

A Living Hope

A Study in First Peter

LESSON FIVE

Prayerfully read through 1st Peter, chapter five.

Peter finishes up his letter by first addressing the “shepherds” among his readers, and afterward addressing the “sheep” in their care.

- 1) Looking at **verse 1**, what qualified Peter to give this exhortation to the “elders” reading this letter?

- 2) The word “elder” is synonymous with the word “overseer.” It is basically the same word used for “pastor” and it speaks of the spiritual maturity and wisdom that qualifies them for leadership, not necessarily about chronological “age.” What is the instruction Peter gives to elders in **verse 2**?

- 3) Jesus gave Peter two aspects of what it means to “shepherd” His sheep. Look up **John 21:15**. What does Jesus tell Peter to do for His sheep in this verse?

- 4) Now look up **John 21:16**. What are Jesus’ instructions to Peter in that verse?

Sheep need to be nourished and fed the spiritual food of God’s Word to help them grow into spiritual maturity. They also need to be “tended.” To “tend” is a different word and it has a different meaning. It involves “caring for,” being “attentive” to, protecting them, guiding them and seeing to their needs. Jesus takes the position of a shepherd very seriously. The sheep of those who are in a position of a shepherd, don’t belong to them. They belong to Christ, and He has entrusted their care to shepherds who will feed, nurture, and tend to them.

- 5) Even beyond feeding and tending, Jesus brought out another important aspect of the shepherd to the sheep. Look up **John 10:11** and write down what Jesus says, as our Good Shepherd.

- 6) What does Paul say to the Ephesian elders in **Acts 20:28**?

- 7) Jesus literally “laid down His life” for His sheep. But laying down one’s life isn’t only about dying in someone’s place. It also includes laying aside one’s own wants, desires and agenda in order to place the needs of someone else as more important. Look at **1 Peter 5:2 & 3**. What further instructions does Peter give to the shepherds overseeing Christ’s sheep?

- 8) Look up **Ezekial 34:1-10**. Read over these verses and **summarize** below what these **shepherds did** and **didn’t do** and **how it affected the sheep** in their care.

- 9) Sadly, today there are many shepherd’s that might fit that description. And every one of them will have to one day answer to God for how they took care of His sheep. But for those who are faithfully feeding, nurturing and tending to them, what does **1 Peter 5:4** say they can look forward to?

- 10) In **verse 5** Peter turns his attention from the shepherds to the sheep. What does he tell them in this verse?
- 11) Peter begins by addressing “the younger,” telling them to submit to their “elders.” This is speaking of the younger, chronologically, but also the younger in the faith. They need to be “teachable” and willing to listen to their instructions. But Peter also adds that we should all be willing to submit to one another, and that is evidence by having an attitude of **humility**. Peter tells them to “**clothed**” themselves with humility. The word for “**clothed**” is a word meaning to “gird oneself” and is used for a servant putting on an apron. Peter may have been thinking back to an example he experienced with Jesus. Look up **John 13:4-15**. After reading these verses, write down **verses 14 & 15** below.
- 12) In **1 Peter 5:6** Peter says, “Therefore.....” (*Because God **resists the proud but gives grace to the humble***) “humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time.” Pride is one of the things God hates. Use a concordance or the internet to look up some Scriptures about pride and share one with the group that especially spoke to you.
- 13) One of the demonstrations of humility is found in **1 Peter 5:7**. What does that verse say?

Pride says, “I can handle it!” Humility knows that without Christ we can do nothing of any eternal value and places all of its dependency upon Him.

David Guzik states, “**Casting** is a rather energetic word. He didn’t say, “Lay all your care upon Him,” because we have to do it more energetically than that. The idea is, “*throw it away from you.*” The pressures and the burdens of your life are so heavy and difficult that it takes great concentration of effort to put them on Jesus.

- 14) Looking back at **verse 7**, what **reason** does Peter give us for “**casting**” our cares upon Jesus?
- 15) Sometimes it’s easy for us to forget this truth, especially in our times of trouble. Our emotions can change with the wind, but in **Isaiah 40:8**, God tells us that **His Word stands forever**. Whatever it is that we’re going through right now that has us doubting God’s care for us, our doubts and questions cannot change the **sureness of His promises**. Look up the following Scriptures and embrace these truths.

Psalm 34:15 -

Psalm 55:22 -

Isaiah 49:15 & 16 -

Matthew 6:26 -

Romans 8:28 -

- 16) What warning does Peter give us in **1 Peter 5:8**?
- 17) Because this is a reality, we are called to be **sober** and **vigilant**. Look up these two words in a dictionary and share the definitions you find. *It is also helpful to look up the synonyms for the words.*

- 18) In **1 Peter 5:8** Peter describes Satan as a roaring lion. What other description do we find of him in **2 Corinthians 11:14**?
- 19) In the **first part** of **1 Peter 5:9**, what does Peter tell us our response to this “roaring lion” and imposter of an “angel of light” should be?
- 20) Commentator **Edmond Hiebert** states, “**Scripture urges believers to flee from various evils (1Co 6:18; 1Co 10:14; 1Ti 6:11; 2Ti 2:22), but nowhere are they advised to flee from the devil. That would be a futile effort.**” Instead, Peter uses the word “**resist.**” The Greek word for resist is made up of two words: *stand* and *against*. Rather than “flee” Peter is telling us to ***stand against*** the enemy, but he also reminds us in this verse that it is only possible for us to do so if we are standing **firm (or steadfast) in the faith**. What other encouragement does Peter include in the **second part** of this verse?
- 21) We often feel all alone against the attacks of the enemy. But this reminder from Peter tells us that we are certainly NOT alone on this spiritual battlefield we are fighting in. What do the following Scriptures add to this?
- John 16:33 -**
- 2 Timothy 3:12 -**
- 22) What encouragement does Peter give to us in **1 Peter 5:10**? Write out the verse below.

- 23) As much as we dread it, Scripture is clear that the Lord uses the trials and sufferings of this temporal life for His eternal purposes. How do these other Scriptures encourage us in those times?

Romans 8:35 & 37 -

2 Corinthians 4:17 -

2 Thessalonians 3:3 -

2 Timothy 4:18 -

1 Peter 1:6 & 7 -

- 24) Write out again, from the last part of **1 Peter 5:10**, the things Peter says our suffering can do for us.

- 25) **Perfect** means to bring us to full maturity. **Establish** means to firm up or confirm you in your faith. **Strengthen**, of course, means to make you strong. **Vincent's Word Studies** quotes **J.A. Bengel**, who sums up this verse saying, "**Shall perfect, that no defect remain in you: shall stablish, that nothing may shake you: shall strengthen, that you may overcome every adverse force.**" What does Peter say in **verse 11** about the God who is able to do this?

- 26) Look up the following verses and record what they say about this.

Ephesians 3:20 & 21 -

Hebrews 7:25 -

Jude 1:24 & 25 -

- 27) In Peter's final words of this letter, he tells his readers in **verse 12**, what his purpose was in writing it. What does he say?
- 28) We discover that he used Silvanus (or Silas) as his secretary to pen this letter. Most scholars agree that this is probably the same Silas that accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey in Acts, chapters 15-17. What other insights do we discover from **1 Peter 5:13**?
- 29) Most commentators believe that Peter's reference to Babylon here is most likely a reference to the church in Rome, churches often being referred to in the feminine pronoun. His reference to his son, Mark, is most likely speaking of John Mark, Barnabas' cousin, whom Peter calls his spiritual "son." Peter ends his letter sending greetings from the church of Rome, where he is residing, to the churches in Asia Minor. Write out the final instruction Peter gives to the churches in **verse 14**.

This was a common greeting, also found in many of Paul's letters to the churches (see Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12 and 1 Thessalonians 5:26). Peter again is establishing the importance of having **love for one another**. And he adds to that command a blessing of **peace**.

David Guzik points out that, "**Love for each other and peace - are especially necessary for those who suffer and live in dangerous times.**"

Notice that Peter says to greet one another with a **kiss of love**. The word used is **agape**. It is the unconditional love of God that selflessly gives expecting nothing in return. It is the love by which Jesus says that others will know that we are His disciples.

30) What ministered to you most in your study of this final chapter?

31) What was your greatest take-away from your study of 1 Peter?

This study was written and prepared by Shawn Van Hook, 2023