

1 Peter 5:1-14

February 5, 2007

Intro: In our outline of 1 Peter we come now to the last of Peter's exhortations. His exhortations occupy the major part of this epistle beginning with 1:13 and going to 5:11.

They are divided into two sections: 1:13-3:12 and 3:13-5:11. In this latter section Peter showed first some of the benefits which suffering Christians receive. These are in 3:13-4:19, which brings us to the end of chapter 4. We have just concluded that part. Peter concluded the practical section of the epistle with More Special Instructions in 5:1-11. These include:

Instructions for elders (5:1-4).

Instructions for the young (5:5a).

Concluding instructions for all of the people of God (5:5b-11).

So now we are ready to consider Peter's instructions to the elders (5:1-4).

5:1 Following the apostles, the main leaders in the local churches were called *bishops*, or *elders*. The Apostle Paul gave the qualifications for bishops (or elders) in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 where he first called them elders, and then bishops. The men who were appointed to work directly under the leadership of the bishops or elders were called *deacons*. Their qualifications are given by the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

The Greek word for a bishop is which Paul used in 1 Timothy 3:1, 2 and Titus 1:7 is ἐπίσκοπος. It means *an overseer, a watcher, a guardian*. You will find it also in Acts 20:28 where it is translated "overseers," but it is also in Philippians 1:1. We have it right here in 1 Peter 2:25 where the Lord Jesus is referred to as "the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." Actually it is this same idea that is in the word "visitation" in 1 Peter 2:12. God sometimes visits people with judgment, but the idea in this verse is that God as an overseer visits His elect with mercy and grace, but in the case here in 2:12 they are awakened to their need of salvation by the godly lives of those who know the Lord. Obviously God in His oversight, and the Lord Jesus in His oversight, are sovereign in their purposes and in the exercise of Their grace and mercy. *Episcopalians* take their name from this word.

The Greek word for elder is πρεσβύτερος. It carries with it the idea of age, but this does not mean that just because a person is older, he is qualified to be an elder. In listing the qualification for an elder in 1 Timothy 3, verse 6, Paul said that an elder cannot be "a novice," which means one is immature in the faith. So an elder needs to be a mature Christian, one who has known the Lord for enough time that he gives evidence in his life of spiritual wisdom and maturity. *Presbyterians* take their name from this word for an elder.

And so the word "elder" shows the honor and dignity of the office; the word "bishop" explains what the work is, caring for the people of God, being aware of spiritual needs and trials through which the people of God may be going, restoring that who have fallen away or are discouraged.

Now Peter's exhortation to elders shows that even elders can fail. They need to be exhorted to remain faithful to the position that they have, and there would be no one better to do this toward the end of the first century than the one remaining apostle, who identified himself as an elder. Actually the writers of the NT epistles were fulfilling their position in writing because it showed their concern for the way the people of God were living.

When we get into the subject of elders, we are getting into that branch of theology called, *Ecclesiology*. This is the doctrine of the Church. The word church is used two ways in the NT. The body of Christ is called, the Church. This came into existence in Acts 2 the first instance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. By the baptism

of the Spirit believers from that day to this become a part of the Church, the body of Christ, when they are saved. But the NT also speaks of local churches – the church at Rome, the church at Corinth, the churches of Galatia, and so on. And when we talk of bishops, or elders, and deacons, we are dealing with local churches. Cf. Acts 20:17; Philippians 1:1.

Peter, as we have seen from the first verse of chapter 1 in this epistle, was writing to believers from several different places. There were churches, evidently, in all of these places, groups of believers who had gathered together for instruction in the truth of God, for fellowship, for worship, and for a testimony to the world about them. Peter claimed to be an elder which means that he, too, was a leader in some local church. And so he had a heart for the elders to whom he was writing. When churches are under trial, the leadership needs special wisdom, special guidance from the Lord. It may have been that Peter had the elders of these churches primarily, but not exclusively, on his heart as he wrote to all of the believers under their care.

He identified himself in three ways:

- 1) As an elder,
- 2) As “a witness of the sufferings of Christ,”
- 3) As “a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.”

There is an obvious note of tenderness in the way he addressed the elders. He had not referred to himself as an apostle when speaking to them, even though he did when addressing all believers in chapter 1, verse 1. But here he spoke as one of them, subject to the same weaknesses, feeling his own inadequacy for the position that he held in the church, reminding himself and them of the high calling they had, and how diligently and in great holiness they should fulfill their responsibilities. Elders should constantly feel in the deepest humility, how God has honored them in giving them such a place of ministry. “The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder.”

As “a witness of the sufferings of Christ,” Peter was reminding them that the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ was what he himself had seen. But he not only means that he had seen it, but that he was to bear witness of what he had seen. After all of the years that had gone by, his remembrance of the suffering of Christ, was just as clear, meaningful, and powerful as it ever had been. Even the Apostle Peter was just a sinner saved by grace. He knew why the Lord had suffered. He knew that he owed his own salvation exclusively to the Savior’s suffering. He knew that Christ had suffered bearing his sins. And the frequent references that we have seen to the Gospel in this epistle are all evidence of how even as he wrote, his mind and heart were filled with thoughts of the Savior’s death, and what the Lord Jesus had accomplished by His sufferings.

Elders must never lose sight of the Savior’s sufferings and death. Only such memories will keep our hearts tender as we minister to the people of God, and as we seek to lead the Lord’s people in bearing testimony to those sufferings to a fallen world. There is no other hope that any of us has. “The sufferings of Christ.” Think often of those words, was what he was saying to those elders. Never lose sight of the Cross of Christ.

Thirdly Peter identified himself as “a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed in us.” Some say that Peter was speaking of his time on the Mount of Transfiguration when with James and John the Lord was transfigured before them. And this certainly must have been a part of what led Peter to identify himself in this way. It may also mean that He was thinking of having seen the Lord after His resurrection in His glorified body, raised from the dead, never to die again.

But notice that Peter did not say that he simply was a witness “of the glory that shall be revealed,” but that he was “a partaker” of, as this verse probably should be translated, *of the glory that shall be revealed in us*. I hope that those of you who have started with me through the First Epistle of John remember what is conveyed to us

as the meaning of the word “fellowship.” The Greek word for “partaker” has the same basic root as the word “fellowship.” It speaks of our identification with Christ. To have fellowship with God and with Christ is to partake of Them. This is what is pictured in the Lord’s Supper. We eat of the bread and drink of the cup in a symbolic way to testify that in being saved we have partaken of Christ. We learn of Christ. We feed on Christ. He has become our life. He is our strength. And we are being transformed into His likeness. The changes began to take place the moment we were saved, and they are going on at this very moment. The change is often hidden from our eyes, and yet we know that we are not like we used to be, and we are not like we would have been if the Lord had not saved us from our sins. We are being transformed in His likeness. This is what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote 2 Corinthians 3:18:

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

“Christ liveth in me.” This is not theory. This is fact. And it wasn’t limited to the Apostle Paul. It is true of every believer. Remember what the Apostle John wrote in 1 John 3:2 and 3, “Beloved, now are we the children of God, . . .”

Peter spoke of this as a revelation: “The glory that shall be revealed.” The Apostle John said that “it doth not yet appear what we shall be.” We know a lot about it, but not all! God reveals what is impossible for us to know in any other way. He has revealed His truth in the Word, but we are not going to understand it until that truth is revealed to us by the Spirit of God. The verb “revealed” is ἀποκαλύπτω. We get the word Apocalypse from it which is what the Book of the Revelation is. It is an unveiling, a bringing to light something that has been hidden. See some form of it in 1:7, 12, 13; 4:13. Notice “partakers” in this last verse. We partake of Christ’s sufferings in that the results are imputed to us.

But what did Peter want them to do?

5:2 “Feed the flock of God which is among you.” An elder is a shepherd. The people of God are sheep. The Lord Jesus is “the good Shepherd” Who has given His life for the sheep. This is the verse that has given rise to the expression, *Undershepherds*. In verse 4 Peter spoke of the Lord as “the chief Shepherd.” In Hebrews 13:20 our Lord is called, “the great Shepherd of the sheep.” And, as I have already mentioned, in John 10:11 and 14 the Lord Jesus called Himself, “the good Shepherd.” The Lord Jesus is “the chief Shepherd,” and elders serve under Him, taking care of His sheep the way He wants us to care for them.

But what does the verb “feed” include? It would be better translated, “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you. Dr. Wuest explained it this way:

The word “feed” is the translation of a Greek word which literally means “to shepherd,” and includes the duties of a shepherd, tending, feeding, guiding, and guarding the flock of God. The noun form of the word is translated “pastors” in Ephesians 4:11 (p. 124).

So a pastor is a shepherd.

The expression, “taking the oversight thereof,” is not in some of the MSS, but there are those that believe that it belongs here. It is a verb from which the word “bishop” comes. Elders have a God-given responsibility to be aware of the needs of the people of God, not intruding in a manner which would be unbecoming to a servant of the Lord. The precautions are stated negatively, and the positively in the remainder of this verse, and then in verse 3.

The elder is not to act “by constraint.” It means *not because you have to*, or *not because it is a part of your job*, *not because it is expected of you*, “but willingly.” If we are going to help people, it must come from the

heart. And certainly not because this is what we are being paid to do. The former Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas once said, "I would rather do what I am doing without pay, than to get paid for doing anything else." That is the attitude that Peter was talking about. "A ready mind" describes a person who is prepared and eager to give help where it is need.

Peter's exhortations to the elders continues in verse 3.

5:3 We are not *lords*. The sheep have one lords. So we are not to dominate the Lord's people. We are not to bring them under our control. What they do must come from their hearts. Only God can do that for them. We take them to the Word. We pray for them because the sheep don't always want help. Being a shepherd takes a great deal of patience. We can only help those who want to be helped.

"God's heritage" are those whom He has chosen for His inheritance. Paul prayed according to his Ephesian epistle that those who really knew the Lord would "know . . . what [are] the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18). The Lord has chosen those who are truly saved. So to speak, He has invested much in their salvation. We need to treat the Lord's people as those who are precious, very precious to Him. Sometimes the sheep can be very stubborn, but that is where we need to trust the Lord to work in their hearts.

Above all, we need to be "examples to the flock." Often in dealing with the Lord's people, an elder, or pastor, will become aware of special needs in his own life. Our goal needs to be what the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, as Pastor Will reminded us on Sunday night, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

The standards are high for an elder, but then the standards are high for every child of God. We can only live as we should by the grace of God. Elders need to meet high standards because of their position, but they need to maintain those standards in order to continue to be qualified to serve in such an honored position.

The real reward is yet to come as we learn from verse 4.

5:4 Christ here is called "the Chief Shepherd." He is the One with supreme authority. This is a statement of His sovereignty. He is going to "appear," to be manifested as Who He is. And when He does, there will be the giving of rewards. In the case of faithful undershepherds, they will receive "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Nothing in this world is like that. Even heaven and earth shall pass away. But the crown of glory, glory at its best and highest, will never tarnish and never disappear. If only to be able to put our crowns at the feet of our Savior, this should be incentive enough for us to seek to be faithful servants of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

February 12, 2007

F. B. Meyer reminds us in his commentary, that there are three crowns that are promised in the NT:

- 1) The crown of righteousness - 2 Timothy 4:8. I read verses 6 and 7 with it:
 - 6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.
 - 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
 - 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
- 2) The crown of life - James 1:12:
 - 12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.
- 3) The crown of glory - 1 Peter 5:4:

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Three of the four of the Gospel writers mention that the Lord Jesus wore “a crown of thorns” (Matt. 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2, 5). But the writer of the book of Hebrews tells how some day we are going to see the Lord Jesus crowned:

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Heb. 2:9).

This may speak of our Lord’s resurrection. But even beyond that, or probably as an even greater explanation of what it means that our Lord will be “crowned with glory,” is the statement in 1 Tim 6:13-16 where we have a charge which Paul gave to Timothy:

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings , and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

We also read the following in Rev 19:16 this about our Lord when He returns to reign upon the earth:

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS , AND LORD OF LORDS.

So crowns will be very visible in heaven, and we need to make sure that, by the grace of God, we will have one.

At this point in the epistle, as Peter was bringing his epistle to a close, he gave a few more instructions to the people to whom he was writing, first to young people, and then to all of the people generally in verses 5 through 11.

5:5 Independence has always been an obvious characteristic of young people. It was when we were young; it has always been this way. We can’t set any age limit on the word that Peter used, but generally when we think of young people we think of those in their teens and into their twenties. Young people need to know that the Spirit of God is concerned about them. Perhaps Peter addressed them for one reason, to get them to pay special attention to the final words of his epistle. But a generation can usually be graded on the response that young people have for those who are older than they are. What Peter was saying here applied especially to young people who claimed to know the Lord. Do they listen to the advice of older Christians? Or better, do they seek the advice of older Christians? What respect do they show for the elders of the church? And do they follow the advice of the elders? Are the elders being an example for the young people. The close mention of elders and the younger members of the congregation suggests that this was a special need. The word for young people was “submit,” and this would apply to young people in their relationship with their parents. The Apostle Paul set the highest possible example for all of us when he said, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1).

The verb in the original means *to place yourself under the authority of another*, not just to find out what they would advise young people to do, but to do what they say. Every young person is responsible to God to do what the Apostle Peter was telling them to do, and that attitude is to be carried over into adult like in every believer’s relationship with God. This is a responsibility that we all have. A child is to be submissive to his parents, but his parents are to be submissive to God. A wife is to be submissive to her husband, but her husband is to be submissive to God. There are times when submission is very difficult, but it is always right. Note what Peter said to servants in 2:18. See also his instruction to wives in 3:1, even when a husband. And in

3:13-16 this attitude must prevail in a Christian's attitude toward his government, *even when living in the Roman Empire!* Note "honor the king" in 2:17. There may be times when a Christian cannot do what those over him tell him to do, as when the apostles were told not to speak at all about Jesus, but under normal conditions, to be submissive is the will of God. Even in our relationships with each other, humility is always in order. All of this is contrary to human nature, but it is clearly the will of God

When Peter said for them to "be clothed with humility," many expositors believe that Peter was thinking about what the Lord did in the Upper Room when no one felt responsible to wash the Lord's and the disciples' feet. And so He took a towel and some water, and proceeded to do it Himself. Read about this in John 13:3-17.

The word that Peter used here for humility (*ταπεινοφροσύνη*) is defined by Thayer as meaning "*having a humble opinion of one's self, a deep sense of one's (moral) littleness, and lowliness of mind.* So we are not to act toward each other outwardly just because we feel that that is what we are to do, but it must come from our minds and hearts. We do it because we believe this is what is pleasing to God, and so it is what we want to do. And to show why we do it Peter said, "For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

There are many Scriptures which teach us this, that "God resisteth the proud . . ." One is close by in James 4:10: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." Pride is the root sin. That is, pride is always present in every sin. We are all guilty of it. Remember what the Apostle Paul said in his qualifications for a bishop or elder: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (1 Tim. 3:6). One well-known verses from Solomon in the book of Proverbs are, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). Another that is well-worth remembering is found in Proverbs 29:23: "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit." Modern life gives us abundant examples of people who really don't know these truths, or, if they know them, they don't believe them. But we need to remember that we will never be misguided by the Word. But, on the hand, ignoring the Word leads to disaster from which there is often no recovery.

And so the Apostle Paul said is all again in verse 6, but with a wonderful promise.

5:6 The child of God who pursues a proud path has forgotten "the mighty hand of God." When we forget Who God is, then we seek to take over His work. And that is what gets us into trouble.

The greatest example I know of who illustrates the truth of this verse is our Lord Jesus Christ. (Explain.) But the greatest example that I know of among the Lord's people, is Joseph. But Peter is also an example. And so was the Apostle Paul. King David is another one. And who could forget Moses. Mary the mother of our Lord is an example of humility. So was Ruth in OT times. And there are many who have taken the Lord at His word regarding humility down to the present day. For the Lord to exalt us does not mean that we will fill a place like Joseph did, or like Daniel did, or like Mary of Bethany did. But it means that the Lord will put us where He wants us to be, and that is always infinitely better than anything that we could do for ourselves. Most politicians are examples of what we should not be. And the same can be said of Hollywood celebrities. The child of God who waits on the Lord, will never regret what he has done. God's thoughts and God's ways are infinitely better than anything that we could do for ourselves.

But verse 7 is also a part of verse 6.

5:7 What does the word "care" mean? It is whatever you are anxious about, whatever "bugs" you. It is what you worry about. It can be different things at different times. With children it is often that they don't have a friend. It can be what a young person is going to do with his or her life. An unmarried young

person will worry about marriage, or if marriage is even in the future. Health often becomes something that we worry about. We can worry about war. We worry about money. Fathers and mothers worry about their children. We all are concerned about how we are going to die – and when, and where. Peter didn't ask if his readers had cares. He knew that they all did. He was just telling them what to do with their cares. What did he say? He spoke of "casting" it. What does that mean? It means *to cast upon*. So the words "cast" and "upon" are both in the same word. But Peter also added the preposition "upon" before "him." So a very cumbersome translation of this verse could be, "Casting upon all your care upon him. So the idea is that you and I are going to take all of those worries, those anxious thoughts that we have, whatever they might be, and throw them somewhere. Really, upon someone. Who is it? To whom does the word "him" refer?

Well, if you go back into verse 6, you will see that Peter was talking about "God." He was speaking of "the mighty hand of God." At every stage in life, whatever we are worrying about, we are to take that "care" and cast it upon the Almighty, Sovereign God of the universe. Or better yet, you and I are to cast it upon the God Who has by His mighty power done what we couldn't do for ourselves, nor could we do it for each other. What is that? He has saved us. And even before that, He made us. And even before that He chose us. And even more than that He has ordered our steps, each step, throughout our lives. So wherever we are in our lives, He knows where we are because He has planned it all. He has never planned our sins, or even tempted us to sin, but He uses even our sins, or mistakes, to bring us along in His plan for our lives. These are all things that the Bible tells us. That is one big reason why we need to be reading our Bibles. But just in case we might have missed it, Peter said that we are to cast "all of our cares," none is exempt, none is too great for the Lord, and the reason: "For He careth for you."

Years ago I was listening to a Bible teacher who gave a literal translation of the words, "He careth for you." It goes like this: *It matters to Him about you!* "Careth" can be translated also, *He is concerned about you*. Or, *He is interested in you*. And do you know what? Peter was not only speaking by divine revelation, but He was speaking by personal experience. He didn't know how to do this when He first came to the Lord. Do you remember how he pulled out his sword, and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest. But then from that Peter went on to deny three times that he even knew the Lord. Those are things that happen when we try to work things out our way instead of throwing our cares, not simply *at* the Lord, but *upon* Him.

The elders to whom Peter was writing needed to learn this. And the young people to whom he addressed himself needed to learn this. In fact, no child of God who has ever read 1 Peter can say that this is not a lesson that he or she has needed to learn. I doubt if any of us can say that we have learned it thoroughly. Every fresh trial (and Peter was writing about trials to people who were being severely tried) gives us a fresh opportunity to decide what we are going to do about it. We are all learners, and we are going to keep learning until the Lord comes, or until He takes us to heaven.

Now one thing that makes our struggle with trials so difficult is that we have an enemy who is out to destroy us. Notice very carefully what Peter wrote in verses 8 and 9. Peter had had some very personal dealings with the Devil, and so his advice to us is priceless.

February 19, 2007

5:8 It is probably true that none of us pays as much attention to what the Bible has to say about the Devil as we should. The people of the world like to joke about the Devil, but he is no one to take lightly. I am sure that you have all seen that unbelievers don't think seriously about God, and they don't think seriously about the Devil either. This is really evidence of the judgment of God. I often think of Paul's words to the church at Corinth where he was actually talking about the world's attitude toward the Gospel. The people of

the world count it foolishness as they do almost everything that has to do with the Bible, and with God, and with Christ. Paul was quoting from Isaiah 29:14 when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:19 that God said, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” He also said in Romans 1:21b and 22 that when men turn away from God “they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” However, we know that we must never take lightly anything that the Word of God has to say. This applies to all of the truth of Scripture. If what is in Scripture were not important, it wouldn’t be there. So I hope that we all take the Word of God as being very, very important. This includes what it has to say about the Devil. In fact, the Bible is the only book that gives us the truth about the Devil, unless they are books written on what the Scriptures teach about the Devil.

The title Devil means that he is an accuser. He is a slanderer. In Revelation 12:10 we are told that he is “the accuser of the brethren . . . which accused them before our God day and night.” And so it is not surprising that Peter called him (he is a real person, although unseen because he is an angel, a fallen angel), “your adversary.” He is the adversary of God and of everyone who knows God and belongs to God. He is not our friend; he is our enemy, our archenemy, our chief enemy. I doubt if any of you have any real enemy. We may have people who don’t like us, but not any who are out to harm us. But we all have one enemy, and he is the worst kind of an enemy. He is *the* enemy of all mankind, but especially of the people of God. But he is our enemy because he is God’s enemy. And we know that he did not hesitate to attack even the Lord Jesus Christ when He was here on earth. He is not omnipresent. Neither is he omniscient. So he did not know what effect it had had upon the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ to become a Man. And so he tempted our Lord, hoping that he would be able to get the Lord to sin, and so put an end to the divine plan that Christ should be the only Savior for the whole world.

I want to take a little time to talk about the Devil this morning, and I would like to call your attention now to what is revealed about him in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 14, verses 12 through 14. Please turn to that passage with me.

I believe, there have always been those who believe that “Lucifer” is the name that was given to the Devil by God, most likely when angels were created, to show the important position that he had among angels. Keep a finger in your Bible at this Isaiah passage, and turn for just a few moments to Ezekiel 28 where we have another passage which seems to deal with the Devil, telling us more about his origin. I want to read to you from verse 11 down through verse 19. Some simply apply the Isaiah passage to the king of Babylon because it was in the context of pronouncing judgment on Babylon that “Lucifer” was mentioned, and, in the same way, some feel that this passage in Ezekiel 28 applied just to the King of Tyre, as verse 12 seems to indicate. But both in Isaiah 14, as well as in Ezekiel 28, what we read goes far beyond anything that those kings were, or anything that is said about what they were intent on doing. The ambition of those kings never went as far as the objective that Lucifer had.

(Read Ezekiel 28:11-19 – with comments.)

Now, going back to Isaiah 14, the Lord called the Devil, “Lucifer, son of the morning.” “Son of the morning” is a phrase explaining what the name “Lucifer” means. It can also be translated, “son of the morning.” It speaks of his original glory. The Apostle Paul had this in mind when he was writing to the Corinthian church about false teachers, and he said this which you will find in 2 Corinthians 11:13-14:

- 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.
- 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

False teachers are often very attractive, very persuading in what they are teaching, even though it is error, and Paul said here that this is just like the one who is behind their teaching, “for Satan himself is transformed into

an angel of light.”

Now let us look at the five “I will’s” of the Devil in Isaiah 14:12-14:

- 1) “I will ascend into heaven.” The Bible does not speak of seven heavens, but it does speak of three. The first is the firmament, the area surrounding the earth where God placed the sun, the moon, and the stars. The “third heaven” is mentioned by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:2 where Paul spoke of a time when he was caught up into what must of been the dwelling place of God. As far as I know the second heaven is not mentioned in the Bible, but what is left is the dwelling place of angels. Angels have access to the third heaven, and they certainly have access to the first heaven where we live. But they belong in the second heaven. Now, as I have said, the Bible doesn’t tell us what the second heaven is, but it seems logical that it would be the dwelling place of angels. So for the Devil to say that he would ascend into heaven would mean that he was not satisfied with the place God had prepared for him, but we wanted to take over God’s place.
- 2) “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.” When the Lord spoke to Job about creation, He said this: “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:7). This is an obvious reference to angels. So it was Lucifer’s purpose to take the place of authority over all of the angels.
- 3) “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north.” In Psalm 48, verses 1 and 2, we find many of these same words used:
 - 1 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.
 - 2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.“The mount of the congregation in the sides of the north” is obviously a description of Jerusalem, which means that the Devil’s purpose was to reign over the city of Jerusalem to take the place of the coming Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. The king of Babylon never had such a purpose. So the Devil was planning that he would be the Messiah, and you have an Anti-Christ.
- 4) “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.” Remember that the cloud going before the children of Israel as they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan was the visible evidence, not only of the presence of the Lord, but of the glory of the Lord. The cloud in the Holy of Holies, over the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant and between the cherubim, was also a display of the presence of the Lord and the glory of the Lord. So Lucifer’s objective was to have a glory greater than the glory of God.

And finally,

- 5) “I will be like the most High.” Lucifer’s objective was to be like God, and to establish himself as the sovereign god over all of creation. Talk about the Great Imitator. He intends to make people think that he is God, but he is the Devil, and will always be the Devil. If the Devil always showed himself to be the Devil that he is, it would be a rather simple thing to identify him and his evil work. But, as I have mentioned, he is especially effective and dangerous because he can transform himself into an angel of light. Cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-14.

Angels don’t die. There are elect angels, but there are also fallen angels. These are the demons who were so active during the ministry of our Lord on earth. This same Devil is the one who tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden. This is the Devil who appeared to God, asking permission to attack Job. He appeared also, as we know, during the lifetime of our Lord on earth. He was active in the early church. And it is this same Devil that the Apostle Peter was warning the people of God about in our text in 1 Peter. He is active in our world today, very active. We need to be acquainted with his ways and his purpose. His object is to destroy the work of God. The Moslem objective of wiping Israel off of the face of the earth, is the Devil’s plan. And he would destroy us

if he possibly could. Revelation 12:9 gives us a list of his titles, his purpose, and what will happen to him and his angels, the demons, during the Great Tribulation. During the Millennium he will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. His final doom is hell, the lake of fire where he “shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” – that is, eternally!

This is the living creature that the Apostle Peter was warning his readers about when he told that “your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). He destroys everyone he can, but his special objective is to do away with the Lord’s people. He is the Supreme Terrorist! Peter’s words indicate that we have an enemy that is much greater in power than we are, and that we are utterly dependent upon the Lord for our protection. The Devil is powerful, but he is not omnipotent. God is omnipotent, and that is why the Apostle John gives us that encouraging and comforting word in 1 John 4:4 after telling us that the spirit of antichrist was even then in the world. He did this in verses 1, 2, and 3 of that chapter, but then he added this in verse 4:

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4).

This was a subject that was etched deeply in Peter’s heart. There was a day when the Lord said to Peter, “Simon, Simon [his original name], behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.” It was similar to the request that Satan made concerning Job. Why do you sift wheat? It is to separate the chaff from the wheat. Satan wanted to find out just what Peter was like as a follower of the Lord, and hopefully to prove that there was more chaff in his life than reality. But then the Lord added this statement: “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:31-32).

We all know how self-confident Peter was, and how he declared to the Lord that he would never fail the Lord. But he was so confident about himself that when the Lord took him and James and John into the Garden of Gethsemane, asking them to watch and to pray as He went farther into the Garden to pray, Peter, James, and John went to sleep. And after the Lord was arrested, Peter was singled out by those who were watching what was going on with the Lord, and Peter denied three times, before some ladies, and finally with a curse, that he even knew the Lord. But that was a major turning point in the spiritual life of Simon Peter.

So what was Peter doing here in 1 Peter 5? He was doing what the Lord had told him to do. He was seeking to strengthen his brethren. And how many have found strength in Peter’s word here in 1 Peter 5, we will probably never know, but we can find strength here for our own struggles with the Evil One.

So what did Peter say that we are to do? I think that primarily we need to go back to verse 5, and read it. And then read verses 6 and 7 as preparation for verses 8 and 9. (Read verses 5-7, and then move into verse 8 and 9.)

“Be sober.” Peter used this word in 1:13 and 4:7 as well as here in 5:8. It is a word which would be used if you were warning a person against drunkenness, but that is not what Peter had in mind when he used it in this epistle. He probably was thinking about not letting anything affect your thinking like intoxicating drink can do. It could mean that they were to safeguard themselves with a solid understanding of the truth, and not to forget the truth in times of temptation, but then always to be alert and watchful against those times when the Devil may be preparing to attack us. Some expositors suggest that because Peter did not say, Be sober and be vigilant, but “be sober, be vigilant,” that these were two verbs emphasizing the same thing, with the second verb seeking to emphasize and strengthen the former. Prayer is certainly a part of what Peter had in mind, the very place where he had failed. So we probably have doctrinal preparedness and spiritual readiness since the Devil is to be resisted in the faith.

A roaring lion is a hungry lion, and one who is anxious to jump on his prey.

5:9 The way that the Lord quoted Scripture to the Devil when He was being tempted, gives us an idea of how we are to “resist” the Devil “steadfast in the faith.” “The faith” is an expression found several times in the epistles to speak of the doctrine, the teaching, of Scripture, or, actually in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, *by the Word of God itself*. The person who is most likely to be able to resist the temptations which the Devil places before us, is the person who is well grounded in the teaching of Scripture and consistent in the application of Scripture in his or her life.

February 26, 2007

Wuest in his commentary on 1 Peter mentioned an interesting point about the word “resist.” He said that the word “resist” means *to withstand, to be firm against someone else’s onset.*” And he says this in contrast with waging warfare against the Devil. We do not attack him. We stand our ground against his attacks. When we do, he, according to what James has told us in James 4:7, will flee from us. This shows the tremendous power of the Word of God. He also said that the word “stedfast,” or *steadfast*, as we would spell it today, is a military term and was used of an ancient Greek phalanx of soldiers, who would stand shield to shield with their spears over them, ready for action, which one writer has described as “moveless as a tower.” Only the application here is to each individual believer. We can’t do this in our own strength, but we are to “be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (Eph. 6:10).

“Knowing that the same afflictions . . .” This is meant to be a word of encouragement for the believers who were in the areas mentioned in verse 1 of this epistle. They were not to feel that they were the only ones who were under trial. At that very moment believers at every other place “in the world” were suffering. And the words “your brethren” indicate that they were suffering for the same reason, persecuted because of their relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. “Accomplished” does not mean that their sufferings had come to an end. Hiebert suggested that it means that their sufferings were being carried out for the fulfillment of God’s purposes. Afflictions are not purposeless, but they are for the fulfillment of divine purposes.

It is always good to remember that we are not the only ones under trials, but that this is the lot of all of the people of God. And that it is all under God’s control for the fulfillment of His purposes in the lives of His people.

This is a good place for us to be reminded that the Christian has three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the Devil. And the Scriptures are clear as to how we are to deal victoriously over each one. We are not to be conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2). We are to flee youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22). And we are to resist the Devil (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9). There are positive and negative things to do in each case.

After giving his readers the encouragement that he gave them in verse 9, Peter concluded the main part of his epistle in verses 10 and 11 with even greater encouragements.

5:10 In times of testing we often get so occupied with our troubles that we forget the Lord. Peter could not have concluded this epistle in any greater way than he did in speaking of “the God of all grace” and reminding these believers of God’s eternal purpose in their lives, what He was accomplishing in their lives, and that ultimately it was all to bring glory to God.

“The God of all grace.” In 2 Corinthians 1:3 the Apostle Paul called God, “the God of all comfort.” He is the source of all of our blessings. He is sufficient for our every need. Trials take on different shapes among those of us who are the Lord’s people, but God is sufficient for them all. “Grace” means undeserved. We are saved by grace, and we are to live by God’s grace. Grace means strength, as Paul indicated in 2 Corinthians 12:9. It

is God's way of making us strong. Cf. the Apostle Paul's testimony about grace in 1 Corinthians 15:10. Look at what Peter said about the grace of God earlier in this chapter (verse 5b).

The first evidence any of us had of the grace of God, was that He "called us." Our relationship with God was not our idea; it was His. We didn't take the first step toward Him; He sought us. And He gave us ears to hear. He opened our hearts to the truth. And just as great a miracle as our being called, is that He has kept us. Let us review our spiritual beginnings and history which Peter described for us in chapter 1, verse 3 through 5. (Read.)

The Lord called us to Himself. He "called us unto His eternal glory." He called us to share His likeness for all eternity. This is God's ultimate purpose for all of us. How can any true Christian possibly believe that he could lose his salvation? And this is only possible "by Christ Jesus." Every part of our salvation, from beginning to end, has come to us "by Christ Jesus." We didn't earn any of it. We didn't deserve any of it. In fact, we deserved just the opposite. Paul has told us that our salvation is "not of ourselves," and it is "not of works." It is all – justification, sanctification, and glorification – "by Christ Jesus." It was because He came to earth to die for us, and because He did die. He took the wages of our sin, and paid our debt in full by His sacrifice on the Cross. He is our great High Priest Who "ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Heb. 7:25).

I wonder if the words, "after that ye have suffered a while," is not a description of our lives here on earth. The whole epistle is designed to teach us the value of our trials.

Then Peter mentioned four things that the Lord is doing through our trials:

- 1) Perfect us.
- 2) Stablish us (an Old English spelling for our *establish*).
- 3) Strengthen us.
- 4) Settle us.

February 27, 2007

There is some textual uncertainty about the last verb, "settle," but Hiebert felt that it was in a sufficient number of MSS, that it must be accepted as belonging in the text. These four verbs indicate what God is doing in our lives as He moves us day by day, through all of the trials of life, toward partaking in "His eternal glory."

"Make you perfect." This verb is used in Hebrews 13:20-21. Matthew used it in 4:21 of where James and John were "mending their nets" as they worked with their father. Paul used it in Galatians 6:1 where it is translated "restore." This is not only a prayer, but a prediction. It is certain that it will take place although there will be differences among the people of God depending upon how faithfully we have walked with the Lord during our time here on earth. Thayer renders this verb, to complete the child of God and to make him what he ought to be. Hiebert explains it as meaning "that God would keep on perfecting His suffering children until no defect would remain in them" (p. 319). This work will not be completed until we see the Lord, but it is a process that is going on today, and has been going on since we first knew the Lord.

"Stablish," or *establish*, is the idea expressed in Jude 24 and 25 although this verb is not used there. See also Romans 1:11 and 16:25. So this is obviously the major purpose that Paul had in writing the book of Romans. This is how God perfects us. He works in us so that we will not stumble and fall where previously we have done so. As we look at believers today, even ourselves, it is hard to believe that we used to be far different from what we are now, even though we are not yet all that God intends for us to be, and will make us be.

"Strengthen" is the only time that this word is used in the NT. Grudem says of this verb that God will

strengthen them for any weakness that they have suffered, any inadequacy to overcome evil that they may have known. Any similarity that there is among these four verbs is obviously intended to emphasize that these works will be done in the lives of the people of God.

“Settle you” – This verb means to be established on a foundation. We all grieve over particular sins which often overtake us, and they can be different sins at different times in our lives. There are sins that seem to characterize young believers, but there are also sins which plague us in old age. As a result of God’s work in us, we will be settled on a solid foundation from which we cannot be removed and from which we will not fall.

As you and I look at our lives today, we may find it incredible to believe that these verbs describe what God is doing in our lives. But He is! Wuest quoted Bengel who summarized the meaning of these words in this way: that God shall so “perfect” us “that no defect” shall “remain in” us, “shall establish” us “that nothing will shake us, shall strengthen” us that we “may overcome every adverse force” that we encounter in our lives. See Wuest, p. 152.

When we look at ourselves, and all of the weaknesses and sins which plague our lives, only God could possibly undertake such a work in all of the people of God. The unbeliever has no hope in himself nor in what others might be able to do for him, or her. Only in God are such amazing prospects possible. But with those of us who know the Lord, they are not only possible, but they are absolutely guaranteed. So we must not give up on ourselves, nor should we give up on any other child of God. All of us are difficult cases, but none of us is an impossible case. Our hope is in “the God of all grace.”

5:11 The word “glory” does not seem to be authentic, and so most of the more recent translations speak of glorifying God for His power. The Greek word is *κράτος*. It is one of several Greek words which are translated *power*. It is common in Biblical doxologies. It speaks of sovereign power, God’s power, which is evident, manifested, in the lives of all of those who truly know the Lord. See 1 Timothy 6:16; Jude 25; Revelation 1:6; 5:13. This word is related to the word “mighty” in “the mighty hand of God” here in 1 Peter 5:6. God’s power is sovereign over all nations for all time and eternity. There is nothing that is impossible for our mighty God. This is our hope, our assurance. And it emphasizes that the fulfillment of God’s purposes in all of God’s people rests solely in Him.

“Amen” is not only a word which is used to conclude a prayer, *but is in itself a prayer* – so be it, may it be fulfilled. See also 4:11 and 5:14.

And with this we come to:

III. THE CONCLUSION (1 Peter 5:12-14).

5:12 “Silvanus” is Silas who was Paul’s companion on his second missionary journey. He evidently assisted Paul in the writing of this epistle. Paul commended him as “a faithful brother,” which means that Paul considered him to be truly saved. The word “faithful” means that Paul had found him to be trustworthy and dependable. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:2 that faithfulness is an absolute necessity for one to whom the Word of God has been entrusted. And so, if this can be said about any child of God, it is all that needs to be said. It sounds very simple, but there are not many among the Lord’s people who can be described in this way. Silas was an example of what we all should be – not one way today, and another way tomorrow, but consistently faithful today and tomorrow as yesterday.

Notice in the last words of chapter 4 God is called, “a faithful Creator.” So, in calling Silas “a faithful brother,”

Paul was saying that Silas was God-like. Our Lord Jesus Christ is called “a merciful and faithful High Priest” in Hebrews 2:17. This is consistent with what is said about our Lord in Hebrews 13:8, that He is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” It is a confirmation that all that is taught about our Lord in Hebrews is eternally true. Cf. also 1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13.

The last part of verse 12 gives us what Peter evidently wanted to be his title or primary theme in this epistle: “this is the true grace of God where in ye stand.” It is probably more in keeping with the original text that “wherein ye stand” should be an imperative. They were standing upon the grace of God, the true grace of God, and they needed to continue standing. The idea seems to be that there were those who were seeking to draw them away from “the true grace of God.” We were saved by grace. We are to grow in grace. It is by nothing but the grace of God that we are what we are. When we see the Lord, we are going to be like the people of Israel when Zerubbabel’s men put the headstone of the new temple in place “crying, Grace, grace unto it.” It is like John Newton wrote in his hymn, Amazing Grace: “‘Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.”

5:13 The word “church” is not found in this verse. Some have interpreted “Babylon” as meaning a woman because the word is feminine. But it seems that it is more reasonable to think that Peter was sending greetings from a group of believers in Babylon. We have no evidence in the Bible that Peter was ever in Babylon, but neither do we have any evidence that he never was there. So I believe it was a church in literal Babylon where Peter must have been when he wrote this epistle. Referring to them as having been “elected together” also points to at least a group of Christians who were there, and most likely, a church.

“Marcus” was John Mark, the writer of the Gospel which carries his name, who had a close relationship with the Apostle Peter.

5:14 We had “grace” in verse 12; here we have “charity,” or love, and “peace.” These are three words of major importance to the people of God. And this means that Peter was emphasizing what is so strongly emphasized in the writings of the Apostle John, that we as believers are to love each other and to so enjoy not only peace with God, and the peace of God, but peace and love with one another. Only those who are “in Christ Jesus” can know the meaning of true love and true peace.

“Amen.” May it be so in all of our lives.