

Peter's Be-Attitudes

1 Peter 5:5-14

- 5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to *your* elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.
- 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,
- 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.
- 8 Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
- 9 But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.
- 10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.
- 11 To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.
- 12 Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard *him*), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!
- 13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and *so does* my son, Mark.
- 14 Greet one another with a kiss of love.
Peace be to you all who are in Christ.

Peter has just given some amazingly practical advice to his readers.

Given the circumstances as a persecuted church he closes with encouragements on how to get along as a church.

In times of difficulty there is sometimes a tendency to pick on each other.

Previously Peter gave these words of:

- Keep a clear-headed prayer;
- Keep fervent in your love for one another;
- Show hospitality by sharing;
- Serve others; (from 4:7-11)

In chapter 5 Peter speaks to pastors on how they should serve willingly, enthusiastically, and responsibly, as an under-shepherd caring for God's flock. Peter's final advice is about having be-attitudes, or attitudes of being, beginning with humility toward elders and others in the fellowship.

1. Be submissive

⁵You younger men, likewise, be subject to *your* elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED

TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

Young people have many questions concerning their future.

The answer involves becoming more than deciding.

Showing obedience to authority and listening to others will simplify each opportunity that comes your way. The first step in the right direction is submission. Trust God to work through His established authorities.

Peter writes,

be subject to *your* elders – younger to older

Submit – hupotasso – “to be subject to” or “to submit yourself unto”

- To submit is to obey

Peter has already written a great deal about the importance of submission in this letter

Paul writes to the Ephesian believers, restating the 5th Commandment.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.”
(Eph. 6:1-3)

Faith and righteousness are designed to function within a context of relationship.
-Especially younger to older.

Schreiner writes

Smooth relations in the church can be preserved if the entire congregation adorns itself with humility. When believers recognize that they are creatures and sinners, they are less apt to be offended by others. Humility is the oil that allows relationships in the church to run smoothly and lovingly¹
Humility is the attitude behind acts of submission.

2. Be accountable

and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another

Humility looks like accountability to one another.

- Check and balance system
- No one should be involved in ministry without accountability to a group of other Christians

¹ Schreiner, T. R. (2003). [*1, 2 Peter, Jude*](#) (Vol. 37, p. 238). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Lloyd Ogilvie writes,

“In the church of Christ, there should be no one lording over or dominating others. In love and honor, we should serve one another. We should be seeking first not to get but to give; not to be served but to serve.”²

When Paul wrote about being filled with the Spirit,

“and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” (Eph. 5:21)

The word-picture of being *clothed with humility* means...

- People should sense our inner clothing: unselfishness.

Humility isn't thinking less about yourself,
it's not thinking about yourself at all.

C. S. Lewis

One pastor said that his main job was *'to help the kids get along.'*

Peter Marshall prayed,

“Lord... where we are wrong, make us willing to change,
and where we are right, make us easy to live with.”

3. Be Humble

...for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

Peter quotes Pr. 3:34 “*scoffers*” – a fool that mocks at the things of God. “*to twist the face*”

Being proud makes God our enemy.

Being humble allows God's riches blessings and supply into our lives.

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; assuredly,
he will not be unpunished. (Pr. 16:5).

John Flavel said,

“They that know God will be humble,
and they that know themselves, cannot be proud.”

² Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Ed., *The Communicator's Commentary: James, 1, 2, Peter, Jude*, (Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1984), p. 194.

4. Be dependent

⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God,
that He may exalt you at the proper time,
⁷casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

Humbling ourselves under God's mighty hand means
that we should see God as He really is and see ourselves as we really are.
God's hands are mighty.

His weakness is mightier than our strength.

His foolishness is greater than our wisdom.

All promotions are in the hands of the Lord

His timing is always perfect. We can be at rest in any circumstance.

God is good; all the time!

Because He cares for us as a father, we can roll on to Him all our anxieties.

Anxieties – burdens too heavy, trials too difficult, problems too confusing,
responsibilities too grueling, situations too awkward, temptations too strong,
sorrows too deep – all these we can give him in prayer, in exchange for His
peace.

Problems > Prayer > Peace [Phil. 4:6-7]

5. Be Alert

⁸Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls
around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Sober spirit ... nepho – sober “be watchful, self-controlled
– not under the influence of intoxicants.”

[used many times in this letter]

Alert - “**Vigilant**” – gregoreo – “to be watchful or awake”

“Stay awake!” “Stay alert!”

There is great danger.

Ultimately our battle is with the enemy of our souls.

Paul writes on this to the Church at Ephesus,

“Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against
the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the
spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places.” (Eph. 6:12)

People are not our enemies. Those who were persecuting these churches were not the real enemy; not even the Roman government. The enemy was the devil.

Peter says, “Be alert to your real adversary!”

Satan is described as a lion seeking someone to devour.

One missionary was speaking to a group of young people of what it was like in Africa; and what to do if they were ever encounter a hungry lion.

“The first thing to remember is that you should never try to flee. That would mean certain death. The lion can run much faster than we can. Next, you should try to look very brave and stare right into the lion’s eyes. If you are successful, he will back down and run away. However, if that does not work, you should be prepared for the lion to attack you. Have your spear ready so that when he leaps upon you, he will land on the spear and be killed!”

Peter adds,

⁹But resist him, firm in *your* faith...

James gives the same counsel,

“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:7-8)

Resist – “to stand against” “to withstand” **Why**, because he likes you! ... to eat!

Two steps go hand in hand: first you draw near to God, and then you resist the devil. Our only defense against the evil one is through the power of Christ.

A Mighty Fortress is our God!

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;

were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God’s own choosing:

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he; Lord Sabaoth, his name,

from age to age the same, and he must win the battle.

Forced Isolation for Martin Luther in 1520 – “dark and dangerous days”

NT into German – 1522; Hymn book in 1524; OT completion in 1534

- Foundation of the Protestant Reformation in Germany.

6. Be Aware

The sufferings of believers are brought on by the devil but are used by God for his great purposes.

¹⁰After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who

called you to His eternal glory in Christ,
 will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.
¹¹To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Part of submission to God is knowing that He is working all things together for our greatest good and his greatest glory. Satan's attacks and our sufferings are not being wasted as we entrust ourselves to the Lord's loving care.

Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.
¹¹To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Perfect – katartizo – “to restore, to mend, to complete a thoroughly”
 - used of resetting a bone to heal.

God wants to restore what sin has taken from us,
 to mend what sin has broken,
 to complete us thoroughly so that we may grow to become more and more
 like Christ.

Confirm – Sterizo “to turn resolutely in a certain direction,
 to steadfastly set, or strengthen”

God will use the suffering in our lives to turn us resolutely to Him,
 to forsake sin, to be steadfast in Him, and to be strengthened by Him.

Strengthen - “to give vigor or to make firm”

God desires to make us vigorous [youthful] and strong for Him,
 and to make us firm in our commitment to Him.

Establish – “to settle, consolidate, or lay a foundation”

Our Lord desires to use our brief times of suffering to consolidate all the fragments of our lives and to bring them under His control in order to lay a solid foundation in our lives – Jesus Christ Himself
 – and to settle us from all of our instability.

God uses suffering to prepare us for His eternal glory in Christ.

When I thought I lost me; You knew where I left me,
You reintroduced me to Your love;
You picked up all my pieces; Put me back together.
You are the defender of my heart.

Remember these six be-attitudes:

Submission, accountability, humility, dependence alertness and awareness.

Peter closes with this exhortation to 'Stand firm in the true grace of God!'