

Peter makes his closing remarks in this final chapter, giving warnings, instruction and encouragement to the elders of the church as well as to the lay members.

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

“The elders which are among you I exhort” - Peter now directs his remarks to the elders of the church. These men could be elder in age but more likely elder in spiritual maturity. These men were leaders in the church, appointed to oversee the welfare of the people, probably consisting of the pastor, deacons, preachers, teachers and others responsible for the spiritual growth of the church.

“who am also an elder” - Peter gives his qualifications as to why elders should listen to him. He humbly identifies himself as also being an elder rather than attempt to boast that he was “Peter.” He was like them for He was also charged with the responsibility of the welfare of God’s people. After His resurrection, Jesus emphasized to Peter the responsibility of caring for God’s people by repeating “feed my sheep” three times in **John 21:15-17**.

“and a witness of the sufferings of Christ” - Peter further describes himself as someone who knows what he is talking because he witnessed the events of the cross. He has been telling them to look to Christ’s sufferings while they have been enduring their own sufferings. He could do that because he himself was eyewitness to those sufferings and knew they were genuine.

“and also a partaker [sharer; partner] of the glory that shall be revealed” - Peter had mentioned in the previous chapter that partaking in the sufferings of Christ would enable us to rejoice in the revelation of Christ’s glory (1 Peter 4:13), implying that we will also share in that glory. Here Peter indicates that he also is a partaker of that glory, implying that he also has suffered like they have. He may also be referring to the glimpse of Christ’s glory that he had on the mount of transfiguration that he mentions in **2 Peter 1:16-18**.

These three qualifications give them reason to listen to what Peter has to say next.

² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³ Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

“Feed the flock of God which is among you” - “Feeding the flock” is the act of a shepherd – caring for their needs. These elders are to care for the believers that live around them. They are to minister where they are to those within their sphere of influence. They are not to neglect anyone.

“taking the oversight [responsibility to care for] thereof” - The word “oversight” carries the idea of looking after the welfare of God’s people, not being “the boss.” It is a position of service not of privilege.

“not by constraint [by force], but willingly” - Taking the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of God’s people should be something that an elder wants to do because he loves them and not something that he has to be compelled or forced to do.

“not for filthy lucre [eagerly for base gain], but of a ready mind [eagerly]” - Some church leaders see their position as a means to make money or derive some other benefit for themselves. Instead, their motivation should be an eagerness to care for God’s people (“of a ready mind”) rather than looking for a way to benefit personally.

“Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples [examples] to the flock” - Too many church leaders want to be the one to call the shots, but Peter reminds them that the church is “God’s heritage.” The church belongs to God and these leaders are merely stewards who have been given the responsibility of caring for the church and being a spiritual example for the members to follow. John wrote of such a person that was more concerned with his own leadership than for the welfare of God’s people:

3 John 9-10 *“⁹ I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. ¹⁰ Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.”*

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” - These elders are charged with being shepherds over God’s flock, but when the chief Shepherd (Christ Himself) returns, elders who have humbly fed the flock of God will be honored with a crown whose glory will last forever. This honor will not be temporary.

⁵ Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder” - After describing the responsibility of the elder to the church, He now describes the responsibility of the younger men in the church to the elder, which is to submit themselves to the leadership of the elder. They should recognize the spiritual maturity of the elder and allow themselves to be fed and taught by the elder.

“Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed [to tie on with a knot or a band] with humility” - Church members should be humble enough to serve one another. The word for “clothed” was often used for a slave tying on an apron in preparation for work. We should be humble enough to tie on our own “apron” in service to our fellow Christians.

“for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” - Peter quotes a principle from **Prov. 3:34** (“Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.”) to remind us that God is actively against the proud and shows grace toward the humble.

⁶ Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God” - Knowing that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble, we should place ourselves into His capable hands rather than following our own ambitions. It is better to be under God’s blessings than to have Him against us. God warned Israel through His prophets in the OT that He would oppose their prosperity when they rebelled against Him.

“that he may exalt you in due time” - The world tells us that we have to assert ourselves for if we don’t stand up for ourselves then no one else will. However, Peter tells us that if we humble ourselves in submission to God, trusting circumstances to Him, then God will take care of us, exalting us when the time is appropriate. Joseph was in Egypt for 13 years before God exalted him.

⁷ Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

God wants us to lay every care that we have on His strong shoulders, because He loves us and has our best interests at heart. Humbling ourselves under His mighty hand means we surrender all our circumstances to His loving care.

Psalms 55:22 “*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*”

Matt. 6:25-30 “²⁵ Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? ²⁶ Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? ²⁷ Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? ²⁸ And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: ²⁹ And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: ⁹ Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

“**Be sober** [to be calm and collected], **be vigilant** [alert; attentive]” - We are not to be distracted by worry (we are under our Father’s care) but instead to be watchful for the enemy of our souls.

“**because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour**” - Satan, the one who is against us, is always on the prowl seeking someone he can deceive and destroy. A roaring lion is one that is aroused by his hunger and is thus looking for prey to satisfy that hunger. We do not have to fear Satan because of our Heavenly Father, but we do need to be alert to the dangers he poses.

“**Whom resist stedfast** [firm; unmovable] **in the faith**” - We are to resist the devil and his temptations. How do we resist the devil? Not by bossing him around like Pentecostals think they can do, for we have no authority over Satan (**Jude 8-9** “*Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. ⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*”). Instead, we resist Satan by standing firm in the faith of Jesus Christ, trusting Him for He alone has power over Satan.

“**knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world**” - An encouragement to remain firm in the faith is the knowledge that we are not the only ones enduring persecutions for other Christians are also suffering for their faith. If they are remaining faithful then we are encouraged to remain faithful as well.

¹⁰ But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. ¹¹ To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

“**But the God of all grace...make you perfect** [complete; equipped], **stablish** [stabilize], **strengthen, settle** [lay a foundation] **you**” - Peter expresses his desire that the “God of all grace” (the One from Whom all grace comes) would supply that grace to his readers in four ways. His prayer is that God would make them “perfect” (not lacking in anything), stabilize and strengthen them in their faith, and place them on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

“**who hath called** [to call by name; invite] **us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus**” - Peter further describes God as the One Who has invited us by name into His eternal and glorious kingdom through Jesus Christ.

“**after that ye have suffered a while** [a short time or a small amount]” - The Greek word for “while” has the meaning of small or few, depending on the context of time or number. Peter is saying that his readers will have to suffer, but compared to eternity that suffering will only be for a short time or a small amount. He also says that the perfection, stabilization, strength, etc. come “after” we have suffered, implying that these things will not come into our life without the suffering. The suffering brings purification and maturity as Peter wrote in the previous chapter (1 Peter 4:12-14, 17, 19).

“**To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen**” - Peter closes his instructions with the same statement of praise for God that he used back in 1 Peter 4:11 at the end of the verse.

¹² By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

“**By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose** [reckon; judge], **I have written briefly**” - Commentators seem to agree that this is Silas who was Paul’s companion during his missionary journeys. Silvanus wrote the epistle down as Peter dictated it to him, as was a common practice in that day. When Peter says “I suppose” he’s not expressing doubt about Silvanus’ faithfulness but “in my judgment I’ve found him to be a faithful brother.” It is with the help of Silvanus that Peter has written this short letter to them.

“**exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand**” - Peter wants to encourage and strengthen their faith through his testimony that the faith in which they stand is the true grace of God and is worth the persecution they are enduring.

¹³ The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. ¹⁴ Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

“**The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you**” - Peter passes along greetings from the fellow believers in the church “at Babylon,” which is apparently where Peter is writing from. Most commentators believe that “Babylon” is a code name to hide his true location from persecutors that would read this letter and then come after those in the church at “Babylon.” Peter’s readers would understand what location Peter meant and most commentators believe that city was Rome, the center of idolatrous worship at the time.

“**and so doth Marcus my son**” - This may be John Mark, who was close to Peter and like a son to him. Most commentators believe that Mark got most (if not all) of his information for the Gospel of Mark from Peter.

“**Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity**” - Final instruction to express love to one another.

“**Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen**” - Peter expresses his desire for their peace and well being.