

1Peter 5:5

Humbled by Grace for More Grace

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 • Read 1Peter 5:5

Questions from the Scripture text: Who are the counterparts to these elders (v5)? How are they to relate to the elders? Whom else are they to treat as more important than one another? What clothing "outfits" them for this way of thinking and interacting? How does God treat those who do not have this clothing? What does He give those who do have it?

Why, and how, is humility so important in the life of the church? 1Peter 5:5 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In this verse of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **humility gives us a proper view of ourselves, proper incentive to follow God's authority structure for the church, and a proper view of how we are interacting with God.**

This verse tells us to be clothed with humility before encouraging us that God gives grace to those who do so. In the following verse, this will become a direct command, "humble yourselves." Humility, humility, humility. What a significant part of biblical church life this is! And we see why even in the wording of the instruction to submit to the elder.

The instruction to submit to our elders is so obvious that it ought not be necessary. After all, this is the way by which the Lord Jesus has opted to guide us: through elders who oversee us in the church. Case closed. And yet, the Lord urges submission to our elders in many places in the New Testament. That which should be obvious, we apparently need to hear over and over again. Doesn't this call us to watchfulness against an independent, or even rebellious, spirit in the church? Once we see that we are so prone to resist God's ordained authority structure, we begin to understand how urgently we need humility.

"Youngers" in v5 is actually "new ones." "Newbies," to use the vernacular. Part of the humility that the Spirit teaches us here is to consider ourselves as newbies before God, who are in need of shepherding and oversight. This was part of the wisdom of Solomon in 1Ki 3:7 and the fitness of Jeremiah for ministry in Jer 1:6-8. Either man might have had a high view of himself, but viewed himself instead as barely having made a beginning in the faith, hardly fit for their duties, like toddlers who do not know how to go out or come in or speak. A believer needs to be able to confess genuinely before God, "I am a toddler before You, not knowing how to go out or come in or speak." Such a spirit will go a long way toward facilitating a healthy body-life in the church.

When v5 continues the chapter by saying "all be submissive to one another," it is not erasing the authority structure that the Lord has put in place, but rather forbidding all self-superiority or self-serving. In order to reconcile this verse with what precedes it, we must maintain a recognition that the Lord gifts and graces particular men who are to be examples.

When the Spirit says, "all of you be submissive to one another," it is not a flattening of His work or denial that there is such a thing as a more mature believer. Rather, this verse makes plain that with maturity comes even more humility. Notice a couple things about the first instruction about humility. First, it's a passive command: "be clothed." It's a command that we can't even accomplish for ourselves. It has to be done to us. Second, it's clothing that comes from another and is put upon us. It's not something that we have the ability to produce from ourselves. How needy we are of grace, that even humility comes as clothing from Christ!

Thankfully, in God's wisdom, as He clothes us with more humility, He makes us more and more an object of His grace. "God gives grace to the humble." We don't become any less needy of grace as we grow, so He widens the channel of that grace as He "grows us down" in humility.

This should be alarming to anyone who feels superior in himself. The one who is conceited in himself or looks down upon others should worry that he is not actually being clothed by Christ. Even worse (!), he provokes God to enmity. For, "God resists the proud." A proud shepherd in the church is a living contradiction! All proud sheep are ripe for destruction. Dear reader, may the Chief Shepherd give you His own mind to consider others as better than yourself and to look out for their interests as much as for your own.

How does your being a "newbie" before God come out in your prayers? How does it come out in your habits? How does it shape your thoughts toward others and your interactions with them? Where can you get humility? How do your habits show that you are trying to get it?

Sample prayer: Lord, we praise You for humbling Yourself to take the form of a bondsman, be found in appearance as a man, and offer Yourself up to death upon the cross for us. And, we thank You that by Your Spirit, You take Your own humility and clothe us with it. O, give us grace that we might grow in humility and be, more and more, objects of Your grace! Glorify Yourself in Your church, which we ask in Your own Name, Lord Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP131 "My Heart Is Not Exalted, LORD" or TPH488 "May the Mind of Christ, My Savior"

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit hpwl.org/hah

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First Peter 5 again. And our portion. Today is this evening is just verse 5. Likewise you younger people submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you here.

Submissive to one another And be clothed with humility. For god, resists, the proud. But gives grace to the humble.

So we covered earlier, we were looking at versus one through four in The context of the passage as a whole and the Letter, as a whole. That the lord jesus has come on a recovery mission. We had gone astray. But he came and gave himself. In order to restore us to him and return us.

To the shepherd and overseer. Of our souls. Because the one who has come now as The shepherd to lay down his life for the sheep. As the one whose glory we had despised. When choosing instead the glory of the creature became Um, As it were descended from the devil.

And either you will believe in the lord, jesus christ and be The seed of the woman who are the children of god, Or you will remain in the first atom. But the lord jesus. Who thus has come and given himself and secured glory for us. And now is bringing us to glory.

We noted. Brings us to glory in part. By means that he uses on earth, including Shepherds and overseers, who are also sheep. Who are also sinners. Who do not have a glory of their own, their suffering is not a toning. It imitates Christ. It doesn't fellowship with christ, but it doesn't do the same thing.

That Christ's suffering does. And so, it's often unpleasant. Just like we're thinking about the suffering of the overseers, in the church, the shepherds and the church, the elders, the pastors. And it's unpleasant to shepherd. Sinful sheep. It's also quite unpleasant to be shepherded. By sinful sheep. Because that's what pastors and overseers are.

And yet, if we are following the Lord Jesus, and his instruction in the word, those who are the shepherds in the church are such? Because God has saved them by grace. And he's done a work of sanctification in them that has matured them. To the point that they are examples.

Onto the flock, he's blessed them. The way they shepherd, their wife and their marriage. The way they separate their children. In the home. And then, The Lord Jesus says, this is how you can recognize Him. He has gifted and called and helped by his spirit, not just for his wife.

Although surely, she's happy to have a godly husband. And not just for his children although shortly, they are glad to have a godly father. Put all the blessing. Of a congregation. That has faithful. Holy. Men. As elders. Who are mature? But even with those who are faithful and mature, Those who are immature are less likely, to recognize it.

Since the first thing, we need to see here. Is that all of us are to consider ourselves? Newbies. To our elders. Likewise you youngers, he says, Now, it's a word that can be used of those who are of less years. But the elders being described here are not those who are of Of necessarily of many years.

Or not, just of many years. And so it takes humility to recognize that I need the help. That I need to be shepherded that I need to be overseen. And so, He starts to give us that humility, even before he says be clothed with it even before he um, Even before he quotes from the proverb for us.

He requires humility. Because, you know, he means you And you can't say to God. Are you calling me that? That's what we would do to one another. If someone else had called us, A newbie, her a neophyte. But he says, you youngers submit yourselves to your elders. And then this all be submissive to one another Reminds the elders that they too are.

Still newbies in the Lord. Yes they are mature and the Lord has gifted and graced and called them to a ministry. But each of them is to submit to the other elders as well. And not only that. But in this submission, we submit ourselves to whatever the Lord has established in his church.

Which means, you know, the elder, Can maybe give you counsel you can command you to be modest the Lord does that. And he can give you counsel on modesty. And in the order of the orderliness of the church, they can even have standards. For modesty. The elder, can't tell you what to wear.

Because the Bible doesn't tell you what to wear. He's not your husband. Is not your father. And so we submit to one another in the roles that God has assigned to us. Well, this also means That we submit to one another whenever we sing God's word, that's why it's so important.

To sing God's word. Because when we sing in the assembly, and the Lord's to assemblies, I have to submit to Sophia. And to baby's death. And tour Miss Lottie. Even though all of them combined don't have a quarter of my ears, But I have to submit to them. Because it's the word of God.

They're singing. And the Lord addresses me with that word. Instructing me to let it penetrate that he gave us to sing and worship. So that his word would penetrate it, it would dwell in me richly. And his spirit who uses his word and attends his word with his power.

Would fill me. Now, nobody ever says. I don't like having the word of Christ's dwelling me richly and being filled with the Holy Spirit. But a lot of people say, I don't like to submit to others. Well, we submit to one another When we sing, we submit to one another.

When we come and we speak the truth and love that's one of the reasons why the elders ministry is so important in Ephesians 4, right? Because Jesus gave apostles and prophets and evangelists by whom we have, received the Bible But also pastor teachers to teach us the Bible, why?

So that we wouldn't be tossed to and fro in doctrine and not just so that we wouldn't be wishy-washy and what we believe. But because every believer also has a speaking ministry. It is the truth that we are to speak and love to one another. Every joint supplies something.

If you've ever had a dislocated joint, or a broken joint or bruised joint, You know how the entire body. Can suddenly be debilitated if the joint is out of location. And if that joint is supposed to be speaking, And if what they're supposed to be speaking is truth. And if the truth that they're supposed to be speaking is in love.

While they better have shepherds for that joint because Jesus said, this is how he gets joints. In place. For the part that they have in the body. But then when that weakest one of the joints, That has been stabilized by the doctrine of the shepherds and overseers and elders.

Is speaking the truth to another member in the body. What is that member supposed to do? Don't tell me what to know. Submit to one another. And that requires humility. That works best if we listen to how God addresses us. When we say, yes. Before God, I'm still a newbie.

But he gives his word and he's given elders to teach that word. So that we might all speak it to one another. Then he humbles us further. Doesn't just say yes, all of you submit. Be submissive to one another. He says be clothed. With humility. He doesn't say clothe yourselves with humility.

That would be a reflexive verb. He says, be clothed with humility. That's a passive command. In other words, we have to do it. But we cannot do it. Humility doesn't come. Merely by effort. Certainly there is a discipline using the word and using the means looking to God in prayer.

But why? Because he's the one who has to give it. It's humiliating to realize you can't even humble yourself. You have to be clothed with humility. It comes from someone else and it comes by someone else's power. And praise God, that it does. Exactly right Sophia. It's God's power.

Because you and I don't have humility in ourselves and if we did We are so wretched that we would start being proud of being humble. But if you know that the humility didn't come from you, As someone else's clothing. And that you didn't even put it on yourself, You had to be clothed with humility.

You know, Sophia has been dressing herself for a long time. But none of us. Spiritually are so grown up, associates. We need someone else to dress us. Isn't that humbling? Where newbies? Who can't dress ourselves. To feel like Solomon. When he's been made king and he prays, Yeah, I'm like a toddler.

I don't know how to go out and come in. Order. Jeremiah It's called to be a prophet to God's people and he says, I don't know how to speak. Well. The Lord.

Humbles us as a good thing that he does. Because if he didn't, we would continue to have him as an enemy.

It's the easiest way. To make god an enemy. Just be proud. Isn't that how the enemy became the enemy in the first place? God, resists, the proud. But he gives grace to the humble. And so you say oh i don't like being told i'm a newbie and i don't like submitting to others and i don't like being told that i can't even give myself the humility that i need.

But here is something to like, The reason that god is humbling us, Is because that's exactly the sort of person. Whom he fits for his grace. To whom he gives that grace. Isn't that what we want? To be a people who receive blessing that we don't deserve. By grace, we are saved.

Not by works. Don't we want to be a people? In whose weakness. God's strength is displayed. My grace is sufficient for you. For my strength is made perfect in weakness. And so the church. Want to be a humbling place for everyone. Because, That is the way by which god has given a given to us.

To have it be a place of grace. That's remember that not only And the congregation. But In our home, with one another. Be clothed with humility when you find yourself. At odds, with one another. Whether looking down. Or irritated that you feel looked down upon. They're being gruff with one another.

Remember that you are in danger. Of provoking god as your enemy. But that god can be your help even to get you out of the danger. And you can ask him to clothe you. With his humility. Let's pray.

Lord jesus. We are amazed that you. For whom. Equality with god was not something to be grasped. For from everlasting, two everlasting. You are God? And you are the radiance of the glory. Of the father. The only begotten, the eternally. Begotten, the beloved The delight. From everlasting to everlasting with the spirit with the father.

You live and reign. And we bless your name for it as the king of kings. And the lord of lords. And we marvel that you. Displayed yourself as that lord of glory. Not only by taking the form of a slave and Being found as a man. But, giving yourself.

To be crucified. Because what? I Could not see your ear could not hear. Or the heart of man. Could not devise. You had already devised. And if they had known, they would not have crucified you. And so, we thank you that you are the one. Whose mind, we now may seek to have in ourselves.

Give us to have The same mind in us, that was in you. Give us to prefer others to ourselves. Give us to look out, not only to our own interests. But to the interests of others. And i pray lord for Myself my wife. My children. My brother-in-law that you would That you would give to us to know that it is your mighty hand.

Under which we are humbled. And therefore also, Your mighty hand upon which we are cast. And all of our cares. So help us, we pray in jesus name. Amen.