

A Believer's Service

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Date: 15 January 2012

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[0:00] Well, this morning we're going to be in 1 Peter chapter 5, and so here we are, the final chapter of 1 Peter.

Did you think we'd ever make it? And I would also add to that the final message in this series of messages or sermons through 1 Peter.

The theme throughout the letter, I shouldn't have to tell you, you surely should know, because I have certainly tried to emphasize the theme.

And that's the way to preach God's Word. You don't come up with your own theme when you approach any particular text. You look for the theme. And so clearly the theme throughout the letter has been Christian persecution, and it's never, ever strayed very far from that, from the subject of Christian persecution.

And yet having said that, I would say to you that woven into the fabric, as it were, of the letter, we have some other very rich subjects.

[1:24] Subjects that are filled with significance. In fact, we could review what we've seen in this marvelous letter with following outline very quickly.

Chapter 1, clearly, though the subject of persecution is woven into it, the subject is the believer's salvation.

That's chapter 1 of 1 Peter. In fact, I mentioned a number of times how interesting that Peter's first answer to persecution is a doctrinal lesson on salvation.

That is, to remind us of who we are and what we have in Christ. Chapter 2, and really carrying on through to about midway through chapter 3, the subject is the believer's submission.

Submission in light of persecution. Submission. And then chapter 3, verse 13, and all the way through to the end of chapter 4, and we finished this up last week, the believer's suffering, though suffering, of course, is a reoccurring theme throughout the letter.

[2:33] In this block of the letter, Peter emphasizes even more strongly this subject. Suffering. And then now here in chapter 5, we have the believer's service.

Service. Not service in the sense of every aspect of it, of our service. Service. The service in the sense of humility.

That is, serving God, serving one another within the body of Christ, and to do that with humility.

And so, Peter concludes his letter with the focus being the church itself. That is, internally. And so, let's look at the text.

In fact, it's the entire last chapter, starting with verse 1. The elders who are among you I exhort. I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed.

[3:41] Shepherd. Here's his exhortation. Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers. Not by compulsion, but willingly.

Not by or for dishonest gain, but eagerly. Nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of glory that does not fade away. Likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders.

Yes, all of you. Be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility. For God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him. For he cares for you.

[4:41] Be sober. Be vigilant. Because your adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him. Steadfast in the faith.

Knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who calls us to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

To him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. And then Peter concludes kind of with this, by Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him, I have written to you briefly.

That is, Silvanus was kind of his secretary and wrote the letter for him as Paul dictated. Exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

She who is in Babylon elect together with you. He is speaking there of the church in Rome. And he is kind of using a code word so they would not know.

[5:51] If the enemy confiscated the letter, would not know where he was writing from. Greet you, and so does Mark, my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love.

A holy kiss. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen. Alright, so there you have the final chapter. Now, I've got quite a bit of ground to cover this morning, so let's get right on into it.

To set this up, chapter 5, we really need to go back to the final verse of chapter 4. And the final verse of chapter 4 says, and you can see it there for yourself, Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to him in doing good.

That's what Peter says, or doing what is right, if you have that in your translation. As to a faithful creator. And so, it is the subject of doing good, or doing what is right, that Peter now takes up here and expands upon here in chapter 5.

Now, how do we know this? Well, we know it because of the word, therefore, at the beginning of chapter 5, there in verse 4. And you might be thinking, well, I don't see that in my translation of the Bible.

[7:11] In fact, Pastor, you didn't even read the word, therefore, when you read the passage a moment ago. Well, it's not in the King James or New King James Version, but it does appear in some other versions, and it really belongs there, because it is in the Greek text.

And so, then, therefore, connects us to what he said in chapter 4. And now we move forward. And so, we know, then, chapter 5 tells us what Peter has in mind here.

What he has in mind when he exhorts us to do good, to do what is right. And so, here is the main idea of chapter 5. Peter is saying, even though it is God's will that you suffer persecution for your faith.

That's what he told us in chapter 4. That being true, then, here is what I want you to do. Continue to serve one another in the church with humility.

That's the idea of chapter 5. Now, Peter is not going to get into every aspect. Again, not every aspect of serving. He is not going to detail all of that. There are a lot of things that God wants us to do in the church, within the body of the church, how we are to serve the Lord, a lot of various features of that.

[8:26] And Peter is not going to get into all of that. But he is going to cover three aspects of service, strongly connected to this idea of humility.

So, that's how you ought to get this humble service. Our service of humility within the body of Christ. So, he is going to give us three aspects of this as we look down through chapter 5.

First of all, Peter says to every one of us here, serve with the flock in mind.

That's number one. Humbly serve, or serve with humility, with the flock in mind.

And so, verses 1 through 7, in those verses, Peter addresses this idea, to serve with the flock in mind. And in those seven verses, he first addresses the shepherds of the flock.

[9:29] And then he's going to address the sheep of the flock. It's just very clear, very clear outline of verses 1 through 7. He addresses the shepherds of the flock, and then the sheep of the flock.

Now, the flock is, of course, the church. All right? Not the church in any universal sense, but the church in a local sense.

The church, the flock. He could say Highland Park Baptist Church. We are the flock of God in the sense of the local assembly of the body of Christ.

That's what we are. All right? So, he is addressing the flock, the church, the local body of Christ, and he is addressing the shepherds first, and then the sheep of that flock.

All right? So, let's see what he says about the shepherds. And I kind of approach this with a lot of anxiety and intrepidation, because this is talking about me up here.

[10:30] And so, the focus is your pastor in these passages, but he's addressing you for you to know how the shepherds are to conduct themselves within the local body of Christ.

And he addresses us, first of all, as elders. As elders. And he says, the elders who are among you, elders, it's the word presbyteros.

We get our word presbyter from it, or presbytery, or presbyterian. You know, all that comes from this word presbyteros. By the way, it is also used in the Bible, in fact, used a little bit later in this particular passage, to refer to elderly people.

The presbyteros, the elder ones within the body of Christ. But here, when he says the elders, presbyteros, he's using the term in the strict official sense.

He is addressing the leaders of the church, the pastors of the church. And he says, those elders who are among you, that is, in your local body, in your local church, I exhort.

[11:47] He's exhorting the elders that are among you. And the elders that are among you right here. And so Peter is speaking of, and directly to, the shepherds, or the local church pastors, slash elders.

elders. And the word is in the plural, which is the case almost always when you find it in the Bible. And so, usually, in the early New Testament church, and in some churches today, churches, had multiple elders.

All right? So he's addressing the elders. And then Peter continues. He says, I, who am a fellow elder. And here, Peter is using that in the sense of his, his apostleship.

He's an apostle. And so he's not an elder, necessarily, in the local church, but he's an elder in the sense of the church as a whole. By virtue of the fact that he's an apostle.

All right? And so he says, I have authority to speak to you. I, too, am an elder. But I'm an elder in a broader sense, as all the apostles were. Elders of the church, universal in that sense.

[12:57] And he goes on to kind of qualify that. And he says, I, by the way, was a witness of the sufferings of Christ. And he was, wasn't he? Peter was a witness, an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ.

In fact, one of the qualifications for an apostle is to be, was to be, is to be an eyewitness. That's why we don't have any more apostles today. Peter was an apostle in that he was an eyewitness, eyewitness of the life of Christ, the sufferings of Christ.

But Peter adds another thing to it that gave him the authority to speak to shepherds in this way. He said, I was a partaker of, also a partaker of the glory, that will be revealed.

Now, how is Peter a partaker of the glory that will be revealed? Well, you can find that at the transfiguration. Peter, James, and John were invited to be with Jesus, go up to the mountain.

And there they met, of course, and Jesus was transfigured before them. That is his true, at least, I think, somewhat veiled glory, was brought to the outside, so they saw him for who he really was and is.

[14:13] He was transfigured before them. And so, Peter could say, I was a witness, a partaker of the glory, that, by the way, will one day be revealed to all of us, when Jesus comes the second time.

All right, so, now he qualifies himself. And now, he's saying, he's speaking to elders. He is exhorting the elders, the shepherds, of the church.

And by the way, I have chosen the word shepherd, for a reason. And I get that from verse 2, as we kind of move forward. He says, to the elders, shepherd, the flock of God, which is among you.

Shepherd them. Now, actually, there are, by the way, three words, three words in the Bible, that refer to the office of pastor.

There is, as I've already mentioned, presbyteros, and it is almost always translated elder. There is also poimenos, and that is almost always translated shepherd.

[15:18] In some translations, they'll use the word pastor. In fact, it is from this title, this word, that we get our word pastor. Pastoral. Shepherd.

Alright, so there is presbyteros, poimenos, and then the third one is episkopos. Now, I know you're not going to remember all these Greek words, though some of them might sound a little familiar to you, as I've already mentioned.

Presbyteros, presbyter, and then episkopos, episkopal, episkopalian. That's where those words come from. And that word is almost always translated bishop.

Bishop. Alright, so there are three terms, three words, that are used to refer to the same office. there is elder, pastor, or shepherd.

There is bishop, or overseer. And you might have noticed in your copy of God's Word here in chapter 5, you have overseer there too, don't you?

[16:20] And so all three words appear in chapter 5, 1 Peter chapter 5, all three. And all three appear in some other passages in the Bible, and so the words are used interchangeably to speak of the same office within the church.

Now, what does Peter say to you about me? I put it in those terms. That's what we have here. What is he saying to you about your pastor, your elders?

Three things. He first identifies your pastor's role in the church. And it's a pretty important one.

What is the pastor's role in the church? Peter says, it is to shepherd the flock of God.

Poimenos, to shepherd. Now, I know the King James has the word feed, and that is true, but the better translation would be shepherd, the more broader term.

[17:28] Feed might suggest, and has led some to believe that the pastor's only duty, only role is just to simply preach and teach. There's more than that. His role is shepherd.

To shepherd the flock of God. And then he adds this other qualification, serving as overseers. And contrary to what some believe it does not mean, to rule over you.

All right? It's to oversee. And it's put in close connection with the term shepherd. Shepherd the flock of God. God serving as overseers of the flock.

And so, really, it's quite simple. The image is quite simple. The pastor is to do what an actual shepherd does for his flock.

And it's manifold, isn't it? Watching over the flock, over the sheep. Certainly feeding the sheep.

[18:29] That is, feeding them with God's word. It is certainly leading the sheep. That's included in that. That's what a shepherd does. He leads the flock.

Leads them in the right way. With the God that I would do that. So, watching the sheep, feeding the sheep, leading the sheep, protecting the sheep.

That was the duty, the role of the shepherd. Even today. To protect the sheep from the wolves. To lay down his life, if called upon, for the sheep.

That's why a shepherd is who he is. And he's not a hireling. The Bible says, because the hireling, when the hireling sees the wolf, he flees.

But the shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. Now, certainly that's a description, it's meant to be a description of the Lord Jesus Christ. But as an under-shepherd, that is a description of me as well.

[19:27] That's what the shepherd is to do. Watching and feeding and leading and protecting and also nursing the sheep. Shepherd has that responsibility as well.

Every night when the shepherd would lead his flock into the fold, into that kind of enclosure for the night, the shepherd would examine each of his sheep, one by one, to see how they were doing, to see if they were injured throughout the day, or see if they had parasites or anything else.

And so he, in a sense, nurses the sheep. The shepherd also rounds up the sheep when they go astray. Sometimes the flock, members of the flock do that.

And we're to round you up. And the shepherd is also responsible for disciplining the sheep when they go astray, when they disobey.

All of these together define the role of the poimenos, the shepherd, the piskopos, the overseer of the flock.

[20:32] That's his role. That's my role. Then he says second, or describes his responsibility. His responsibility, or the weight of that responsibility, yes, more technically.

And the pastor obviously has a great responsibility, doesn't he? Tremendous responsibility when performing his God-given role. And Peter mentions three here in kind of an interesting way.

The elder is to shepherd the flock, by the way, the flock of God. That is, you're not my flock. You don't belong to me.

You belong to the Lord. You belong to Him. And so the elder is to shepherd the flock of God, oversee the flock of God. And He's to do it, number one, willingly, not reluctantly.

He's to do it willingly, not reluctantly. Peter says, not by compulsion, but willingly. Or to put it another way, in other terms, not by constraint, or because you have to do it.

[21:49] Not because you have to. You have to do it willingly, voluntarily. Now the question in my mind is, why would anybody take on the responsibility, the pastorate, out of compulsion, out of constraint?

Why would anybody, anybody who's ever been a pastor, knows, Brother Ralph, that if you weren't called to it, and didn't have the willingness to do it, then why would you want to do it?

Why would anybody want to do this? So what's Peter talking about? Well, he could be, though I don't think he is, he could be referring to the pressure of peers. Sometimes, men get into the ministry because they've been pressured into it.

I tell you, people can really put pressure on you. I mean, all you have to do, you know, is kind of be pretty good at God's Word, you know, kind of know a little bit more than maybe the average man in the church, and a pretty good communicator of it, teacher of it, and so forth, and right off, there are people in the church early on in your life as a young man saying, you know, I think God's calling you to the ministry.

Like, you need to get in the ministry. You should be preaching. You should be a pastor. And no one ever goes into the pastor because of the call of man. And so, in that sense, you are doing it because you have to.

[23 : 17] Because you're compelled or constrained by the pressure of peers. But I don't think that's what Peter is getting at here because, remember again, the theme, the overriding theme of this entire letter is persecution and resulting suffering that goes along with that.

And so, it's not the pressure of peers. But the press of persecution. And really, it has kind of the opposite meaning.

He's not addressing those who are in the ministry but they shouldn't be. He's addressing those who are in the ministry but because of persecution and the press of persecution, they are attempted to abandon it.

And they're only staying in it because they feel like they have to. They have to because the call of God is upon their life. In kind of an opposite way, He is addressing the shepherd saying, I know, you know, things are getting tough for you and now you're kind of operating in the flesh now.

You'd like to check out. You'd like to. You just quit. I'd like to go find something else to do. And trust me. Trust me. I have entertained that thought many a time in my ministry.

[24 : 33] Not because of Christian persecution necessarily but because the ministry is sometimes very hard. And so a pastor can, if he's not careful, and keep the right perspective, he can slip into a mode where he's just doing it because he has to.

Like a pastor I heard one time who had pastored a church for nearly 40 years and someone asked him, how in the world could you pastor the same church for 40 years?

And he said, well, I just kept going back. Just kept going back. Well, I understood and understand what he means. But Peter's saying, don't ever pastor the church with this kind of idea, this kind of mentality.

You're doing it because you're compelled to. You just have to do it. Not because you want to. Willingly. Voluntarily.

Then he mentions a second thing. Shepherds are to shepherd their church. Pastors are to shepherd their church eagerly. Not selfishly.

[25 : 48] He says, not for dishonest gain, but eagerly. Not for dishonest gain. Now, some of you have a King James and you have that old antiquated English and there says filthy lucre.

What in the world is filthy lucre? Well, I think we know, don't we? It's dishonest. That a man would be in the pastorate and be leading a flock just simply for what he can get out of it.

Financially. It really includes all of it. Not just simply dishonest things that he would actually be robbing from the church. And that certainly has happened many times before, hasn't it, in the church.

In fact, in the church today, that's unforgivable. A man can go out and spend time with prostitutes and the church will forgive him, but you take their money and you're out of there, bud.

But see, listen, we're not to be in the church, serving the church, pastoring, leading the church for personal gain. That's the idea here.

[27 : 01] Personal profit is never to be a motive for doing the work of an elder at all. In fact, in most cases, it doesn't work out that way anyway. You know, like I'm convinced that some churches have this motto or this prayer, Lord, you keep him humble and we'll keep him poor.

We'll just make sure of that. Now, that's not you. I'm not talking about you. Okay? But this is not the motive for pastoring the church, for shepherding the church.

We're to do it eagerly, not selfishly. And then he mentions a third thing, humbly, not arrogantly. Humbly, not arrogantly.

He says, nor as being lords over those entrusted to you by being examples to the flock. Now, this is a tall order. Probably the hardest thing.

The phrase, being lords over, really comes from one word in the Greek text. And it means, basically means, to domineer.

[28:08] To domineer. That is, to actually rule the church with a heavy hand. That the pastor would approach his ministry, his pastorate, with the idea to his congregation that it's either my way or no way or the highway.

Thank you. That's not the way to lead. This is not what the pastor is to do. We're to lead humbly, not arrogantly.

In fact, in Matthew chapter 20, I take Jesus' words there. In Matthew chapter 20, verse 25, you can jot it down or if you can get there fast enough, you can read along with me.

But Jesus really gives a pastoral model here. And he says, he's speaking to his disciples, you know, he said, that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them.

That's, by the way, the same word that appears here in 1 Peter chapter 5. The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and those who are great exercise authority over them, dominion over them.

[29:28] Yet, it shall not be so among you. But whoever desires to become great among you, whoever desires to be in a place of leadership in the church, let him be your servant.

And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave. Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.

That's a model for the pastorate. Well, there's much more that Jesus is saying there. But what a model. And I think that's what Peter has in mind here.

See, elders, pastors, shepherds, overseers, whatever term, are to humble themselves, ourselves. were to lead humbly, to be examples, he said.

By the way, the word there is tupas. We get our word type from this word examples. And so, pastors, if it would be a type of something or someone more specifically, who would that be?

[30:48] It would be Jesus. pastors are to typify, exemplify the Lord Jesus Christ.

All right, so his role, his responsibility, and third, his reward. There is a reward here. And it's a great one. And you might notice right off, it's not a reward for this life necessarily.

Though I can tell you that there are many rewards that God is gracious to give pastors in this life.

But there is his reward. He says in verse 4, and when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of glory that does not fade away.

What a tremendous reward. Now, the words chief shepherd, of course, is a reference to Jesus. It's just one word in the text. And by the way, the word shepherd is the same word that we've already had.

When Peter said shepherd the flock, it's the same word, poimenos. And yet there's a word added to the front of it. And in English, we would pronounce it arch, or ark, as in archbishop, or archangel, compound word.

[32:10] And so, really, literally, this is arch shepherd. In a reference to Jesus. And every version of the Bible that I consulted, renders a chief shepherd with two words, chief shepherd.

And Jesus, of course, is the chief shepherd. He's the arch shepherd. And so, what does that make me? The under shepherd. I'm the under shepherd of his flock.

And so, I am subordinate, always to place myself subordinate to him, to Jesus. Whether you're talking about this elder here, or any of our elders in our church.

We're subordinate to the chief shepherd, the over shepherd, the arch shepherd of the church. You see. And, you know, the chief shepherd shall appear one day.

That is, the chief shepherd is coming again. He's coming. He's coming. That's Jesus, of course.

And when He comes, faithful pastors of the Lord's flock will receive a crown of glory that does not fade away.

[33:23] Now, I don't know what that crown is going to look like. The crown of glory suggests that it will be a reflection of the greater glory of God Himself.

And what that means, what that looks like, I don't have any idea. It never fades away. And I got thinking about that, you know, I believe wholeheartedly that Brother Arnold Long, you saw the little obituary in the bulletin this morning, and some of you don't remember him.

I don't know him. I didn't know him. Past pastor of this church, wonderful man of God, as I've heard from many of you.

him. And no doubt, Brother Arnold Long, either he's already received his crown of glory, or he's going to get it. I don't know exactly when that's to be done.

Peter says, at his coming. But Brother Arnold Long, without a doubt, shepherded this church willingly, not reluctantly. He shepherded this church eagerly, certainly not selfishly.

[34:35] In fact, I've heard that he refused even to get any kind of raises in his salary during those years when the church was really having some tough time financially.

Great man of God. He didn't pastor here selfishly, but he did passionately, humbly, Certainly not arrogantly. And he has or will receive a crown of glory that one day, as all pastors, one day he'll have the great privilege to lay that crown at Jesus' feast and give to him.

Alright, so Peter's talking about serving with the flock in mind. And he addresses the shepherds of the Lord's flock and then he addresses the sheep.

He doesn't want to leave you out. He addresses the sheep of the Lord's flock. Look at verse 5.

Likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders.

Now, the word younger is from a certain word in the Greek that means, usually translated new.

Neos, new. And yet, it's quite right to translate the young or younger and that's the idea here.

[36:00] but the word is in the masculine form. I need to make this qualification because I think it's clear from the text. It's in the masculine form and so it's probably not correct to translate this younger people in the generic sense.

The word people in the text is supplied. It's not in the original text. It's supplied. It really doesn't belong there. It really ought to be men. The younger men in the church is the idea here.

And these young men in the church, Peter says, must humbly submit to the wisdom and counsel of their elders in the church.

And here's the second use of the word presbyteros and it is not specifically a reference to the office of elder. It's included.

They're included in it, but it is a reference to the older men in the church. The elders. The hopefully more mature.

[37:19] Spiritually mature. More versed in God's word. And so therefore able to give leadership and counsel and to impart wisdom, godly wisdom, to the younger men in the church.

That's the idea here. And so elders are not to act as lords over their congregations and likewise younger men in the church are not to despise the elders, to disrespect them, and to disrespect their counsel just because they're old guys.

Not to disrespect their wisdom and treat it as unimportant or old school. just kind of dismiss it as well, that's old stuff.

You know, they've had a lot more of their gray matter destroyed over the years and so they're not thinking as alertly as I am and besides nobody can teach me anything.

I already know everything. Well, that's ridiculous. And so really the old expression should hold true.

Respect your elders. Respect your elders.

[38:48] And specifically directed toward the younger men in the church. In fact, it applies to me as a younger man.

I still kind of like to consider myself as a younger man. And there are in this church older men. wiser than I.

Have more experience under the belt. Have a wisdom that I have not yet obtained because it comes with years.

And I tell you, I have a great respect for the counsel of older men in our church. And we are all to do that, even though Paul is specifically addressing young men.

And now he doesn't want to leave you out, all of us out, because he continues, doesn't he? He says, yes, all of you. Here's where everybody's included. I know you were feeling left out, ladies, and younger women.

[39:58] But you're all included. Yes, all of you do what? Be submissive to one another. We're to be submissive to one another. And this is a tremendous expression.

Be clothed with humility. That is rich with imagery there. Even though it's somewhat lost on us and our culture, because the idea here is a scarf or towel that is worn by a slave or servant.

And he's saying to all of us that we are to gird ourselves, wrap ourselves with the towel of a servant in our relationship to one another.

And I think very clearly Peter had in mind, he was remembering when Jesus stood there in John 13 and girded himself with a towel and he took a basin of water and he went to each one of the apostles, even Judas, by the way, and washed their feet.

The most humble of acts. It is even more humbling to the one having his or her feet washed. washed. How many of you would want to take your shoes and socks off here this morning and have your feet washed?

[41 : 39] I wouldn't want anybody to even look at my feet. It's a thing of humility. And we're to take the role of Jesus as he exemplified it.

He said, here is the example for you. What I've done for you, you do likewise for one another. Now, he's not putting another ordinance on the church.

I do not believe that's the case here. So that's why we don't have a third ordinance in Baptist churches. Foot washing. Not that I'm against it.

Not that it ought not to be done sometimes as an act of humility. But it's not an ordinance. What Jesus is doing is I'm giving you an example of a greater spiritual lesson. That you are to be that submissive, that humble toward one another.

That as Paul said in another place, to esteem all others better than yourself. And this is what Peter is telling us.

[42 : 46] The reason that we ought to do that, ought to relate to one another in that way, he says very clearly, because God resists the proud. God, but he gives grace to the humble.

And here he's quoting Proverbs 3.34, and it means literally that God sets himself against those who are full of pride.

Those who elevate themselves above others. He says God's against you. In fact, a good image of this would be kind of the football image.

And here is that running back with the ball, and he's running, and here comes his defender, or his potential tackler, and he puts out his arm to stiff arm him, to resist him.

Now, they use other techniques as well, but that's the idea. If you begin to operate according to pride, and you resent others within the body of Christ, do not respect what God might be saying through them to you, you have no regard for any counsel from others, and you do not care about the needs of others because you are above them, then God's against you.

[44 : 08] He's against you. That's the worst possible place for anyone to be on the other side where God's against you.

He sets himself against you. God resists the proud, but He gives, and by the way, that verb gives is in a certain form that means it's an ongoing continuous action.

He gives and He gives and He gives more and more and more grace to the humble. To the humble. And the result is also reward. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time. Lift you up in due time.

He'll do the lifting up. He'll do the promoting. He'll do the rewarding. He'll do that in His time and due time. And then He gives us these instructions, casting all your cares.

[45 : 10] because you know, sometimes it's difficult to be submissive within the body because some people are actually trying to lord over you.

Aren't they? It's not always a two-way street. And by the way, Peter gives no qualification for this submission. He's not saying you submit to one another, that is at least to those who are submissive to you and treat you right.

Sometimes you're not going to be treated right. And so that's why Peter says cast all your cares, your anxieties about this. Just cast all those on God.

Why? Because He cares for you. By the way, that's a different word for care and it means that God is intensely interested in you.

Individually. He's intensely interested in you. So you can cast all your cares on Him. You might be thinking sometimes, well, you know, who am I?

[46 : 26] I'm just one person and my anxieties, what are those to God? These little petty things, little minor things, little, you know, things in my life.

I mean, God's certainly not. I mean, He's the great God of the universe. Why would He be interested in that? Well, God is interested in anything you're interested in. And anything that bothers

you bothers God.

God is intensely interested in you. So that's the result, the reward. All right, let's move on. Because we need to serve with the flock in mind.

Second, serve with the foe in mind. He's here in the church too. Now, I'm not talking about any person here.

I'm talking about Satan, the devil. And we're to serve with him in mind. Look at what he says there in verses 8 and 9.

[47 : 32] And I really like the English standard version here, so I'm going to kind of divert to that. Listen to it. Be sober minded. Be watchful.

Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him. Firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of sufferings are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

Now, there are three things very quickly that you ought to be concerned, you ought to concern yourselves about your foe. What you ought to be concerned about. Number one, you ought to realize that he's real.

Realize your foe. The devil or Satan or Lucifer, which is his proper name, he's real.

He's a real person. Not a person in the sense of human or flesh and blood, but he's a real being.

Satan is. And Peter uses the term devil.

[48 : 49] He's a devil. You know what the Greek word is there? It's diabolos. You ever heard that word before? in reference to Satan?

We get our word diabolical from this word, diabolos. And that's what Satan is. And that's what Peter is trying to tell us.

He's diabolical. He's real. He's a diabolical, malicious enemy of all of God's people. therefore, be sober minded.

That is, be spiritually alert. That is, base what you know about him on the word of God. Don't add all the other kind of stuff that you might see in the movies or hear.

Be spiritually alert, scripturally alert, sober minded. Don't be afraid of him. That's not the idea, but be watchful. Watchful.

[49 : 51] Alright, so first of all, you need to realize your foe. He's real. Second, you ought to recognize your foe. That is, what he desires, how he works. And what does our foe do? He slanders us.

He attacks us. Literally. He is, Peter says, our adversary, the devil. That is, he's against us at every point, in every possible way.

But it's more than that, because Peter goes on to use this imagery of a ferocious lion, and he likens the devil, diabolos, Satan, to a roaring lion.

He is always hungry, and he is always on the prowl, always on the hunt, and his desire is to devour you. Devour you.

And by the way, this is an interesting word. It means to swallow you whole. To gulp you down. And so his plan, his desire is not to wound you, to hurt you.

[50 : 58] It's to destroy you. I tell you, Satan's desire is that you be dead. That's what he wants. And so we need to recognize how he works in our lives.

So realize your foe, he's a real enemy. And recognize your foe, his desires, his desires, and then resist him. Resist your foe.

Verse 9, again, resist him. There it is, very clear. That is, stand against him. And to stand against him firm, with a firm footing.

That's what Peter says. That's what you're to do. Have an immovable stance against the devil, against Satan.

And where can you stand that firmly? Well, Peter says, in your faith. Literally, the word faith in the text is preceded by the definite article, the faith, and that's important.

[52 : 09] Stand firm in the faith of yours. What's the faith? The full revelation of God's word.

We have Jesus as our example. Jesus, when he was tempted by Satan, Jesus responded always with the word of God. Have you not heard?

God said. That's where we stand firmly. You better get to know God's word. And then we're to know that the same kinds of sufferings are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

That is, what you're dealing with is not unusual. So serve with the foe in mind. But now as I wrap this up, don't think too much about the devil. Okay?

That is, don't let your mind always be upon him. You know, like looking for a devil, behind every tree and under every rock. Because the third thing Peter tells us is to serve with the Father in mind.

[53:18] Serve with the Father in mind. Verses 10 and 11. And it's a doxology. A kind of praise God from whom all blessings flow kind of ending to this.

And we're to keep the Father in our mind. We're to consider some very important things about him. First we're to consider his grace. His grace.

But may the God of all grace. All grace. Now this is not a reference to saving grace here. Though he's the God of saving grace.

It's not a reference to eternal grace. So it's not a reference to past grace and future grace. grace, but it's a reference to the grace that is present. The grace that God gives us right now.

And that we must have every day. And so it's grace not for the sweet bye and bye, but for the nasty now and now. Serve with the Father in mind.

[54:25] Consider his grace. And then consider his goal for you. His goal. Who called us to his eternal glory by or in Christ Jesus after you've suffered a while.

I'm sorry that's added there, but that's the way it is. After you've suffered a while. For what reason? To perfect, establish, strengthen, to settle you, that is to establish you.

The goal is to conform you to the very life of Christ himself. 1 John 2:2 Beloved, now we are children of God and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when he is revealed, the Lord is revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

And so God accomplishes this through suffering for a while. It's going to come. And he does that to perfect us, to establish us, to strengthen us, to settle you, to establish you.

And that is the goal of our Father. And then finally, consider his glory. Consider his glory.

[55:40] To him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. God has everything in this universe under his absolute sovereign and irresistible control.

God has never relinquished any of that. He's sovereign. Keep that always in your mind when you are serving him in this life and in this journey.

Have the Father in mind. Thank you.