

Day 189, 1 Peter 5

by David Servant

The sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine shepherding, resisting Satan, and trusting in God's care, as seen in 1 Peter 5.

Scripture: Acts 4:13, Romans 8:28, 1 Peter 5:1-13

Topics: "Pastoral Ministry", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

David Servant discusses the debate among modern biblical scholars regarding the authorship of Peter's epistle, emphasizing Peter's growth in communication skills during his 35-year career in public speaking. He highlights the pastoral responsibilities outlined by Peter for elders, contrasting the simple, interactive meetings of early pastors with the roles of modern-day pastors. Servant warns against manipulative pastors and encourages genuine shepherds who serve their flocks faithfully, reminding them of the future reward awaiting them. He emphasizes the importance of casting all worries upon the Lord, resisting the schemes of Satan, and finding strength in faith during times of persecution, knowing that God works all things for the good of His people.

Transcript

Some modern biblical scholars debate if Peter is actually the author of this epistle. They doubt that an unlearned fisherman could write in such an urbane, cultured style of Greek. They seem to forget that Peter retired as a fisherman about 35 years earlier to embark in a career of public speaking! Is it possible that Peter learned some things about communication during 35 years of practice? May I also mention that even from the outset of Peter's new career, learned men were amazed at his speaking ability since he was "uneducated and untrained" (Acts 4:13). The Holy Spirit is a good helper!

Incidentally, if Peter didn't write this epistle, then we ought to rip it from our Bibles, as the person who did write it was a liar who claimed to be the same Peter who witnessed Christ's sufferings.

Today's chapter begins with instructions to elders regarding their shepherding responsibilities (5:1-2), so they are instructions to pastors/elders/overseers. Remember that there wasn't a single pastor/elder/overseer to whom Peter wrote whose ministry was like that of most modern pastors. Those whom Peter addressed did not prepare weekly sermons or conduct services in special church buildings. They did not direct worship teams or Sunday school teachers, or oversee a staff consisting of assistant pastors, youth pastors and children's ministers, and so on. They simply disciplined little flocks that met in houses for participatory and interactive meetings. Therefore, such pastors could actually be "examples to

the flock" (5:3), something that is impossible for most modern pastors, whose interaction with their congregations usually amounts to nothing more than standing in front of them for an hour on Sundays and shaking their hands as they exit the sanctuary. Only those pastors with little flocks have the potential to teach their flocks by their example.

Heavy-handed "pastors" who manipulate their flocks for their own selfish ends, beware! You will stand before the Chief Shepherd one day, who laid down His life to serve the sheep whom you "lord it over" (5:3). Genuine pastors who serve their flocks will "receive the unfading crown of glory" (5:4). God bless all the good pastors around the world! They deserve their future crowns!

How wonderful it is to know that God cares for us (5:7). That simple fact fills our hearts with peace. There is no good reason that we have to worry about anything, so we are wise to follow Peter's instruction to cast all our cares upon the Lord (5:7). Worrywarts, repent! Worries are like prayers that say, "God, I know you can't be trusted!"

Peter paints a picture of Satan as a "roaring lion" who "prowls around...seeking someone to devour" (5:8). His prowling about to devour someone was, in Peter's mind, connected to the persecution that his readers were suffering (5:9). If Satan "devours" a believer by means of persecution through unbelievers, what is the outcome? It would seem quite logical to think that Peter was speaking once again of the danger of believers falling away from the faith, especially since Peter admonishes them in the same passage to resist the devil, "firm in their faith" (5:9). That is, suffering believers must hold fast in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, even though they are tempted to abandon their faith to escape the fires of persecution.

It is also good to remember that God is always in control even when He permits His people to suffer under persecution, and that He is working all things together for our good (Rom. 8:28). He uses our trials, according to Peter, to "perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish" us (5:10). If you will look back at your spiritual life, you will probably notice that your times of greatest spiritual growth were those times when everything wasn't easy. It could well be said: "No spiritual pain; no spiritual gain!"

Peter closed this epistle with the admonition, "Greet one another with the kiss of love" (5:13). Have you kissed a Christian today?

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