

1 Peter 5:1

by John Gill

In 1 Peter 5, the apostle Peter exhorts elders and church members to fulfill their roles with humility and vigilance, emphasizing the importance of mutual submission and care for one another.

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1

Topics: "Church Leadership", "Humility"

Description

John Gill emphasizes the apostle Peter's exhortation to church elders, urging them to fulfill their pastoral duties with humility and dedication, as he identifies himself as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings. He encourages them to lead by example, feeding the flock willingly and without greed, while reminding them of the eternal reward awaiting faithful shepherds. Additionally, he calls on church members to submit to their leaders and to each other, highlighting the importance of humility and vigilance against spiritual adversaries. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the believers' strength and stability in their faith, reinforcing the communal responsibilities of both leaders and members in the body of Christ.

Transcript

INTRODUCTION TO I PETER 5

In this chapter the apostle first exhorts pastors and members of churches to their respective duties as such; and then to those which were common to them all, as Christians; and closes the epistle with prayers for them, salutations of them, and with his apostolic benediction. He begins with the pastors or elders, and describes himself as a fellow elder, an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings, and a partaker of his glory, 1Pe 5:1, and these he exhorts to feed the flock of God, where they were; to take the charge and oversight of them, freely, readily, and willingly, and not through force or covetousness; and not to exercise a tyrannical dominion over them, but to be examples to them, 1Pe 5:2, and the argument made use of to encourage them to all this is, that at the appearance of Christ, the chief Shepherd, they should receive a never fading crown of glory, 1Pe 5:4 and next, the members of the churches are exhorted to submit to the rule and government of their pastors, being according to the word of God; and to be subject to one another; and particularly to put on humility, as a garment very ornamental to them; and the rather, since God opposes himself to men that are proud, but gives more grace to the humble, 1Pe 5:5 and especially he exhorts them to be humble under the hand of God, since that is a mighty one, and this is the way to be exalted in due time; and also to cast their care upon him, seeing he cared for them, 1Pe 5:6 and then the apostle proceeds to the common duties of Christians, and to exhort them to sobriety and watchfulness, since

Satan their adversary was a cruel and indefatigable one, and ever seeking the ruin of men; and to resist him in the steadfast exercise of faith, and patiently bear all afflictions, seeing the same were accomplished in their brethren in the world, 1Pe 5:8 and then he puts up some petitions for them, that they might be perfected, stablished, strengthened, and settled, 1Pe 5:10 and ascribes glory and dominion for ever to the God of grace, to whom he prays, 1Pe 5:11 after which he names the person by whom he sends this epistle, giving a summary of it; that it was an exhortation and a testimony to the true doctrine of grace wherein they stood, 1Pe 5:12, and next follow the salutations of the church at Babylon, and of his son Marcus, to them, 1Pe 5:13, and lastly, he desires they would salute one another with a kiss of love, and gives them his benedictory wish, 1Pe 5:14.

Ver. 1. The elders which are among you I exhort,.... The apostle returns to particular exhortations, after having finished his general ones, and which chiefly concern patient suffering for Christ; and having particularly exhorted subjects to behave aright to civil magistrates, servants to their masters, and husbands and wives mutually to each other, here proceeds to exhort "elders" to the discharge of their office and duty; by whom are meant, not the elder in age, or the more ancient brethren in the churches, though they are distinguished from the younger, in 1Pe 5:5 but men in office, whose business it was to feed the flock, as in 1Pe 5:2 and though these might be generally the elder men, and whose office required, at least, senile gravity and prudence, yet they were not always so; sometimes young men, as Timothy, and others, were chosen into this office, which is the same with that of pastors, bishops, or overseers; for these are synonymous names, and belong to persons in the same office: and these are said to be "among" them, being members of the churches, and called out from among them to the pastoral office, and who were set over them in the Lord, and had their residence in the midst of them; for where should elders or pastors be, but with and among their flocks? they were fixed among them; and in this an elder differs from an apostle; an elder was tied down to a particular church, whereas an apostle was at large, and had authority in all the churches; and these the Apostle Peter does not command in an authoritative way, though he might lawfully have used his apostolic power; but he chose rather to exhort, entreat, and beseech, and that under the same character they bore:

who also am an elder; or, "who am a fellow elder"; and so the Syriac version renders it; and which expresses his office, and not his age, and is entirely consistent with his being an apostle; for though that is an higher office than a pastor, or elder, yet it involves that, and in some things agrees with it; as in preaching the word, and administering ordinances; and is mentioned to show the propriety and pertinency of his exhortation to the elders; for being an elder himself, it was acting in character to exhort them; nor could it be objected to as impertinent and unbecoming; and since he was still in an higher office, on which account he could have commanded, it shows great humility in him to put himself upon a level with them, and only entreat and beseech them; he does not call himself the prince of the apostles and pastors, and the vicar of Christ, as his pretended successor does, but a fellow elder:

and a witness of the sufferings of Christ; as he was even an eyewitness of many of them; of his exceeding great sorrow in his soul, of his agony and bloody sweat in the garden, and of his apprehension, and binding by the officers and soldiers there; and of the contumelious usage he met with in the high priest's hall, where was mocked, blindfolded, buffeted, and smote upon the face; if not of his sufferings on the cross; since it is certain John was then present; and quickly after we read of Peter and he being together, Joh 19:26 and therefore a very fit person to exhort these elders to feed the churches under their care with the preaching of a crucified Christ; since he, from his certain knowledge, could affirm his sufferings and his death: moreover, he was a witness, that is, a minister, and preacher of the sufferings of Christ, and of the

doctrines of peace, pardon, justification, and salvation through them; as appears from all his sermons recorded in the "Acts of the Apostles", and from these his epistles: and besides, he was a partaker of the sufferings of Christ; he bore witness to him, by suffering for him; and as the Apostle Paul did, filled up the afflictions of Christ in his flesh; he, with other apostles, were put into the common prison by the Jewish sanhedrim, for preaching Christ, as he afterwards was by Herod; and had, doubtless, by this time, gone through a variety of sufferings for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, as he afterwards glorified God by dying that death, which his Lord and master signified to him before hand; and therefore a very proper person to exhort these elders to discharge their work and office, and persevere in it, whatever they were called to suffer for it:

and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; which some think has reference to the transfiguration of Christ upon the mount, where Peter was present, and saw the glory of Christ, and of those that were with him, Moses and Elias, and enjoyed their company, and heard their conversation with so much pleasure and delight, that he was for continuing there; and which was an emblem and pledge of the glory of Christ, that was afterwards to be revealed, and still is to be revealed, and so the Syriac version renders it, "a partaker of his glory": of the glory of Christ, see 1Pe 4:13 or it regards the eternal glory and happiness of the saints, which is at present hid, and unseen, but shall be revealed at the last time, at the coming of Christ, when he shall appear in his glory, both to the saints, in them, and upon them; a glory which shall be both upon body and soul; and this the apostle calls himself a partaker of, as in Christ, his head and representative, and because of his interest in it, his assurance of right unto it, and meetness for it, and the certainty of enjoying it; nothing being more sure than this, that those that suffer with Christ, and for his sake, shall be glorified with him. Now, the exhortation of a person in such an office, as before expressed, and of one that was an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings, and had endured so much for Christ, and had had so large an experience of his grace, and such full assurance of glory, must carry great weight and influence in it, and is as follows.

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