

Lessons for Us to Learn Day to Day

by Willie Mullan

Willie Mullan's sermon emphasizes practical lessons from 1 Peter on submission, humility, and reliance on God for daily living.

Duration: 1:11:51

Topics: "Lessons"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a situation where a little man preached well, but the chairman of the meeting talked for over half an hour, wasting everyone's time. The speaker then shares a personal story about a pastor who was a man of God but struggled with alcoholism. The speaker emphasizes the importance of being vigilant and sober in the spirit, contrasting it with the negative effects of alcohol. He also highlights the reality of the devil's activity and encourages listeners to be aware of his schemes. The sermon emphasizes the need to be alert and on guard in the spiritual realm.

Transcript

It is 1 Peter 5 again this evening, 1 Peter chapter 5, and we're going through from verse 5 to the end of the chapter this evening. I think we're all agreed that this 1 Peter has been a great book for us to study, no doubt at all that Peter was a man sent from God. And I think in these verses at the end of this book and at the end of this chapter, we see Peter at his best as a teacher, because he's teaching practical things.

And there are one or two places throughout this great letter, first letter of Peter, where we have seen him in his practical teachings, and every time we've been moved and thrilled, and so many have come and said, you know, that was really wonderful, it was Peter at his practical best. And at the end of this chapter this evening, he's not only Peter the teacher, but he's teaching us lessons, lessons that we all need to learn and then put into practice day by day. That's why I put at the beginning of the chapter, Peter the teacher, lessons for us to learn and we should practice them day by day.

You notice as he begins verse 5, he uses the word likewise, because he's been exhorting so many right through this letter. You know, he's gone into every department of the local churches to which he was writing. He's taken these local assemblies and he's taken them at times of the whole assembly of the elect and he speaks to them like that.

And then he took the whole crowd together and he said, strangers and pilgrims. Thought they were a heavenly people, but they were wandering through this swift howling wilderness. I think it's always well to

remember this, some get their way up with election and adoption and so on, but you need to remember that you're a stranger and pilgrim down here marching to Zion.

Good combination he is. And he talked to the whole assembly under these headings, the elect and strangers and pilgrims, but then he began to go into the different departments of the church. Let's go back and gather one or two of these up.

See chapter two, and when he had spoken to them there in verse 11, dearly beloved, God receives you as strangers and pilgrims. Then down the chapter he begins to take sections of the church. See verse 18, servants, and I pointed out to you that the word in the Greek is really slaves, because there were a great many in these local assemblies to which he was writing, in Galicia and Cappadocia and Pontus and all over Asia Minor, there were a great many in these assemblies who were still slaves, the very rich Gentiles.

And you have to teach them how to themselves are slaves. And then chapter three, you remember the wonderful night we had when he talked to the wives, took all the married women in the assembly and really talked to them. I think that's a paragraph we will never forget.

And then when he had spoken to the slaves and the wives, in verse seven of chapter three, he speaks to the husbands, and I think that was even a greater night, when all the husbands were spoken to. And then he came back in verse eight to the whole assembly, and he said, all of one mind, the all of one mind is talking to the assembly again. And then we found out last week that he talked to the elders in the assembly.

And now tonight he's talking to the younger ones in the assembly. I think that's very good departmental stuff, isn't it? Because that's the whole church he's talking to. And these local churches he talked to them as strangers and pilgrims, and as the elect of God, and wives, and husbands, and elders, and now the young.

And he's saying this to the younger ones in the assembly, it is likewise ye younger submit yourselves unto the elders. And it's not a matter of just an older brother, it's the matter that this is one of the gifts given to the assembly. There are elders, and there are qualifications for elders in this book.

And they're the rules of the assembly, and you should know them which have the rule over you. And you should hold them very highly in love for the work faith. And sometimes the elders have caused to bring a young man in, and very carefully.

And I can assure you all the elders about this place are great men. There is no question at all about that in my mind. There's Mr. Russell, and Mr. McCullough, Mr. Minnis, and myself.

And there's one thing that's been inoculated into us, and that is to have mercy. We always have mercy. But if you won't be taught to, we'll not have any nonsense with you.

Because if you won't listen, we'll put you on the street. Because we're determined to rule this assembly for the glory of God. You'll get all the chances that there are to listen.

And when we have to talk to you, there'll be something to talk about. And if you would listen to the book now, you would learn that you should submit to yourself. You see, all that he's asking the younger people to do is to respect the elders' judgments.

And you ought to respect it. There's nobody wants to do anything for your only good. It's always for your good.

Yes, there ought to be respect, you know. I remember being in an office bearers' meeting, not here, and I'm not telling you where, when all the office bearers were really, absolutely persuaded about something. Only one man, and he ought to have known better.

And he looked at me, and he nearly hit me. He said, I don't believe in this majority rule. And I said, well, there is only one thing worse, and that is minority rule.

And so it is. And if they could learn that, but also it would never do them good. For it's a stupid thing for to try to make the minority rule the majority.

I know that the majority is not all the great. But I think there's a place in the church anyway, and especially in the church meeting, and especially in an office bearers' meeting, where if the majority have their minds made up one way, and you just don't say it, the best thing you can do is submit. And there are times, you know, in our office bearers' meetings, and I'm so glad, you know, that all the men of the deacons and the elders, and not just men around here, think very carefully.

And at times, I may have had something on my mind, and it's been opposed. And when the majority opposes it, I submit to them. And there have been times in my life, when a month or two later, I found out that they were right and I was wrong, and it was a good job I submitted.

Baptist church is not run by a pope of any kind. We've had meetings where we've all opposed things. But it's a great lesson for the younger to learn to submit, to be subject one to another.

You know, Peter is teaching submission. You'd think this was never mentioned in the book, to hear some of them. They'd love to come in here sometimes at six months, say it, and rule the place.

They wouldn't know where to find Isaiah. Ah, well, it won't work, you know. Yes, I think it's a good thing for all of us to learn this great lesson and practice it.

In fact, it's a good thing to carry into the home, too, and a good thing to carry into the business, too. Yes, Peter's teaching submission here. And then he goes on quickly, because they're related subjects.

He says, likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another. And then he goes on to the next bit of teaching, and be clothed with humility.

You know, the word that's translated clothed, there's a very interesting word. It's a big, long Greek word, and I can't say it right, and therefore I'm not going to attempt it. But I read it, looked at it, and fiddled with it today, and tried to break it up into departments, but it sort of beats me.

Sometimes I do blame it on the bottom teeth having no bottom teeth. But never mind, I'm not going to have a go at it. It's a big, long Greek word, but I know all about it.

But it means this. It means, in literal Greek, wrap this round you. Wrap humility around you.

That's what it means. And it has a root meaning in the Greek language, which might mean girdle. Of course, you know that you wrap a girdle round you and tie it there.

This is all in Peter's mind, and I think there was a lot more in his mind when he said, wrap it round you like a girdle man. I think he was thinking of the night in the upper room when Christ took the towel and girded himself with it, wrapped it around him, and became a slave to the rest of them. I'm sure he had that in his mind.

It would do us all good to follow the Master like that at times, just to humble ourselves, just to wrap humility around you like a girdle, just to do for once in your life what the Master did. It's a lot of trouble. You know, this great doctrine of humility, it's linked with everything that's good because it's linked with love.

Because the humble man, or a man who humbles himself, is a man who loves. And I can assure you it's linked with peace. For nobody that ever brought trouble into an assembly was humble.

I'm sure it's linked with peace all the time. And I think it's linked with wrong suffering. Oh yes, you know, you may get somebody who says something behind your back and rattles you when you hear it.

If you can only humble yourself and put up with it, it's a great idea. You know, I learned lessons in life, and I had to learn some of them terrible ways. I went to preach at Monkstown Conference about 20 years ago.

A little man called Pastor Forbes was with me. He was a sedate wee man, always well-dressed, usually wore a butterfly collar, they called it in those days. And sometimes he had the swallowtail coat on.

He was a dapper little man, but he was a man of God. There is no doubt about that. And you know, he said to me in the back room, he said, Willie, you're the better preacher over me.

I'm preaching first, and I'm only taking about 10 minutes, and you can finish it with it the way you like. And I just submitted to this quite simply. The little man preached, and he preached well.

And then the chairman got up, and what a model of a chairman he was. He talked about everything under God's heaven, only the thing in hand. And as you might know, I, as the young man, got fed up with him.

And he talked for over half an hour. He was wasting the meeting. Because the little man had laid the basis for this.

And I was sitting beside the little man, and I said, when I get up, I'll screw the head of that man. And the little man never moved. He just said to me, the fruit of the Spirit, I can still see, it's a straight forward, the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace.

And the next one is long story. And then he said quite simply, you know, there must be some place to practice it. And surely today.

Well, I just got as much in about two minutes as any man could take. I got it in all right. It just calmed me down.

Yes, this great doctrine of humility, it's linked with love and peace and long-suffering. And it's one of the great things that Peter is putting out that we should practice. You know, God promises something to the humble.

Here's what Peter actually says. He says, all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. And then he goes on with this, humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God.

That he may exalt you in due time. And there's one thing that I can promise all the younger members of this assembly and all who are with us this evening. If you can learn to submit yourselves unto the elder when he speaks to you, and you learn by grace to wrap humility around you, God will give you more grace and God will exalt you in due time.

There's a guarantee with this thing. There's a guarantee that God will give you grace and giveth grace to the humble. And there's a guarantee that God will exalt you in due time.

I think it's a great lesson to learn. Oh, I've had to learn all the way up. It took me so long.

You do it quicker, please. It'll be better for you. But he not only teaches submission here, and teaches humiliation.

You know, he teaches disposition. He says in verse 7, casting all your care upon him. You know, I'm using disposition as the natural tendency of your spiritual life.

This should be your natural tendency, to cast all your care upon him. You know, that's a knot that you need to learn as you go along towards him. Very difficult to learn, you know, because somebody takes the text up and says, casting all your care upon him, and they're worried about something.

Because you know, when you're trusting, you're not worrying. And when you're worrying, you're not trusting. There's something wrong with your trust.

And if you're tumbling all night about something, there's something wrong. And you need to learn how to cast your care upon him. Read after me.

Some people think they haven't learned, and they get out of bed and get on their knees, and take their burden to the Lord, and then take it back into bed with them. And there hasn't been any casting at all. You know, this word casting is a very interesting one.

In fact, it's only twice in the New Testament, so you shouldn't have too much bother with it. It's rendered casting here, which I show you it over in Mark's Gospel, and I don't think you would recognize it again at all. Mark's Gospel, Chapter 2, please.

Mark's Gospel, Chapter 2. See verse 21. No man also saweth a piece of new cloth and an old garb. See the word shalleth.

Well, it's the same Greek roots as the word that's translated casting. And you know what we're talking about here is patching, isn't it? Saweth a piece of new cloth. Mind you, when I was being brought up, I know a lot about patching.

I'm ever so glad I came up in the family I did. I learned to bake there, because I had to bake for 15 brothers. I used to bake for the whole family, and they all lived happily ever after.

And I used to do a bit of patching too. I had to do it because I was the youngest one of the family, and all the old clothes came down the line to me. Yes, you know, if my bigger brother, two or three away from me, got a new suit, he wore it out and tore it and all the rest of it, and then it came down to the next fellow, and you know what he did with it, and so it eventually came to me.

So I got brought up where you never felt proud at all. But my mother used to show me how to cut the whole clean round where the tear was, and get the piece of suitable cloth and put it underneath, and it had to be matched if needs be, and then turn the cut piece in a little bit and stitch it with very fine stitches. And if you stitched it properly, it stayed there.

And this is what you do with your cows. You take them to the throne of grace, and you stitch them to the throne, and you don't bring them back. You leave them there.

Let me tell you, you can only stitch your cares to the throne by real faith. Yes, you have the needle of the promise of God in your hand, and faith is the thread that will stitch your cares to the throne. So you want to try patching them on the throne of God, but you don't bring them back.

And you use something to encourage you to do this. How lovely Peter puts this. He says, casting, and don't forget the word all, casting all your care upon him.

Let me put this lovely little devotional phrase in here, for he careth for you. You know he careth for you, don't you? You know, our Lord Jesus Christ, in this dispensation today, he has three wonderful titles. He's the great shepherd of the sheep, because he loves them, and he's the captain of all salvation, and he's our great high priest.

And you know, if you would examine him in these departments, you would find that the great shepherd of the sheep, he really cares for you. You just go back to the 23rd Psalm, and it says the great shepherd he's thinking about, you know, and remembering you meet your needs. He never really wants you to meet your needs, and he meets it in so many wonderful and miraculous and blessed ways.

He will meet your needs until the journey's finished. And he guides your feet, he brings you into, beside the still waters, leads you, guides your feet, and he rests your mind, and he restores your soul, and he calms your fears. I don't know who the 23rd Psalm standing is.

And I know he cares, and if you think him as the captain of your salvation, he's put a helmet on your head, makes you sure on the top story about things. And he's put a foundation, he's given you the sandals of peace, so that you're firm and secure before the enemy. And there's a breastplate on your breast, and there's a shield on your arm, and a sword in your hand.

This is his provision for you. It was the captain that provided this equipment, you know, because he cares, he knows you'll be in the battle. And if you think him as our great high priest, you know, that he's able to succor them that are tempted.

You know, just when you're tempted, sometimes he comes and strengthens you. Why? Because he cares for you. And you know when you're feeling down and out, and almost under the juniper tree, remember he can be touched with the feeling of your infirmities, or he can sympathize, and remember he can supply grace to help.

A time of need. He's able to save you to the uttermost. Oh, my dear friend, surely we must have gathered this up long ago.

He really cares for you. This helps you, you know, to go to the throne, really attach your cares there, because he cares. There's an old German translation of this, I think it's better this time.

It says, Kaufstein, all your care upon him, for it matters to him about you. Matters to him. Maybe you think it doesn't matter about you.

I can tell you maybe it doesn't matter about you to a whole lot of folks, but it matters to him about you. You're important to him about you, if he cares for you. You know, teaching is a great feature, isn't it? Teaching submission, and teaching humiliation, and teaching disposition.

And I think this is the great feat of his teaching here, he's teaching fortification. It's the breath here, I think, it says, be sober. Is that the word that's opposite to the word drunk? It is.

It's a very word, the opposite to being drunk. You know, when a man's drunk, his mind is muddled. All he knows is his own name at times.

And you know, when you see a man coming staggering down the street, and going from side to side, and almost falling, for any sakes, don't laugh. There isn't anything to laugh at, as far as I can see. This man's senses has been taken away.

This man has sensed, this man has a brain. This man is probably an intelligent man, but this man has taken alcohol until his very senses have taken away. There isn't anything to laugh about.

It's a horrible thing. Now, as you walk through this world, you're to be sober, he says. He says you're to be vigilant.

Well, we have learned something about the vigilantes, haven't we? Bless them. Yeah, there's some of them down in the other quarter. They're up all night looking after the books.

Bless them. They're vigilantes. They're on guard.

They're going to try to see that the books in their district are not being hurt. Oh, bless them. Yes.

Well, in the spiritual realm, you're to be sober, and you're to be on guard all the time. Never off guard. You're one of the vigilantes, the spiritual sense.

And the reason that he hammers this out is this. You see, he's teaching fortification here, how you're to be fortified. He says, be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

I think that there's no argument against or about the personality of the devil. Peter is talking about oppression here, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. And I think in the words of the devil, and in the word he, you can see the reality of the personality of the devil.

He says, your adversary, it's not just the reality of what you're taken up with, it's the hostility that's in this personality that you need to be taken up with. He's against you. You can make up your mind just now there's somebody against you.

But it's not the reality of the personality or even the hostility that we want to emphasise. He says, your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, it's the bestiality that you need to get into your mind. Mind you, it takes a brave man to face a lion.

And I would think that if there was a lion let loose in the town tonight, and it came into reports just now, you would have bought a pass on those two boys that's in the eyes. They would come this way at some rate, I can assure you. Yes, you know, it's real, isn't it? Ever hear a lion roar? Well, once when I was half drunk, a long, long time ago, I went to Dublin for a day with a lot of boys.

And half drunk, I went round the village. And when the keeper wasn't looking, you see, I got over the chain and I whacked this big lion, it was lying in the corner, whacked it with a newspaper on the head. You've never heard such a wacky depiction.

It went mad. It scared the life out of me. It jumped to the height of the roof and it hit those bars to the bottom and you should hear the roar.

And drunk and all as I was, I cleared off. A roaring lion, the real thing. Nobody that I know full enough to take lip.

You know, people could preach, couldn't they? You can see the reality of the personality, you can see the hostility, your adversary, you can see the bestiality. Can't you see what he's about? What he's about? Can't you see the activity? Some of the old millennialists tell me that the devil's chained. Chained at Calvary, they tell me.

People tell me he's walking about. Which one do you think I believe? I don't know what you're talking about. This brute says he's walking about.

The old millennialists say he's chained. Why do you think that? He's walking about. Man, he's walking about Ulster at this time.

There's no chains on them these days. He's loose alright. He gets a lot of boys to do his work too.

Yes, you can see the activity, can't you? Friends, can't you see the ferocity here? Seeking whom he may devour. It's the verse expounded for you. You can see the personality.

You can see the hostility. You can see the bestiality. You can see the activity.

You can see the ferocity. He's out to devour you, cannot he, young preachers? Out to devour you, young preacher. He is.

He's a lot of ways of doing it for you. You can get too big for your boots. You can think you're the whole tree and he'll devour you if you do.

A lot of things he can do to devour. If he wants to devour your testimony, dear, you could preach for the weekend then. Yes, this is Peter teaching fortification, but let's get the whole lot of it.

It says, be sober. That is, be clear in your mind. He says, be vigilant.

That's be on guard in your spirits. And then he says in verse nine, talking still about the devil, whom will resist steadfast in the faith? You know, your mind must be clear, and your spirit must be on guard, and your soul must resist the devil. You know what Nicholson did, don't you? Fella give him a bit of bother in the meeting one night.

Oh, terrible bother. And they put up with them for a while. And then old Nicholson came down from the platform, just got them by the collar and screwed it, drew them up there and threw them down about ten steps as well.

Because he thought Nicholson was a softy, but he made a mistake. And Nicholson threw him out. Coming in, you know, dust in the hands, and an old lady in the back seat, all pious, she says, the Lord wouldn't have done that.

He says, no, the Lord would have thrown the devil out of a man. But I can't do it, sir. I've got to throw man and devil and all out.

Yes. You've got to resist the devil. When the modernists, so-called academics, come out with their nonsense and deny the virgin birth and all the other fundamentals, we must earnestly contend for the faith.

In this book you're taught to resist Satan, resist sin, and resist the source of every evil against the fundamentals. Those are the things you resist. Good old preacher, you know, he's fortifying the young saints.

He says, whom is this steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. You know, some of us get into a weak corner and moan, and we think we're the only folks that's getting it rough. Ah, get that out of your head, dear.

Your brethren that are in the world have all had a time of it. You're not the only one picked out, you know. The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

My, what stories will be told when we get home to heaven, of how God kept his saints in this tomb, and you'll find this tomb blue all over the world. Yes, Peter, the great teacher, is teaching submission and humiliation and disposition and fortification. He's teaching consolation.

The moment that he gets these younger saints sobered up and on their guard and lets them see the enemy, he says, but the God of all grace. You know, that's a great statement. The God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.

There's been an argument about this phrase, the God of all grace has called us unto his eternal glory, and some people stress the on to and say that God has saved us, that he might get glory out of us. So, that's perfectly true in the sense that you get glory out of your salvation, but I don't think that's the meaning here. And others say that he has called us, that when we're landed in heaven, he'll get eternal glory for all eternity.

And that is perfectly true, too. He'll be glorified as I stand faultless before the throne. I don't think that's what he's saying at all.

I think what he's saying is this, that the God of all grace has called us, and that's an effectual call. He's called us and we have heard and responded. All that is in the word called there.

He has called us out of darkness, and it's not so much out of darkness into marvelous light here, but he has called us that we shall go to his eternal home. That's the idea. It's the eternal glory of the home of God that's before us.

And there's no loss again about it, if he has called you to partake in his eternal home, then you'll get there over. I don't know what the fiddle about the lost again for when there are eternal things. The minute you come to Christ, you get eternal life.

Are you trying to tell me that you get eternal life for six months? What sort of eternity is that thing? It's eternal life. The gift of God is eternal life, and it means eternal life. That's what it means.

Whether you are you or not, it still means eternal life. And you can't say, I give unto my sheep eternal life, but. Oh, that doesn't work.

You can't use that sort of language. If you give them eternal life, you can't put any buts in it. He's got eternal life.

You know, when Christ went back to heaven, entered the glory land, what a moment it must have been. There's a man walking in with nails, with nail marks in his hands. And all along, heaven bows, every angel and every seraphim and all heaven just bows down.

And he walks up the golden street towards the throne. And there's a voice comes out of the excellent glory there, and it says, sit down here. And he goes and sits down on the throne.

And this book says, he entered heaven by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Was it eternal redemption? Am I eternally redeemed at this moment? Yes, I am. Because I'm redeemed by precious blood that will never lose its power.

You know, we don't only have eternal life and eternal redemption, but we're called to his eternal glory. Oh, it's eternal salvation, all that. He's the author of eternal salvation.

Yes. Yes, you know, all the way home it's going to be grace. Grace that put me on the road, and grace that keeps me on the road, and grace that takes me on the road.

You know, there are three things that every believer in here, it doesn't make a matter of what kind of believer you are tonight. Maybe you're down in the dumps a little bit, maybe you've made the blunder or two, and maybe you're down in the dumps, or maybe you're even a backslider, but you know that you came into the blood. I'll tell you, there are three things that belong to you, to everything here.

And one is grace. Oh, it's the grace for you. And the other is goodness and mercy.

I can look forward, I don't know if I'm 1972 or 73, but I can look forward into the dark, and I know that surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all days of my life. Can you say the shout? That's how the psalmist said it. I hear him quoting it sometimes in the prayer meeting, and they say goodness and mercy shall follow me.

It doesn't say any such thing. It says goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. I am sure that the amazing grace of God, and the great gracious goodness of God, and the enduring mercy of God will always be mine.

They can throw me out of here, but I'll take grace and goodness and mercy with me. So it's mine the whole way through. Don't you forget it here.

You'll get away beyond that of just now. It won't be good for you. Grace and mercy and goodness will always be yours.

You don't need to buy nor accept it for these things. They're yours. Here's what he did say.

He says, the God of all grace, who hath called us unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while. You know, grace and goodness and mercy will always be with us. Well, I can tell you something that will always be with God.

Wisdom and power. You'll never waken up any morning to find that God's gone doping. Always been a wise man.

And you'll never waken up any day to find that God has lost his power. He won't lose your senses and he won't lose his power. And sometimes while his children are enveloped in grace and in mercy and goodness, in the wisdom and power of God, he allows them to suffer.

I wouldn't have learned a whole lot of things except I had suffered. It's a great school. It's the place where you really learn.

And what Peter is saying to these young folks, are all the old devils around, all roaring about, the God of all grace has called you unto his eternal glory. After that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect. Now it's not sinless perfection that's there.

The word is the Greek word and it could mean to fit you for the job. Because there's nothing fits you for the job like suffering. And somehow it establishes you and strengthens you and settles you.

Yes, you know, this is consolation. That the God of all grace has called you home, is working it out for your good. Don't forget that.

You know, you need to just shout the way he did to him, the glory and dominion forever and ever. Yes, you know, he is teaching consolation. And then he says, by Silvanus.

Oh, now here's something I think that you might walk past and not see. The word Silvanus and the word Silas is the same word. And many of us are wondering, is this the Silas that was with Paul? And I have a feeling it's the same Silas.

It's just another way of writing that name. It's written sometimes Silvanus and sometimes it's written Silas. And I think this is a very interesting thing and I think it bit by bit that you won't miss it.

You know, he's teaching commendation here and he's commending this brother and here's a great thing he has to say about him. He says, a faithful brother. Mr. Russell, our elder, and I are going on Saturday night, God willing, to the induction of one of our young men here as the pastor at Ballygo Martyn.

And we've got to commend this young man to the assembly. And I don't think any one of us will have any bother in saying he's a faithful brother. Mr. Russell had the great joy of seeing him come up in his Sunday school.

And then one night he got gloriously saved. I can remember he was sitting on this very seat here, in that big fellow there sitting. You're a believer, aren't you? Good.

Yes. And he heard the words. He was being asked to the roof.

And could hardly get out of the door or go up the street friendly. That night he was saved. Thank God for him getting saved.

And he has grown in grace and he's going to be the pastor down there. And we're going to commend him to the church and thank God we can do that without a quiver on our conscience. It's great when you can say about a servant of God, he's a faithful brother.

Pastor Irvine is here this evening and I can say about this man, he's a faithful brother. Yes. And Pastor Sam is here from Perth.

Sam Zaffran. It's only my mind goes slow sometimes. And I can say about that character there, he's a faithful brother.

He's a good soul like there's ever was one. Yes. Isn't it great when you can say it without any trouble.

Elder Peter is great at this commendation and he's teaching the church here. And he's saying, by Silas, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein you stand. He's just telling them that although you've had to suffer a lot, because it's the suffering assembly or assemblies that he's writing through, and the real core of the matter of 1 Peter is suffering.

You remember we've been through it again and again, suffering for faith's sake, suffering for conscience' sake, suffering for righteousness' sake, suffering wrongfully, suffering as a Christian. He says, you know, that's the true grace of God. Lots of people try to tell you that there's a source of salvation in this world, that if you accept it, the wind will never blow in your face again.

That's not the grace of God at all. This that you saw as I've gone through, this is the true grace of God. But here's what I want to connect for you.

He says, the church that is Babylon. And you'll notice, if you look carefully, that the word church is in italics. And there are only two translations which say she that is a Babylon.

And some expositors think that he's talking about his wife, because Peter had a wife all right. But he does say this, the church that is Babylon elected together with you, salutes you, and I can't accept that he would pick out his wife and say that she was elected together with all you Jews. I don't think he's talking about her.

And some of the other expositors think that it's a great spiritual woman that was at Babylon, and I don't think he would pick out a spiritual woman out of the assembly and say he salutes you and was elected with you. I think that our good common teachers here, our good translators rather, that they've got the right words. That it is the church which is at Babylon.

Because that brings in something that we should know. If you know when Paul went out with the gospel and he was going to go into Asia, the Lord wouldn't let him. And the Lord turned him and sent him to Europe.

Ah, well, Peter went right out east to Babylon. Oh, they tried to tell me he went to Rome. I can tell you he went to Babylon.

That's where he went. And that is literal Babylon. That's a way in the other side of the Syrian desert.

It's a way in Mesopotamia. Literal Babylon. And there was a church there, and Peter was there.

He said it's the church that is at Babylon, he's talking about. But that's not what I'm after. He says the church that is at Babylon elected together with you salutes you.

And so does Marcus, my son. And this word Marcus is the word Mark. It's John Mark he's talking about.

Now, sometimes the preacher uses phrases that he might be pulled up on. And this is one you could pull Peter up on. Marcus, my son.

He wasn't Peter's son at all. And I'll tell you this, he wasn't even his son in the faith. Now, but this young man has become survivable, and has done so many things for him, and has attended to him in his old age that he can say in a sense, Marcus, my son.

And before you pull the preacher up and call him a liar, try to find out the sense that he's talking in. Because for some years, so simply, you'd never find it. I hear people coming over phrases of mine.

They don't seem to get the sense at times. But isn't Peter using the phrase? And our Lord used phrases like this, and Paul used phrases. He just says, Marcus, my son.

And he means it in a certain sense. And there's nothing wrong with it at all. But you know, I want you to get the hold of this.

He has sent this letter to these assemblies. He sent it by Silas. And here we find that Mark is with him too.

Both Silas and Mark with him at the end. And that's very interesting. Because let's go back to do this properly.

Let's go back to the Acts of the Apostles for a moment. And we're at Acts chapter 12. The Acts of the Apostles.

And we're at Acts chapter 12. Now Barnabas and Paul, or as he was then called, Paul of Tarsus, they're just going out into the work of the Lord. And it says at the end of chapter 12, verse 24, that the word of God grew and multiplied.

And Barnabas and Saul, that's Paul, returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry and took with them John, whose surname was Mark. They took this young man with them. They took John Mark with them.

They're going over to Cyprus and they're going into Asia Minor taking this young fellow with them. Now it says in chapter 13, now when Paul, verse 13, chapter 13, verse 13, now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos and they came to Perga in Pamphylia, and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem. Well this young fellow got cold feet.

Paul was a great warrior and he walked in for many dangers. And I think he was setting the face far too hot for this young fellow and he ran away from the work. John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem.

And then it goes on through this chapter and the next one where they were working in Asia Minor and it comes to the end of chapter 15. They had been back to Jerusalem after the first mission in Germany and

they're going to start out again, verse 36. And some days after, it's chapter 15, verse 36, some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord and see how they do.

And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. That's the same fellow, giving them a second chance. But Paul thought not good to take him with them who departed from them from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work.

Paul wasn't agreeing with this at all, he didn't think he was absolutely fit for the journey. And the contention was so sharp between Paul and Barnabas that they departed asunder one from the other and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed on to Cyprus. But Paul chose silence and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

And he went through Philly and Philly, confirming the church. And you see, these two young men come into this very prominently, and John Mark says that doesn't please Paul at all. And Paul set him aside and took silence.

Now it's very wonderful that Paul in later years restored Mark, because when he's writing to Timothy, he says, Mark, who is precious unto me, is the word for the ministry. But it's very wonderful to think that both these young men, when Paul was imprisoned, or maybe beheaded, that both of them swam right across the world and sought a problem to be with people. And silence and Mark, of course, they're with people at the end, when Paul sins.

Yes, God directs the steps, even if there are contentions, by the way. I could tell you some wonderful stories. You know, the first time I was ever at a church meeting in a Baptist church, the deacons had a fight.

You ever seen the deacons with a coat on? It was like Armageddon. I couldn't understand it. I was just saved.

The treasurer got the coat off, and the secretary got the coat off, and it took about ten to hold on both back and ahead. The big fellow who was the secretary said, if it wasn't for the grace of God, it was the grief of God and ten men. Yes, and the church was split from end to end.

And I'm sitting, I was a drunkard who was saved, and I only saw this thing in a pub. I got the biggest shaking of my life. And I went out into the street and walked around the street, and an old man who was a godly man came after me and said, son, you don't understand this.

I said, I don't understand anything about it. I thought they only did that in pubs. He said, look, you forget about it.

Some of us have got to get out. We're starting a wee meeting in another hall. If you want to come along, you'll be welcome.

I said, I don't know what all this is about, but you're a good man, and I'll go with you. That's all I know. This little meeting that started out of this contention, I wasn't five weeks in this, this old man said to me, you and I will preach next Sunday morning.

I said, yes, all right. He said, that's right, you'll have to sit in all week at your bible, and you and I'll take a meeting. And I would never have been pushed into the mix, only for the love.

Because God works all things together, you know. And Silas and Mark were being trained up to help Peter at the end of the day. God knows what he's about all the time, and don't you forget it.

Here's how Peter closes this benediction, isn't it lovely? He says this, yes. He says, the church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, salutes you, and so doth Marcus, my son. Greet thee one another with a kiss of charity.

That's an all-Eastern custom, when they meet they kiss on either cheek. You can see the Russians doing it, and they still do it in France. They don't do it here, it's a good job.

I knew a wee Methodist minister who did this, way down in the low country. He kissed all the women that came into the church every night, stood in the books, and they were lined up in queues for the Lord. For I assure you were not starting up, sir.

Very wonderful that he ends the letter by saying, peace be with you all. Because I think he must have remembered that when the Lord stood in the upper room, when he'd gone to Calvary, almost the last word he said to them was, my peace be with you. Right in the mouth of the whole way through.

First you've gained something by the letter, next Tuesday we're going on into the second epistle. And there's some strong meat in that one, when we come to the end of the day, and the elements burning with fervent heat. Peter proves to be a great man of God.

I think we'll sing the glory songs tonight, 949. We sing it. Dear Lord, part us in thy fear, and with thy blessing, for thy holy name's sake.

Amen.

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