

1 Peter

October 28, 2007

Verses 5:1-14

I. Humility is a Wonderful Thing!

Who can define what it is?

Here is how Nelson's Bible Dictionary Define it:

“A freedom from arrogance that grows out of the recognition that all we have and are comes from God. The Greek philosophers despised humility because it implied inadequacy, lack of dignity, and worthlessness to them. This is not the meaning of humility as defined by the Bible. Jesus is the supreme example of humility (Matt 11:29; Mark 10:45; John 13:4-17; Phil 2:5-8), and He is completely adequate and of infinite dignity and worth. Biblical humility is not a belittling of oneself (Matt 6:16-18; Rom 12:3), but an exalting or praising of others, especially God and Christ (John 3:30; Phil 2:3). A humble person, then, focuses more on God and others than on himself.

“Biblical humility is also a recognition that by ourselves we are inadequate, without dignity and worthless. Yet, because we are created in God's image and because believers are in Christ, we have infinite worth and dignity (1 Cor 4:6-7; 1 Peter 1:18-19). True humility does not produce pride but gratitude. Since God is both our Creator and Redeemer, our existence and righteousness depend on Him (John 15:5; Acts 17:28; Eph 2:8-10).”

(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

II. Older People among You

1 Peter 5:1

5:1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: NIV

There is a bit of a difficulty with this passage. Often, “elders” as used in this passage is taken to mean a church office. “Elders” really mean simply older ones, and could be both men and women. If “elders” is taken to be a reference to a church office, then “younger men” and “all of you” in verse 5 would also have to refer to church offices (perhaps older church leaders, younger church leaders, and all church leaders). If taken this way, then 1 Peter 5:1-10 would refer only to church leaders. As such, although it does not really change the application, it is probably better to take this passage to referring to older people, younger people, and all people. The letter of 1 Peter has been addressed to the complete Christian audience until now, and it is probably best to take it this way now.

Peter lists three personal attributes:

- a. He is their fellow elder.
- b. He is a witness of Christ's sufferings.
- c. He is a sharer of the coming glory.

Of course, these points draw upon the teachings of last week's lesson.

III. Insulted in the Name of Christ

1 Peter 5:2-4

2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. NIV

How should older people show “leadership”? What kind of example should they be?

-The flock belongs to God.

-The “leadership” should be through service and should consist of providing care.

-Because of the older person’s relationship with God, they should want to do it. The service is not to be done out of a sense of obligation or because of money, but because the person is eager to do so.

-The “service” should be an example to others that does not make the recipient feel as though they are inferior.

-There are a number of OT reference to which Peter might have been considering as he wrote this passage, including:

Prov 16:31

31 Gray hair is a crown of splendor; it is attained by a righteous life. NIV

IV. Submission

1 Peter 5:5

5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

"God opposes the proud

but gives grace to the humble." NIV

-Younger people should be willing to listen to and follow the example of older people.

-“Clothe yourselves” has the meaning of putting on an apron to get ready to serve.

-Peter quotes from Prov. 3:34 (as stated in the Septuagint). The NIV states it as:

Prov 3:34

34 He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.

V. The Good Hands

1 Peter 5:6

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. NIV

Jesus makes similar statements several times in the gospels, such as:

Matt 23:12

12 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

NIV

VI. Why Worry When You Can Pray

Instead, many Christians seem to follow: “Why pray when you can worry.”

1 Peter 5:7

7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. NIV

-A well-known verse. What does it mean?

-See Matt 6:23-34 and Matt. 10:29-31.

-Peter is quoting Psalms 55:22

22 Cast your cares on the LORD

and he will sustain you;

he will never let the righteous fall. NIV

VII. Your Prowling Enemy

1 Peter 5:8

8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. NIV

C.S. Lewis: “The safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.”

-Another well-known verse. What does it mean?

-Why does this verse follow the previous verse?

-“Be self-controlled” is literally to be sober (i.e. not drunk) and is also mentioned twice earlier in the book in 1:13 and 4:7. Obviously, this is an important command to Peter.

-Being alert means that one is ready for an attack from any quarters.

VIII. Last Command Concerning Suffering

1 Peter 5:9-10

9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. NIV

-Obviously this verse has many counterparts in the New Testament...from James 4:7, Ephesians 6, 1 Cor. 10:13, etc.

-What does it mean?

-The promise in verse 10 obviously might not be until the next life. (see 1 Cor. 15:42-44)

-“Eternal glory” is also used in Rom. 8:18 and 2 Cor. 4:16-18.

-Notice the long list of promises that go beyond restoration: Strong, firm, and steadfast.

IX. Closing Remarks

1 Peter 5:11-14

11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

12 With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. 13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. 14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

NIV

As noted earlier Silas, apparently the man who was originally Paul's colleague was with Peter when this book was written. Of course, Peter would likely have known Silas while both were in Jerusalem.

Most people take "Babylon" to mean Rome, but the real Babylon is not impossible, or perhaps, it was a code name for somewhere else. Reasons for this are:

- a. Early church tradition support that Peter was in Rome.
- b. There is no reason to believe that he was ever in the Babylon in Iraq or Egypt.
- c. Babylon might have been a cryptic reference to Rome to avoid persecution, or as an allusion to exile (where Peter begins the letter).
- d. Babylon might be used to exemplify a wicked city.

"She" does not have to refer to a person in Greek, but can refer to any feminine noun. Since church is a feminine noun, "she" may refer to the church at Rome (as it is so translated in the KJV).

Mark probably refers to the gospel writer.

"Kiss" is also mentioned in Rom 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 2 Thes. 5:26.