

November 23, 2025

1 Peter 5:1-11

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ² shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³ not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. ⁵ Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, ⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. ⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. ¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Scriptures for further study:

James 4:6-10

Philippians 2:1-11

John 21:15-19

Revelation 5:5



Grace and Humility

1 Peter 5:1-11

BIG IDEA: Because of the life-giving grace and humility of Christ, then through our faith in Him we may live with grace-fueled humility.

OUTLINE

1. The Grace and Humility of Christ (5:1, 4, 10-11)

2. Grace and Humility for Elders (5:1-4)

3. Grace and Humility for All Christians (5:5-11)

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. Why is humility a key character trait of Christians?
2. What is humility? What are some ways we might misunderstand humility?
3. What does the Bible teach about the grace and humility of Jesus Christ? How does that provide the foundation for a Christian’s life?
4. What are the ways that Peter compares and contrasts humility for the elders?
5. How does Peter describe the Christian life in verses 5-11? How does humility play a role in those parts of our Christian life that Peter describes in these verses?
6. What did you learn about God in our passage? What did you learn about yourself in this passage?

“Grace always runs downhill.”

- Jack Miller

“Self-reliance, a sense of our merit, runs strong in humanity. Yet believers are humble in principle because we know and confess that we sin.”

- Daniel Doriani

“By definition, a church is a gathering of the humble. Disciples are confident of their worth, since we know that God created us in his image and valued us enough to send his Son for us. Yet every believer is aware of his sin and need. Every disciple has repented, and when we repent, we both confess particular sins and admit that we are selfish and rebellious to the bone. Knowing that we are incapable of self-reform, we trust in Christ to forgive and restore us. This is the conviction of every Christian.”

- Daniel Doriani

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The whole of the Christian life as set forth in the first four chapters of 1 Peter must be pursued in the context of community and under the loving authority of elders whom God has raised up to guide, guard, and feed his people. But we must never grow slack or smug in this communal experience, for Satan is ever active in his effort to undermine our confidence in the goodness of God. However much we suffer persecution, and for however long it lasts, we must be encouraged with the assurance that God “will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish” us in his “eternal glory in Christ” (1 Pet. 5:10).

-ESV Expository Commentary

Praise to Jesus-Let all of God’s people sing glory to the Lamb who sits on the throne, “to him (Christ) be the dominion forever” (1 Peter 5:11)! Sing praises to the God of all grace, who has called us to his eternal glory in Christ after we have suffered because of Christ, the God who welcomes all our anxieties because he cares for us. He tempers our resolve to stand in our faith as we suffer. Praise him because of his lavish grace. He will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish us!

Repentance through Jesus-Today, confess the times when you have been insubordinate to our church’s leadership, confess the times when you have been too proud or self-assured to humble yourself before the Lord by casting your anxieties on Him, confess the times when you had forgotten Jesus’ words that He will never leave us or forsake us, thinking you were alone, gave into the lies of Satan instead of remaining faithful to the Lord in the midst of trials.

Consecration for Jesus-Because Peter has provided numerous incentives to remain steadfast in our faith, we are motivated to stand; because nothing can compare with this exalted promise (v. 10) from God himself: he will “restore” what has been lost, damaged, or wounded; he will “confirm” us in the grace that is ours in Christ; he will “strengthen” us to endure; and he will “establish” us as immovable in his eternal and unbreakable love. Be encouraged and remain faithful at all times!

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

These questions are written to aid parents in leading family devotions with their children.

1. What is humility? What is the opposite of humility? (Humility is willingly giving up our status and power to help others. The opposite of humility is pride.)

2. Why is humility such an important character trait of Christians? (This is because we are made in the image of God. We are made to live in a relationship with God, with Him at the center of our lives. This means we confess that God is God and we are not. Yet in our sin, we are selfish and prideful. In our sin, we attempt to live as if we are God. Humility is a key character trait as it shows that we recognize how God is our Creator and Lord. It is also important because we follow Jesus, who showed us true humility.)

3. How does Peter describe a humble elder in Christ's Church? (He describes an elder as a shepherd who willingly and eagerly cares for those in the church. We see that an elder does not seek to rule in a domineering way but in a humble way, showing that he bows the knee to follow Christ, the "Chief Shepherd.")

4. What do we learn in verses 6-7 about a Christian's humility? (A Christian shows his or her humility by recognizing God is Almighty and that we can cast all our anxieties or worries on Him. When we worry, we show that we are trying to live in our own wisdom and power.)

5. What do we learn in verses 8-9 about a Christian's humility? (We are reminded in these two verses about our Enemy, the devil. The devil is described as a "roaring lion". When we are living by the Spirit, we recognize that we don't have the strength to resist the devil. Yet we also recognize that God is all-powerful and rules over the devil. This is where humility is so important. Humility will point us outside of ourselves for strength and point us to God.)

6. What important reminders are in verses 10-11? (We get reminded that God is a "God of all grace", that He strengthens us, and that His rule or "dominion" is "forever and ever.")

Scriptures for further study:

James 4:6-10

Philippians 2:5-11

Revelation 5:5

FOR STUDENTS

Scriptures for further study:

Philippians 2:1-11

1. In verse 4, Peter calls Jesus our “Chief Shepherd.” What does that title say about how Jesus leads and cares for His people?
2. Peter has a lot to say about how leaders ought to lead. What do you think it would look like for a leader to lead with grace and humility rather than power or pride?
3. In verses 6-7, Peter correlates humility with “casting our anxieties” upon God. How do you think those two things connect, and what would it look like for you to cast your anxieties upon God?
4. Why do you think Peter describes the devil as a “roaring lion, seeking someone to devour,” and why is it important that we “resist him?” How might verses 6 and 7 provide help in doing that?
5. In verse 10, Peter gives us the hope and assurance that Christ will himself “restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish” us. How might knowing this help us in our desire to live for Christ and resist the devil?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. Peter first addresses the spiritual leaders (“elders”) of the church, with whom Peter also classifies himself. Strong leadership is critical to the health and vitality of the local church.

Question: By referring to elders as “shepherds” (v.2), what does this tell us about the nature and responsibility of a church leader?

Question: According to this passage, what are the positive qualities and attributes of a leader? What are the sins or vices that a godly leader must always avoid?

2. In many places in Scripture, including here in v.4, it is mentioned that believers will receive crowns in heaven. All Christians receive the “crown” of eternal life, but it would also seem that some receive special rewards or honors for faithful service to the Lord.

Question: How might this motivate us?

Question: Why do we sometimes balk at this idea of eternal reward or treasures, even though this is taught throughout Scripture? (see 1 Corinthians 3:10-14; 1 Cor.9:24-27; 2 Tim.4:8; Matt.5:12; Matt.6:20; Matt.25:23; etc.)

3. In v.5, Peter is encouraging the church to be submissive to their elders. By “elder,” Peter is referring not so much to older people as to church elders/overseers specifically (as he has already been teaching in vv. 1-4).

Question: While elders have spiritual obligations to the church “flock,” how can we as church members, at the same time, be submissive toward and supportive of our elders? (see Heb. 13:17)

4. Next, Peter writes more generally about all the interpersonal relationships within the church.

Question: Peter both warns against pride and encourages humility in our relationships in the church. How does pride break down community? How does humility foster greater community? (See Philippians 2:1-4)

5. What does it mean to be humble before the Lord? What is the relationship between humility (i.e., trusting in the Lord’s wisdom, providence, and provision) and the anxiety Peter encourages us to cast upon the Lord?

6. The devil is real! Moreover, Peter warns us that he is evil, cunning, and dangerous. While we need not fear him, we must also be sure to resist him (v.9), i.e., we must have an active and determined opposition to him.

Question: Though Peter does not spell it out for us here, Paul, in Ephesians 6:10-20, offers us some specific ways to combat the enemy. What are they?

7. What final word of encouragement (v.10) does Peter give to his original audience and to us about how the whole story ends?! How does Peter’s central theme of hope in the future (and in particular the reality that all of our losses will one day become gain!) give us strength to endure and persevere as God’s people here and now?

Living Hope: How God's Glorious Grace in Jesus Shapes and Empowers Us by the Spirit to Live with Gospel Grit in a Foreign Land.



Daniel in the Lion's Den by Briton Riviere, 1872

About the Artist: Briton Rivière, a British painter known for his animal paintings, particularly those featuring dogs and wild animals with deep emotion and dramatic flair, came from an artistic family. His father, William Rivière, was a drawing master and art teacher. Rivière initially studied at the University of Oxford, drawn to literary and historical themes, but later developed a fascination with animals and became renowned for his ability to imbue them with emotional depth and narrative presence.

About the Artwork

"Daniel in the Lion's Den" (1872) depicts the biblical story with lifelike lions, a popular and symbolic theme in Victorian England. It explores faith under trial, divine protection, and moral strength against tyranny, themes that resonated with Victorian audiences during a time when Christian values and moral courage were emphasized.

In Riviere's painting, Daniel's calm, unarmed demeanor symbolizes absolute trust in God. His gaze suggests prayer, hope, or spiritual communion, not fear. He represents the righteous man steady in the face of evil. The lions, though fierce, are subdued, a miracle of restraint. Riviere doesn't show angels or supernatural intervention; the restraint is invisible, spiritual. Some lions are relaxed, others alert, suggesting the tension between nature and divine command. Each lion has a distinct personality, reflecting the mystery of creation. The focused light on Daniel recalls God's presence in darkness. The murky den symbolizes the unknown, death, or temptation, yet Daniel remains untouched. Unlike dramatic biblical scenes, there's no movement or violence. The silence emphasizes Daniel's victory through trust, countering 19th-century action-heavy storytelling with a meditation on spiritual endurance.

1 Peter and Daniel in the Lion's Den

This painting, based on a biblical scene, helps us understand the overall theme of the New Testament letter. 1 Peter teaches Christians that as God's elect, they are called to live holy lives of faithful witness, enduring suffering with hope rooted in God's grace, while embracing their Gospel identity as a holy, royal priesthood in a hostile world. Like Daniel in the Old Testament, we are strangers in a distant place. Jesus told his disciples and us in the Gospel of John that we are "not of this world." Hebrews reminds the church that "this world is not their permanent home." Even within 1 Peter, God's people are called "sojourners and exiles."

Like Daniel, the darkness of this broken, sinful, and fallen world is always present. While we may never face a physical lion, Peter's first letter tells us that our enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, and the spiritual forces of evil are ever present. Yet, like Daniel, we must face the opposition with a Gospel poise, knowing that which is unseen is more powerful than what is seen and against us. Peter uses the language of "standing firm" in God's grace as we encounter all forms of darkness.

Church, may we see the beauty of 1 Peter in its overall message: God's glorious grace leading us to Gospel grit as sojourners in a dark world. But may we not just perceive its beauty but also embrace God's unique calling in these words: stand firm!