

R E M E M B E R Y O U R

H O P E

1 Peter 5

Introduction

- Peter closes his letter with a word to the elders of the churches and a word to the whole congregation, both related to humility.
- He exhorts the leaders to lead the people as shepherds, with humility rather than dominance. Then he exhorts all believers to live with humility.
- Peter promises that those who live in humility on earth will be exalted by God in the kingdom of heaven.
- Those who suffer for “a little while” in this life will live in eternal glory with Christ in heaven.

Christian leaders are called
to shepherd their people

1 Peter 5:1-2

Shepherd

- Peter closes his letter with an exhortation to the elders about how best to lead the people under their care.
- He told husbands about how to lead their wives in love and humility.
- He tells the church leaders to lead the people under their care as a shepherd leads his flock.
- Notice that this metaphor of shepherd leadership is found throughout the Bible (Numbers 27:17; Zechariah 10:2).

Shepherd

- God expects His leaders to care for His people the way a good shepherd cares for His sheep.
- Actually, that is where the word pastor comes from. It's the Latin word for "grazed" or "fed," as in a shepherd who feeds his sheep.
- This was one of Jesus's last charges to His disciples before He ascended into heaven. He Himself told Peter, "If you love me, feed my sheep" (John 21).
- Peter writes to them as a fellow elder, a fellow shepherd. Good pastors (shepherds) care for their people.

Shepherd

- Peter describes this kind of leader as one who exercises oversight, not for his own gain, but to serve, who is not domineering, but leads by example.
- This type of leadership requires humility.
- The biblical definition of humility is “not thinking less of yourself; it’s thinking of yourself less.” It’s putting others’ needs ahead of your own (Romans 12:10; 1 Corinthians 10:24; Philippians 2:3–4).
- Spiritual leadership isn’t about power, but service and sacrifice.

Shepherd

- James states that teachers, leaders, pastors, and elders will “be judged with greater strictness” (James 3:1) because they have a whole flock following them and trusting them to lead well.
- Peter encourages those who shepherd their people well that when Jesus, the “chief Shepherd,” returns, they will be rewarded with “the unfading crown of glory.”
- Church leadership is a weighty, yet rewarding, calling.

*All Christians are called to humility:
putting others' needs ahead of ours*

1 Peter 5:5-7

Humility

- Peter starts this section by exhorting younger believers to follow the example of humility set by the elders of the church.
- He says to “clothe yourselves” with humility.
- This is the only time this phrase is used in the Bible and refers to any kind of clothing that is tied on with a knot.
- The picture Peter paints refers to the apron worn by slaves.
- Clothing was one way that slaves and their role in society were identified.

Humility

- As Christians, we are servants.
- Peter is emphasizing the picture of humility: to put on your servant's uniform and serve one another.
- Peter may be remembering Jesus' wrapping Himself with the towel at the Lord's Supper when He knelt to wash the disciples' feet (John 13:4).
- Jesus calls on all of us to put ourselves last and others first (Matthew 20:20–28; Philippians 2:3–6).

Humility

- Peter includes a promise — that if we humble ourselves “under the mighty hand of God,” then He will exalt us “in the proper time.”
- The mighty hand of God refers to the Exodus where God delivered Israel from Egypt with a mighty hand (Exodus 10:3).
- Humbling ourselves before the Lord means submitting to Him, honoring Him as God, and trusting His mighty hand in our life.
- Those who demonstrate humility by trusting God now will be exalted “in the proper time,” in the kingdom of heaven.

If we persevere on earth, God will establish
us in His eternal glory in heaven

1 Peter 5:8-12

Persevere

- Peter concludes by restating his thesis, that those who suffer for a little while here on earth will be glorified in heaven with Christ (5:10).
- He then focuses on the true origin of this suffering: spiritual warfare (5:8).
- Peter uses the picture of a roaring lion on the prowl looking for someone to devour as a warning about the battle we face daily.
- Satan is the prince of this world (John 14:30).
- He is prowling around on this earth, looking to destroy people's lives.

Persevere

- Be sober-minded: To be sober-minded is to have a clear picture of the world around us.
- We do this by taking every thought captive and making it obedient to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).
- Peter told them to “arm themselves” with the mind of Christ, with godly thinking (4:1), because the battlefield is our minds (2 Corinthians 10:4–6).
- This allows us to look at the world with the mind of Christ. Practically, this is why we encourage you to spend time in God’s Word daily.

Persevere

- Be watchful: Like a lookout in the military, keep your eyes open, scan the horizon, realizing that the Enemy will especially try to sneak in.
- Keep your eyes open and look out for the ways Satan may be working.
- C. S. Lewis in *The Screwtape Letters* describes how Satan attempts to manipulate our intentions: “Surely you know that if a man can’t be cured of churchgoing, the next best thing is to send him all over the neighborhood looking for the church that ‘suits’ him . . . this makes him a critic where [Jesus] wants him to be a pupil.”

Persevere

- Stand firm: This is the same phrase Paul used repeatedly in the passage on spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6.
- When used in a military sense, this phrase has the idea of holding a critical position while under attack.
- In the Old Testament, God repeatedly told His people He would fight the battle for them; they just needed to stand firm (Exodus 14:14).
- Put on the full armor of God every morning and guard against falling to the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:11).

Application:

Good Shepherd vs. Evil Shepherd

Good Shepherd	Evil Shepherd
2 Samuel 12; Psalm 23, 79, 80, 95, 119; Isaiah 40, 53; Luke 15; John 10	Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 34; Zechariah 11
Tenderly cares for his people	Steals from the flock
Protects them from harm	Abuses the flock
Provides for them	Uses the flock

Abusive Churches

- Control-oriented leadership
- Manipulation of members
- Rigid, legalistic lifestyle
- Frequent changing of group / church name
- Denouncing all other churches
- Persecution complex
- Painful exit process

