



# 1 PETER 5 LIVING THE GLORY

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**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

SHEPHERDS

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ONE ANOTHER

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BE ALERT!

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ENDURE

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GRACE AND  
PEACE

*A ReVision Resource*

Living the Glory: 1 Peter 5  
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## 1 Peter 5: Introduction

Peter wends his way back to where he started, extending the blessings of grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ to his readers.

There are hardships to come and temptations and trials along the way, but God has called us to glory, and when we live together in the Lord's flock as He intends, we can show the watching world that Jesus is alive and we are His beloved people.

We need faithful shepherds and loving, obedient sheep, and we need to be alert to the devil who, though bound in Jesus' chains, still has power to do us ill.

But we can and must resist him, and even if we have to suffer a bit in this life – and we will, as Jesus promised – we can still live in and for the glory of God, and show the world our eternal hope.

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1 and 2 Peter can encourage, embolden, and instruct us, if we're willing to take the Apostle's words to heart. My prayer is that all who take up this study will do just that. Thank you for joining us.

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## 1 Partakers in Glory?

*1 Peter 5.1*

*1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:...*

**The Story:** Sometimes I think we read through certain passages of Scripture without really stopping to think about them, and very often, these are some of the most important texts we might consider. Like this one. Peter describes himself as a “partaker of the glory that will be revealed.” In 2 Peter 1.4 he indicates that believers partake of the divine nature as part of our walk with the Lord. Paul wrote about the “hope of glory” (Rom. 5.1, 2) and the glory of God by which we are transformed into the image of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3.12-18). But let us ask ourselves: Do we really, truly, indeed *participate* in the *glory* of God? And what’s that like? Or how would we know? The glory of God is our calling in life (1 Cor. 10.31); it is also our great hope and privilege. The glory of God should motivate, direct, and characterize our lives as followers of Jesus Christ – that we participate in the glory of God as a foretaste of the eternal glory that is yet to come! This is the Christian’s daily privilege and calling.

**The Structure:** God is revealing His glory through the things He has made (Ps. 19.1-4; Rom. 1.18ff.). Yet most people pay no attention. God, however, is not deterred. In this time of redemption and restoration He has appointed His people for the work of making His glory known throughout the earth (Hab. 2.14). This we do by our own participation in that glory – *meeting* God in glory through prayer, Scripture, worship, and the contemplation of creation; and *living* for the glory of God in such a way as to get the attention of others and provoke a question concerning our hope (1 Pet. 3.15).

*Are you regularly participating in the glory of God? How would you describe that experience to a new believer?*

## 2 Shepherd the Flock

*1 Peter 5.2-4*

*<sup>2</sup> Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; <sup>4</sup> and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

**The Story:** God has established shepherds in the Church for the work of equipping the saints, so that the saints can do the work of ministry that builds up the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.11-16). Shepherding is a very distinct function, the disciplines of which Jesus outlined in John 10 and practiced throughout the course of His ministry. Church leaders are not free to lead any way they choose. The latest methods imported from the worlds of business or education are no match for the work of shepherding when it comes to building-up the flock of God. One of the primary tools of a shepherd is his personal example of grace and sanctification. Church leaders serve selflessly in shepherding the flock, seeking only the benefit of their members and the nurture of the Body as a whole. God provides their needs, and He does so through the gifts of His people, in the first instance. But the true shepherds of a flock serve after the example of our Lord Himself, and it is His blessing and glory they anticipate receiving as a result of their continued faithfulness in ministry.

**The Structure:** If churches were more communities led by shepherds than organizations managed by program directors, we would see the world paying more attention. Just as in Acts 6, when the shepherds of that flock led them to care for one another in a generous and selfless manner, provoking a huge response from erstwhile skeptics and critics, so today, if the churches were more like true flocks cared for and equipped by competent and loving shepherds, the watching world would really have something to see.

*Does your church have a ministry of shepherding? Is that ministry led by the kind of people Peter describes?*

### **3 Mutual Submission**

*1 Peter 5.5*

*Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for  
“God resists the proud,  
But gives grace to the humble.”*

**The Story:** We don't much cotton to the notion of “submission” these days, but it is a resoundingly Biblical idea. Paul insists that submitting to one another in love is an indication of the filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5.18-21). When elders shepherd the flock of God so as to equip church members for ministry, the people should respond by being available to learn, grow, and serve under their leadership. All must be done with humility, not with any sense of “throwing our weight around” or trying to impress others. All believers are to be “clothed” with humility, making this a characteristic trait of the followers of Jesus. Thus the leaders of the Body of Christ and the Body as a whole put flesh on the humble example of the Lord Jesus Himself (Phil. 2.5-11), and demonstrate to the watching world that Jesus truly is alive from the dead.

**The Structure:** Humility is the natural posture of one ready to serve, as Jesus demonstrated in the upper room when He washed the disciples' feet (Jn. 13.1-15). Do you suppose Peter may have had that embarrassing (for him) situation in mind as he penned these words? The world knows how to respond to what it regards as the arrogance, aloofness, and hypocrisy of the Christian community. What would it do if it ever observed us acting in true love, humility, and mutual submission toward one another?

*With whom are you engaged in a relationship of mutual submission and service?*

## 4 Let the Lord Worry about It

*1 Peter 5.6, 7*

*<sup>6</sup>Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, <sup>7</sup>casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

**The Story:** We might be thinking, “Well, hey, if I’m busy submitting to everyone and his brother, and looking out for their needs more than my own, who’s gonna look out for me?” Peter says the Lord will look out for us. We must not allow anxiousness about our personal needs to overwhelm us. Rather, if we continue reaching out to others, we will find the Lord Himself there to attend to the matters that matter to us. And He will typically do this by other submissive-and-service-minded believers reaching out to us in love. We cast our anxieties on the Lord as we turn to Him prayer, giving up our fears and worries to Him, and letting Him worry about what we need. Of course, the Lord never worries; He simply takes care of us, just as He always has and always will (Heb. 13.5). Rather than worry, rejoice (Jms. 1.2-4). Rather than cower or cringe, submit and serve. God will take care of the rest.

**The Structure:** When we are living in the hope of glory, the world cannot help but see a different countenance and demeanor in us (1 Pet. 3.15). But when we get caught up in the fears and follies of our secular and materialist age – always running about here and there, trying to satisfy our wants and further our feeling of success – we only show the watching world a reflection of itself. Living as a Christian requires a new set of disciplines to bring our new mindset to fruition in everyday life. True believers will relish the challenge of thinking with the mind of Christ and living in His power.

*What does it mean for you to “think with the mind of Christ”? How does that affect your daily life?*

## 5 Prowling around in Chains

*1 Peter 5.8, 9*

*<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

**The Story:** The devil is real, and spiritual warfare is a struggle (Eph. 6.10-20). But the devil has also been bound by our Lord Jesus, so that, as long as we don't stray within the length of his chain, we're free to plunder his holdings (Matt. 12.22-29). We are on a mission to take back the world – lost souls, sinful lives, broken relationships, ruined cultures – from the dominion of the devil, and he's not going to take that lying down. But we can resist him by walking in obedience and humility, serving the Lord in all we do, and working hard to bring holiness to completion in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7.1; cf. 2 Pet. 1.5-11). This is hard work and can entail suffering of various kinds – even the suffering that comes as we struggle with temptation (cf. Ps. 73). But all this can be good for us if we will keep our eyes on Jesus and run our race with perseverance (Heb. 12.1, 2).

**The Structure:** The devil is not the ruler of this world. The True Ruler of this world has bound the devil and is in the business of putting *all* His enemies and everything else under His feet for the sake of blessing and building His Church (Eph. 1.19-23). We're on the side of the True Ruler, but we still have to contend with the pretender during this season of redemption and restoration. Know the devil's tricks. Learn your own vulnerabilities. Practice the disciplines that can help you to resist temptation. God will grow you through each brush with the enemy of our souls, but you must remain resolute and determined to resist.

*How would you explain to new believer what is involved in resisting the devil? Why must we do this?*

## 6 Restoration Ahead!

*1 Peter 5.10, 11*

*<sup>10</sup>But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup>To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

**The Story:** Recalling that the people to whom Peter was writing were experiencing persecution, we understand why he brings his book to a close with this particular focus. We are all called to suffer in one way or another, but it's only for a "little while" compared to the "eternal glory" that awaits us in the new heavens and new earth (a theme Peter will develop a bit more in 2 Peter). So let's keep our sufferings in perspective and learn to live with a view to the horizon of eternity. Everything that comes to us in this life, including our sufferings, is from the hand of God, and by His grace. We may discover joy and strength in suffering if we will bear up, looking to the Lord for restoration, confirmation, strengthening, and establishing now, and knowing that our full renewal is stored up in heaven in the dominion of Him Who reigns forever and ever.

**The Structure:** Christians live toward two horizons: the temporal horizon of our plans and duties, and the eternal horizon of glory and light. The more we learn to allow the latter to inform the former, the more our lives will move from glory to glory in advancing the Kingdom of God. By meditation, prayer, and mutual encouragement we may learn how to allow the "eternal glory" of King Jesus to fill every "little while" of our lives with meaning and strength.

*Do you live toward two horizons? How does that work out in your life?*

## 7 Greetings and Peace

*1 Peter 5.12-14*

<sup>12</sup>By *Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.* <sup>13</sup>*She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.* <sup>14</sup>*Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

**The Story:** Peter evidently dictated this letter to Silvanus, who doubtless applied some of his own style and skills to its composition. No matter; the Holy Spirit inspired the whole. The “true grace of God” is to endure hardship for Jesus, to submit in love to one another, use our gifts in ministry, and to live in the hope of glory before the watching world. This is not an option. Every believer is called to “stand firm” in this Gospel. The Church is one Body throughout the world, so it makes sense that those in Babylon (probably really Rome) and others should want to be remembered to the suffering believers in Asia Minor. The kiss of love provided a tangible reminder of the grace of the Lord and of His presence in the Body by His Spirit. Notice that Peter ends his epistle with grace and peace, rounding back to where he began in chapter 1. The Gospel, in spite of trials, suffering, hardship, uncertainty, and various other difficulties, is all about grace and peace. They who learn to live this way, no matter their circumstances, declare to the watching world that they are citizens of another realm, a realm of eternal hope and glory.

**The Structure:** It’s hard work to maintain the unity of the Body of Christ in the bonds of peace (Eph. 4.3), but Christians must strive to do so, beginning in their own churches, reaching out to other churches in the community, and joining together to extend the grace and peace of the Gospel to the Body of Christ around the world. When the world begins to see such oneness, it will believe that the Father has sent Jesus, full of grace and peace, for the salvation of lost men (Jn. 17.21).

*In what ways does your church reach out to other churches with the grace and peace of Jesus?*

*For reflection or discussion*

1. Quickly read John 10, making note of everything Jesus says He does as the Good Shepherd. Does this kind of shepherding exist in your church? Who is responsible for shepherding in your church?
2. Meditate on John 13.1-15. What does it mean for church members to be in submission to their leaders? To one another?
3. Read Matthew 12.22-29. Jesus has “bound” the devil. What does that mean? How should that encourage us?
4. What does it mean to “resist” the devil? When is this necessary? How can believers help one another resist the devil?
5. What does it mean to “partake” of Christ or to “participate” in Him? How should doing so affect our everyday lives?
6. What’s would you say is Peter’s most important message for churches and believers today? How are you seeking to put that message to work in your life?

*Prayer:*

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