

Fact Sheet for “The Coming Glory”

1 Peter 5:1-14

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Today we come to the closing chapter of Peter's first letter. In this chapter we will find both important theology and great application. Remember that Peter's readers were experiencing persecution for their faith. His letter was sent to encourage them.

ESV ¹ ¶ 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.

Notice Peter's mention of Christ's sufferings and Peter's own hope in the glory that is going to be revealed. He identifies with their suffering. Notice also that he identifies himself with their elders (“fellow elder”). His next words come from someone who can identify with them.

Theology... These verses are some of the most critical in the NT in understanding church leadership. They were not only addressed to those whom our culture identifies as the “pastors”. You need to think biblically and not with current culture here. The following are a few observations.

1. These elders were the leaders of the church.
2. There was more than one.
3. Elders were male. (This is 100% consistent throughout the Bible.)
4. The terms “elder”, “shepherd” (“pastor” in Eph. 4:11), and “overseer” (“bishop” elsewhere in the KJV) here referred to the same leaders. These three words emphasized different aspects of their ministry (elder – the wisdom commonly found in those who are older, shepherd – care, overseer – administrative).
5. We get our word “Presbyterian” from the word for elder. We get our word “Episcopal” from the word for overseer.
6. Nowhere in the NT are these men identified as the “clergy”. This office is open to any qualified male. It does not require ordination.

In our congregation this would refer to those who are current elders. The respect granted these men should also be given to those who have served well in the past as elders as well as to those who haven't served on the board but are of elder quality.

Application... Look at Peter's three couplets of negative and positive instructions (verses 2-3).

“when the chief Shepherd appears” – end times
“you will receive the unfading crown of glory”

Peter himself was going to be a partaker in this glory (verse 1).

Peter has firstly addressed the “elders” in verses 1-4. Now he secondly addresses those who are younger and thirdly everyone.

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.”**

Those who are younger... “be subject to” – Literally “place yourself under”

This is the same word used in 3:1 and Ephesians 5:21.

All of you... “clothe yourselves... with humility toward one another”

The word translated “clothe yourselves” occurs only here in the NT (*hapax legomena*). Here it is a verb, but when its noun is used outside of the NT it refers to the apron of a slave.¹ It is reminiscent of John 13:4-15. Then Peter quotes Proverbs 3:34.

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.

We should not only be humble before others we should humble ourselves before our sovereign God. The same mighty hand that let Peter’s readers suffer will one day lift them up. He has not forgotten them, but He cares for them. Read Matthew 6:25-32 and psalm 55:22.

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.

Their suffering is not unique. It was being experienced by Christians throughout the world. Peter exhorted his readers to resist the devil and stand firm in their faith. If they caved, grew depressed or angry, and doubted Christ, then they would be allowing themselves to be devoured by the devil.

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.

Their suffering will last only a little while, while their glory in Christ will be eternal.

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

This short benediction is like the one in 4:11b.

Peter now closes his first letter with these words...

¹² ¶ By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.

Silvanus (or Silas) served as Peter’s *amanuensis* and wrote this letter as Peter dictated it. Peter then likely penned these closing words.

¹³ She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.

Peter may have chosen these words due to the persecution under Nero.

“**She**” – the church (the word “church” is feminine)

“**Babylon**” – Rome

“**Mark**” – John Mark (see Acts 12)

¹⁴ ¶ Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Theology... church leadership

Application... standing firm in the face of suffering, with our eyes focused on the glory that is to be revealed

If you have any doubts as to whether or not you will be a partaker with Peter and his readers in the glory that will be one day revealed when Christ returns... then talk to me or another Christian. We would be happy to take the time you need to find salvation in Christ.

¹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, p. 856.