

1 Peter – Week 23

Humility and Responsibilities

1 Peter 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: 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. 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." 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. NIV

- Carnal Christianity has no place in divine **leadership**.
- The need for strong leadership among believers is **crucial**.
- What do all three of these (elders, bishops, & pastors) have in common? They are called to be **servants** of God.

Peter begins with two very strong statements:

1. He describes himself as a **witness** of Christ's suffering.
He became a witness who stood forgiven, who stood **restored** by the grace of God, who would share the glory when it's revealed.
2. He saw suffering, and he will also see the **glory** of God.
It means to lead, to guide, and to **rule**.

We have to see our role as believers is to be willing to do several things:

- Leaders must be always working on their **ability** to lead.
- Leaders must be willing to provide spiritual **guidance**.
- Leaders are ready always to offer **comfort**.
- Leaders are those who also offer **strength** in times of hurting.
- Leaders also are willing to offer **correction** when it's needed, in a loving spirit.
- The key word in all of this is **willing**.
- Ministry is not to be an **unwanted** burden.
- We must do away with the sense of **unworthiness** or reluctance for responsibility out of fear or lack of ability.

- Peter goes on to say, as stewards we are to be **eager** to serve.
- It's a strong term meaning "with enthusiasm, with **energy**, and excitement".
- Peter calls us to a spirit of **submission** to our leadership.
- Peter just said serve without **grumbling** or calling a press conference.

- If we are to be Godly leaders and servants, and live in submission to God and to authorities, it comes with a price. The price is **humility**.
 - Humility must be part of the believer's **wardrobe**.
 - Humility does not involve beating up one's self.
 - Humility is making a right **estimation** of oneself.
 - Humility is being aware of our own personal **strength**.
 - Humility is also being aware of our own personal **weaknesses**.
 - Humility always involves a true **dependence** on God.
 - Humility always has an **attitude** of putting others first.

- **Pride** is the opposite of humility.
 - Pride can keep the **grace** of God from affecting our lives.
 - Proud people have their faith and trust in **themselves**.
 - The proud can only see their **strength**, not their **weaknesses**.
 - The proud see themselves as the **standard** for others to follow.

Final thoughts:

1. The attitude of humility must be the governing **factor** in every God directed church.
2. The life of a follower of Christ is an **intense** spiritual battle...(it's not always easy).
3. Take time to evaluate your life and attitudes to make sure you are not driven by **pride**.
4. Learn to cultivate a life of **faith** that past experiences have taught you in stressful times.
5. Ask God to **increase** your willingness and ability to trust Him when it's hard.
6. Remind yourself where you would be without the **grace** of God.