



## INTRO

Today we finish up Peter's first letter and move on to his second letter. Mindi's painting for 1 Peter is an incredible visual for chapter 5. Peter was writing to believers who had been dispersed throughout the region by the persecution of Christians. Peter saw displaced Christians as potential church planters who could start churches wherever they were. He encouraged believers to be patient with those who persecuted them and to keep their focus on Christ, our *Living Hope*.

## TEACHING

1 Peter 5:1-4: Peter referred to himself as a fellow elder (v. 1) rather than an apostle, as he placed himself with the elders of these planted churches. He acknowledged that he witnessed the Messiah's sufferings first hand and stated he was "a participant in the glory about to be revealed" (v. 1b). *Nelson's Commentary* explains that as a participant, Peter spoke "of sharing in Christ's reign in the coming kingdom."<sup>1</sup> Peter's focus was on the elders of the churches. *Nelson's Commentary* provides a job description for the elders whose name literally can be translated as "aged."<sup>2</sup> Elders also referred to overseers and bishops, and their responsibilities included:

- *Pastoring or shepherding the church* (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2): "Church leaders should lead the people of God in the same way: feeding, protecting, and guiding them . . . joyfully, not merely as a duty."<sup>3</sup>
- *Being godly examples to the people in the church* (1 Peter 5:3): "Christian leaders "need to perform the role of servants, not of masters, to those who God has assigned to their care."<sup>4</sup>
- *Administering the church* (1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5).
- *Preaching and teaching* (Ephesians 4:12; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17).
- *Representing the church* (Acts 20:17).
- *Praying for the sick* (James 5:14).<sup>5</sup>

*Nelson's Commentary* also outlines the qualifications for elders from 1 Timothy 3: "blameless; husband of one wife; temperate; sober-minded; of good behavior; hospitable; able to teach; not given to wine; not violent, but gentle; not greedy for money; not quarrelsome; not covetous; rules own house well; has submissive children; not a novice; has a good testimony."<sup>6</sup> It's a big deal to be an elder and to represent the church.

Jesus was also referred to as "the Shepherd (1 Peter 2:25), the good Shepherd (John 10:11,14), and the great Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20)."<sup>7</sup> The Shepherd knew His flock and they knew His voice, and He willingly laid His life down for theirs.

In verse 4 Peter reminded them that when the Chief Shepherd (Christ) returns the elders would receive the unfading crown of glory. Constable outlines five crowns that believers can receive:

1. An imperishable crown—for leading a disciplined life (1 Corinthians 9:25).
2. A crown of rejoicing—for evangelism and discipleship (1 Thessalonians 2:19).
3. A crown of righteousness—for loving the Lord's appearing (2 Timothy 4:8).
4. A crown of life—for enduring trials (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10).
5. A crown of glory—for shepherding God's flock faithfully (1 Peter 5:4).<sup>8</sup>

These are not physical but rather metaphorical crowns. Elders are to be examples in all of this.

<sup>1</sup> Earl Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, and H. Wayne House, eds., *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), p. 1688.

<sup>2</sup> *Nelson's Commentary*, p. 1688.

<sup>3</sup> *Nelson's Commentary*, p. 1688.

<sup>4</sup> *Nelson's Commentary*, p. 1688.

<sup>5</sup> *Nelson's Commentary*, p. 1689.

<sup>6</sup> *Nelson's Commentary*, p. 1689.

<sup>7</sup> *Nelson's Commentary*, p. 1688.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Constable, Dr. Constable's Exposition Bible Study Notes: 1 Peter, pp. 104-105; available at <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf>.



Living Hope

# THE ROLE OF THE ELDERS

1 Peter 5

Teaching Notes

1 Peter 5:5–11: Peter moved to younger men and instructed them to be subject to the elders. All believers were to clothe themselves in humility (v. 5) and humble themselves under God (v. 6). Constable explains, “The Greek word translated ‘clothe’ is a rare one, that comes from a word referring to the apron that slaves put on over their regular clothes. This garment prepared them for service.”<sup>9</sup> Peter encouraged the younger men to cast their cares on Christ because He cares about them (v. 7).

Peter warned them to be alert and serious because “the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour” (v. 8). Alert and serious can also be translated as to be sober or “self-disciplined, to think rationally and not foolishly” and vigilant or “alert to the spiritual pitfalls of life and take appropriate steps to make certain that we do not stumble.”<sup>10</sup>

*Nelson’s Commentary* states, “Satan is both cunning and cruel.”<sup>11</sup> Constable stresses that believers should respect Satan’s power by being of sober spirit so they can resist him.<sup>12</sup> Although Satan will do whatever he can to mess up believers walks with the Lord, Peter promised God would “restore, establish, strengthen, and support” believers after they had suffered (v. 10).

We can expect to suffer, but dominion belongs to God. *Nelson’s Commentary* explains, “Responding to the Word of God by saying ‘amen’ echoes a Jewish practice of declaring that everything that had been said is true and that the hearers were committed by putting into practice that truth.”<sup>13</sup>

1 Peter 5:12–14: Peter concluded his letter by explaining that he had dictated the letter through Silvanus and that they could accept that it was the true grace of God to encourage them (v. 12). He encouraged them to stand in Christ’s grace. “The church in Babylon” was possibly a code name for the church in Rome (v. 13).<sup>14</sup> Peter claimed John Mark as his spiritual son. He ended with instructions to greet each other in love. And may the peace of Christ be theirs.

## CLOSING

Peace is essential when people are going through a time of suffering. May the peace of Christ fall afresh on your hearts and your minds and cling onto the *Living Hope*.

<sup>9</sup> Constable, p. 105.

<sup>10</sup> Nelson’s Commentary, p. 1688.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson’s Commentary, p. 1688.

<sup>12</sup> Constable, p. 108.

<sup>13</sup> Nelson’s Commentary, p. 1690.

<sup>14</sup> Nelson’s Commentary, p. 1690.