

A Study of The Epistle of 1st Peter

Theme: "A LIVING HOPE!"

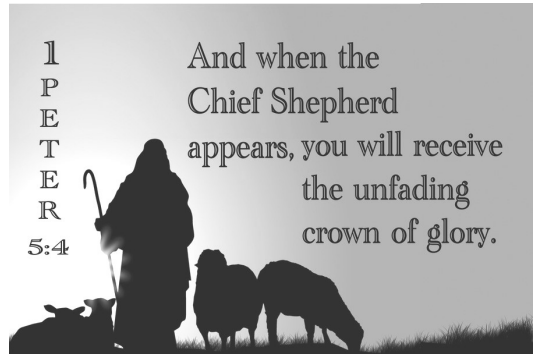
Trinity Lutheran Church - Norman, OK.

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Lesson: 34

Chapter 5:1-5

Date: 4-25-21



BIBLE TEXT:

- (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.
- (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."

STUDY NOTES:

- (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**:
(Mt 16:27; 17:8; 26:58; Mk 14:54; Lk 22:60-62; Jn 18:10-16;
Ac 1:8; 20:17; 1 Tim 3:1; 5:17)
- (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;
(Ezek 34:1-10; Lk 15:3-7; Jn 10:1-18; 21:15-17; Ac 20:28;
Php 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1,2; Titus 1:7)
- (3) not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.
(Mt 16:24-27; Mk 10:42-45; Php 2:6-11; 2 Th 3:9)
- (4) And **when the chief Shepherd** appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
(Jn 10:11; 1 Cor 9:25)
- (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."
(Prov 3:34; Mt 23:12; Jn 13:7; Eph 5:21)

“Here St. Peter tells how those who are to govern in the spiritual realm should conduct themselves. Now in the previous chapter (1 Peter 4:11) he stated that no one should teach or preach anything unless he is sure that it is **God's Word**, in order that our conscience may rest on solid rock.

For it is impressed on us Christians that we must know with certainty what is **pleasing to God** and what displeases Him. Where this is not the case, there are no Christians. Then the apostle also stated that everyone must regard whatever office or work he has as being performed for **God**. This verse, however, is really addressed to the bishops or pastors, to inform them what qualifications they should have and how they should conduct themselves.

But here you must familiarize yourself with the language and learn the meaning of the words. The little word πρεβύτερος, or “priest,” is Greek. In German it is *eyn Eltister* (“an elder”). In Latin the word *senatores* is used, that is, a number of old and wise men who should have a great deal of experience. These are the men whom **Christ** called His officials and council. They administer the spiritual rule; that is, they preach, and they care for a Christian congregation.

Therefore do not be misled in case the priests are now designated otherwise, for Scripture knows nothing about those who are called priests today. Forget about the present state of affairs, and bear in mind that when St. Peter and other apostles came into a city in which there were believers or Christians, they selected an elderly man or two who were upright, were married and had children, and were versed in Scripture. These men were called πρεσβύτεροι. Later Paul and Peter also called them ἐπίσκοποι, that is, bishops. Therefore the words “bishop” and “priest” had one and the same meaning.

Of this we have another excellent example in the legend of St. Martin. A number of people came to a place in Africa and saw a man lying in a hut. Not knowing who he was, they took him to be a peasant. Later, when the people congregated there, this man stood up and preached. Then they saw that he was their pastor or bishop. For at that time pastors or bishops did not have ways, clothing, and gestures to distinguish them from other people.

These elders, says St. Peter, who are to take care of and provide for the people, I exhort. I am one of them. Accordingly, you see clearly that he calls those men elders who have had an office and have preached. For this reason he also calls himself an elder. And here St. Peter humbles himself. He does not say that he is an overlord, although he could have done so, since he was **an apostle of Christ**. He calls himself not only a fellow elder but also **“a witness of the sufferings of Christ.”**

It is as if he were saying: I not only preach, but I am also one of the Christians who must suffer. In this way he points out that where there are Christians, they must suffer and be persecuted. This is a true apostle. If there were a pope or a bishop of this kind today who also bore this title, we would be glad to kiss his feet.”

LIFE APPLICATION

How this is a good summary of the “theology of the cross”:
We share in the sufferings of Christ,
as well as partake in the glory that is going to be revealed.