

22S03 1st Peter 5:1-5 the Flock of God

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our series on 1st Peter with 1st Peter 5:1-5.

The author of this letter is the Apostle Peter. Most scholars believe this letter was written sometime in AD60-64. The main theme of 1st Peter is “Where does our Hope come from?” for those suffering persecution. This letter was written to Christians living in the Roman Empire and facing persecution because they follow Jesus.

I’m reading from the International Children’s Bible (ICB) again today, I like the plain English in this translation. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Before we start today, Peter is talking about some things we often don’t want to talk about. Church leadership and more importantly how Church leaders should act and what their motives should be.

Let’s read 1st Peter 5:1-5 (ICB) *¹Now I have something to say to the elders in your group. I am also an elder. I myself have seen Christ’s sufferings. And I will share in the glory that will be shown to us. I beg you to ²take care of God’s flock, his people, that you are responsible for. Watch over it because you want to, not because you are forced to do it. That is how God wants it. Do it because you are happy to serve, not because you want money. ³Do not be like a ruler over people you are responsible for. Be good examples to them. ⁴Then when Christ, the Head Shepherd, comes, you will get a crown. This crown will be glorious, and it will never lose its beauty. ⁵In the same way, younger men should be willing to be under older men. And all of you should be very humble with each other. “God is against the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.” (Proverbs 3:34)*

Let’s pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your word from 1st Peter, help us to feel the encouragement you intended us to feel. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay, let’s look closer at what Peter is telling us. First 1st Peter 5:1 (ICB) *¹Now I have something to say to the elders in your group. I am also an elder. I myself have seen Christ’s sufferings. And I will share in the glory that will be shown to us.*

Now I think we need to pay special attention when one of the Apostles gives their credentials. They are about to say something that requires them to assert their authority to say it. Peter is specifically addressing people who consider themselves to be elders or people how think they have authority in the church. Peter saw Christ’s suffering and He is sharing in Christ’s glory, so please listen to him.

Peter goes on to say in, 1st Peter 5:2 (ICB) *I beg you to ²take care of God's flock, his people, that you are responsible for. Watch over it because you want to, not because you are forced to do it. That is how God wants it. Do it because you are happy to serve, not because you want money.* Those in influential positions in the church need to take care of the flock or the people of God in the church. Do it because you want to, not because you feel forced to do so. Do it because you want to serve God and serve others, not because of what you think you will get for it, money, prestige, power or influence. People serving as leaders in the church need to be humble servants, remember we only have one leader Jesus. The rest of us are servants.

Let's read the next couple verse again, 1st Peter 5:3-4 (ICB) *³Do not be like a ruler over people you are responsible for. Be good examples to them. ⁴Then when Christ, the Head Shepherd, comes, you will get a crown. This crown will be glorious, and it will never lose its beauty.*

This scripture is clearly talking to and about pastors and church leaders. First, don't act like a ruler over who you are responsible for. Ouch, I've been in many churches in my life and there is always a hierarchy. The pastor typically acts as the president or CEO of the church. Whatever the pastor says goes. As such the pastor often becomes like a ruler. Peter goes on, saying be a good example to them. Peter then stresses we have one "Head Shepherd", Jesus. All the rest of us are followers of Jesus, not leaders. If we are in a place of responsibility like a pastor, we need to lead by example. God's church is not supposed to operate under the rule or authority of humans, but under Jesus only. As leaders, teachers and pastors, we need to be very careful not to act superior or as authorities, rather we need to live as an example to those under our care. God has to be the only true authority and as such, we need to submit and surrender to Jesus as we make decisions and guide our churches.

Let's read verse again, 1st Peter 5:5 (ICB) *⁵In the same way, younger men should be willing to be under older men. And all of you should be very humble with each other. "God is against the proud, but he gives grace to the humble." (Proverbs 3:34)*

Now I know this seems odd but it is obvious that older more mature Christians have a lot to offer younger Christians. Young Christian need to willingly allow older more mature Christians to guide them. As a Christian, we humble ourselves to the rule of Jesus in our lives. Likewise, we need to humble ourselves to the guidance of the Godly people Jesus has put in our lives. God is against our prideful arrogance but instead wants us to listen and learn from others as we grow in our relationship with Jesus.

Let's Review,

- 1) **Does Peter have the authority to tell us what God wants from us?** Simple answer is yes. Peter was with Jesus, he saw what Jesus did, he saw how Jesus acted and spoke. He learned from Jesus and now is sharing some of these he learned from Jesus. I think that gives Peter the right to be heard. So maybe we should listen. What do you think.?

- 2) **How does God want Church leaders to lead?** By example. Church leaders are not rulers and should not act that way. Truthfully, if leaders act like rulers in the church they should be removed because they are not fit to serve in that role. I know this is harsh but our pastors and elders and deacons or whatever they are called in your church are not the authority. Only Jesus is the Head Shepherd, the rest of us are servants. Furthermore, if our pastors are only worried about what they are getting, then their heart is not focused on Jesus. This included money but not only money. Unfortunately, some enter the ministry for the wrong reasons. A job, prestige, honor, respect. But this is not the right motive. A Christian leader, leads by example, not like the authorities in other parts of our lives. Church leaders should be different. Different in the way God wants us to treat others.
- 3) **Does Peter think young Christians should respect older more mature Christians?** Yes. No question here. All Christians should be humble not proud. What this means is we must be willing to learn from others. This includes being rebuked when we make mistakes. This includes allowing others to teach us what they know about God's Kingdom and Jesus. This includes allowing others to make suggestions on how we live for Jesus. We should never be so proud to say, we know better or what can thank person teach me. This does not mean submit or surrender. We submit and surrender to Jesus, not people in our church. We should respect people who God has put in leadership roles. But, just because someone is in a position of leadership, does not always mean they should be. We must discern God's will and observe how leaders act before we accept what they say as Godly council.

Let me leave you with this today. Peter is not telling us Pastors should not be paid. The Bible tells us a pastor deserved to be paid. Pastors have great responsibility. But that responsibility does not make them a ruler, rather they are to lead by example. Now please hear this fellow Christians, fellow followers of Jesus. We must humble ourselves so that we can learn from others, especially those in leadership roles in our churches. Remember Jesus has them in our lives for a reason.

Let's Pray.

Heavenly Father thank you. Thank you for giving us role models like our church leaders. Thank you for allowing us to guide and teach others. Help us to be humble so we can learn and teach more about you. Help us to joyfully do the tasks you ask of us. I trust you Lord. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen

I hope you are enjoying our study of 1st Peter. I hope you will join me for the rest of this series

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. If you liked the message, please select like. And Please Subscribe to our channel. Leave comments here, or our website or mail me at kip@punla.org. I appreciate your feedback. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.