

Faith that Fuels Perseverance

1 Peter 5: Suffering for a little while

Shepherd the Flock of God

⁵ 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.”

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. 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.

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

Final Greetings

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. ¹³ She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son. ¹⁴ Greet one another with the kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Notes on the verb “shepherd” mentioned in 1 Peter 5:2 as per the Lexham Theological Wordbook

ποιμαίνω (*poimainō*). vb. **to shepherd, tend, pasture; figuratively, to lead, guide, rule.** *To care for sheep.*

This word is related to ποιμήν (*poimēn*, “shepherd”) and is the other major Septuagint translation of רָעָה (*rā’ā*, “to shepherd”). The word *poimainō* is used literally in Luke 17:7, but the NT more often uses it metaphorically. Congregational leaders are described as shepherding (*poimainō*) their flock, i.e., offering spiritual oversight (e.g., John 21:16; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2), but they do so as under-shepherds to Jesus, the “Chief Shepherd” (ἀρχιποίμενος, *archipoimenos*; 1 Pet 5:4). Matthew uses *poimainō* in a quoted prophecy about Jesus’ earthly mission to Israel (Matt 2:6), while Revelation uses it (within a citation of Psa 2:8–9) to portray Jesus ruling (*poimainō*) over the nations at the end of time (Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15).

QUESTIONS

a. Observation (What does it say?)

1. Who are the elders mentioned in verse 1?
2. Who is the chief Shepherd?
3. The devil is described as a “roaring lion.” How should Christians react to him?
4. How long will the Christians’ suffering last? (v. 10)
5. Who is “she who is at Babylon”? (v. 13)

b. Interpretation (What does it mean?)

1. Why do you think Peter describes himself as a “fellow elder” in this instance when he introduced himself as “an apostle” at the beginning of the letter?
2. What are the guidelines for leaders in the Christian community and why are they important?
3. What do you think Peter means when he says “clothe yourselves... with humility”?
4. Why does Peter exhort his readers (and us) to be “sober minded” and “watchful”? (v. 8)
5. How would you explain verses 10-11?
6. How do you see this final chapter tie-in with the rest of the letter?

c. Application (What do I do with this?)

1. What have you learned about the model of leadership for the local church?
2. How does this passage help us with the business of Christian living in this world?