

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

### **Fundamental Attitudes of Christian Maturity**

#### **1 Peter 5:5-14**

#### **Part 2**

There is a richness at the end of the epistle of First Peter that demands our attention. At the end of this epistle Peter lists a number of different imperatives. These imperatives are not so much dealing with specific outward behaviors as much as they are inward attitudes. If we are ever going to live in a right way we must think right. Hopefully these list of imperatives will help us to think right and therefore to live right. What are the basic attitudes that we have seen so far?

An attitude of submission - Let us look at **V. 5** **“You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders.....”** Paul addresses the younger men because they would be the ones who most likely will stumble over the exhortation that he is about to give. And what was that exhortation? **“be subject to your elders.”** Peter is commanding the young men to line up under (HUPPATASSO) their elders. The elders are not the older men of the fellowship but rather those who Peter addressed in **VV. 1-4**. The elders that these young men were to be subject to were the local church leaders who were exhorted in **VV. 1-4** **“to shepherd the flock of God.”** Peter is saying that just as the elders were **“not to lord it over the flock”** or in others words to use their authority to serve themselves the **“young men likewise”** were not to serve their own ends or purposes but rather to serve the fellowship by making themselves **“subject”** to the elders. This is a very basic fundamental attitude that we must have in place in our lives if we are going to live right. What was another fundamental basic attitude that we saw last week?

An attitude of humility - Let us continue to read, **“you younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (6) Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”** The word “humble” means “to bring low.” And as we looked at these two verses we saw first of all that we are to put on this particular attitude in respect “to others.” **“Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another.”** **When** we “clothe” ourselves with humility toward one another we are in essence putting on the garment of a servant. This is a very scary thing but Peter gives to us a very powerful motivation at the end of **V. 5** **“God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”** If we want God in our corner ministering grace to us in the time of our need then we need to purpose in the course of our lives to **“put on the garment of humility toward one another.”** I hope that you have been seeking to work this out in your lives this week.

But humility is not only commanded to be expressed toward **“one another”** but also “towards the Lord.” Look at **V. 6** **“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”** The phrase **“under the mighty hand of God”** is an O.T. expression used to communicate the sovereignty of God being expressed in the affairs of everyday life. We must not react to the circumstances as if things are out of control. Things are not out of control at all. Quite to the contrary God’s mighty hand is in truth directing the course of our lives.

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

As such rather than grumbling and complaining, rather than becoming angry and bitter we need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and join in saying with Job, **“though the Lord slay me yet I will still trust Him.”** AND THIS LEADS US TO OUR THIRD ATTITUDE.

### AN ATTITUDE OF TRUST

If we are going to be successful in our walk with the Lord we must be able to trust Him. If I were to ask you this morning if you trust the Lord what would you say? Most of you I believe would quickly say yes. But before we so quickly respond let us consider the words of Peter.

Let us read **V.7, “casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.”** If we do what Peter is exhorting us to do which is to “cast all our anxiety upon Him.” And if we do this for the reason he states, which is “because He cares for you” then certainly we can confidently declare that we do in fact trust Him. But if we fail to do this then we need to possibly reexamine whether we are truly trusting in Him or not.

Let us say that one of his readers because of their Christian profession had just lost their job. Let us say that because he had lost his job he had begun to worry about how the needs of his family were going to be met. And because of his worry he was not sleeping at night, he lost his appetite, and there was this very sick gnawing feeling in the pit of his stomach. And as he looked to the future there was a very real fear that the situation may get worse before he got better. What does this person need to do? He needs to do exactly what Peter exhorts us to do in this verse.

Let me ask you a question. If you cast all your anxiety upon the Lord what are you left with after this is accomplished? PEACE. Is there anyone here this morning that is anxious? Is there anyone here this morning that is filled with fear? Then let me exhort you even as Peter exhorted his readers to “cast all your anxiety upon the Lord.”

But you may ask, “How do we do this? How do we cast our anxiety on the Lord?” **Phil. 4:6** makes it very clear how this is done. It says, **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication ...let your requests be made known to God.”** We cast our anxieties upon the Lord through prayer by making are requests known to Him.

But someone may say, “But I do this and my anxieties still persist.” They may say, “I am praying faithfully and yet I am not experiencing the peace of God which is supposed to surpass all comprehension,” according to Phil. 4:7. Why would this be? Why would someone who prays and prays and prays may find themselves continuing to experience anxiety? Why would someone who prays and prays and prays find themselves continuing to experience fear? The answer is very simple.

In order to become free of anxiety in respect to the cares and burdens that we are seeking to cast upon Him we must do this with “thanksgiving.” Isn’t this what the verse says, **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”** It is not “praying” that would lead us to be free of anxiety but rather “praying” with “thanksgiving” that will lead us to be free of anxiety.

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

Let me ask you a question, “What should be the source of this thankful spirit when praying? This is a very important question. Should the source of our thankful spirit when praying be the certain knowledge that we will receive what we have requested?”

**Rom. 8:26** makes it very clear to us “**that we do not know how to pray as we should.**” The only confidence that we can have in our request being answered is when we know that the request we have made is consistent with His revealed will. **1 John 5:14**, “**And this is the confidence that we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us.**”

Again let us ask ourselves the question, “What should be the source of our thankful spirit when praying? If it is not the certain knowledge that we will receive what we have requested then what is it? The source of the thankful spirit is the certain knowledge the Lord cares for us.”

Isn't this exactly what Jesus was saying in **Matt. 6:25-26**, “**Do not be anxious for your life as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing? (26) Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they.**” What is Jesus saying? He is saying that the Lord cares for us. And if this is so then we need to put away this anxiety. Or in the words of Peter we need to “**cast our cares on the Lord because He cares for us.**”

We will only be set free from our anxiety if our prayers are made with thanksgiving or in other words if our prayers are made knowing that God in fact cares for us.

When you find yourself under the mighty hand of God. When you find yourself suffering in the outworking of God's sovereign plan you need to humble yourselves before Him, “**casting all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you.**”

I am sure many of you are familiar with the story of Hannah which is found in **1 Samuel 1**. Elkanah had two wives Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah was barren and Peninnah had children and Peninnah would not let Hannah forget that she was barren and year after year she suffered Peninnah's ridicule. But in the incident recorded for us in **1 Samuel 1**, we see Hannah going up with Elkanah to Shiloh to worship the Lord and to offer sacrifices. While there we read that she poured out her heart before the Lord and was weeping bitterly. Though praying silently, Samuel records for us the prayer that she prayed, “O Lord of hosts, if Thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of Thy maidservant and remember me, and not forget Thy maidservant, but wilt give Thy maidservant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.” The sight of this weeping woman moving her lips while praying silently but not making any intelligible noises caused Eli the priest to think that she was drunk and confronted her, but she answered in **V. 15**, “**No, my lord, I am a woman oppressed in spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the Lord. (16) Do not consider your maidservant as a worthless woman; for I have spoken until now out of my great concern and provocation.**”

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

**(17) Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace; and may the God of Israel grant your petition that you have asked of Him.”** He in essence joined with her in praying for the petition that she had asked, and she responds in **V. 18** by saying, **“Let your maidservant find favor in your sight.” So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no LONGER SAD.** What had she done? She had cast her cares, she had cast her anxieties, I believe in the midst of her tears, she cast her cares upon the Lord with thanksgiving knowing that He in fact cared for her and she was able to go away in peace. **HAD HER CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGED WHEN SHE LEFT ELI AFTER PRAYING HER PRAYER? NO! THE ONLY THING THAT HAD CHANGED WAS THAT SHE TRANSFERRED HER BURDEN FROM HERSELF TO THE LORD. THIS IS WHAT WE NEED TO BE ABOUT DOING. AND CASTING OUR BURDENS UPON HIM BECAUSE WE TRULY KNOW THAT HE CARES FOR US.**

There has been some very pressing issues that we, as elders have been recently wrestling with. And I have had to confess to my wife just a few days ago, after I had stayed awake until 4:00 AM in the morning that I had begun to lose my peace. This passage of Scripture was very timely for me. I can cast these anxieties that I have been experiencing upon the Lord because I know that he cares for me. I can cast these anxieties upon the Lord because I know that He cares for you. The bottom line is simply this I can trust the Lord. Am I trusting Him to take away the difficulties that I have encountered or may encounter? No! I am trusting Him to care for me and this church, whether the path He has chosen for me or for this church is easy or hard.

If we are going to live victoriously, if we are going to live our Christian lives successfully, we need to be practicing basic fundamental Christian attitudes. The first attitude that we saw in this passage was the attitude of submission, then we saw the attitude of humility, and we have just seen the attitude of trust. But Peter is not yet finished. There is still another attitude that he wants us to embrace in our lives.

### AN ATTITUDE OF SELF CONTROL

Let us look at **V. 8 “Be of sober spirit.”** This is not new we have seen this encouraged earlier in the epistle. In **1 Pet. 1:13** it said, **“Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”** And we see Peter making another reference to this quality in **1 Pet. 4:7** where he said, **“The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.”**

To be sober means that we are free from intoxication or in other words not drunk. It can be used to refer to being free from intoxication with alcohol. Or it can be used to refer to being free from intoxicating influences of the world. In all three cases in this epistle we are compelled by the context to conclude that the word “sober” is being used in a metaphorical sense. Or, in other words, Peter is commanding us to be free from the intoxicants of the world.

These readers who Peter was addressing was going through some very difficult times. They were suffering. It is very difficult sometimes when we are the midst of suffering not to want to indulge ourselves in things that would ease our pain. And in our attempts to ease our pain we can make some very bad decisions and end up under the influences of the world and the world system.

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

But how will we be able to overcome the influences of the world? **1 John 5:3-4 “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. (4) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. To be sober minded is to simply walk by faith.”**

If you have ever listened to the radio broadcast “Thru the Bible” its theme song is “How firm a foundation.” For us here this morning who desire not to be overcome by the world or to be intoxicated by its message it might be good to once again review the words of this wonderful song.

“How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord. Is laid for your faith in his excellent word! What more can He say than to you He hath said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Fear not, I am with thee: O Be not dismayed, For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid. I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, upheld by My righteousness, omnipotent hand.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply: The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to its foes: That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no , never, no , never forsake!

### CONCLUSION

WHAT ARE THE BASIC FUNDAMENTAL ATTITUDES THAT WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE DEVELOP WITHIN US.

AN ATTITUDE OF SUBMISSION.

AN ATTITUDE OF HUMILITY.

AN ATTITUDE OF TRUST.

AND ATTITUDE OF SELF CONTROL OR IN OTHER WORDS COMMITTING OURSELVES TO WALK BY FAITH RATHER THAN SIGHT.