

The Book of I Peter Part 15 – I Peter 4:19-5:8

Remember, in I Peter chapter 4, verses 7-19, we see how a Christian, a person who names the name of Christ, is to wait for the coming of the Lord. Of course, we're to wait joyfully. We're to be enthusiastic. We're to help each other as the children of God, and we're to help others come to a saving knowledge of the Lord. If you remember back in verse 18, if the justified sinner has been judged according to the first part of verse 18, what judgment awaits the unsaved. Of course, we know that Jesus died for everybody in this world. It's sad that everybody will not be saved because they do not believe in the name, the only begotten Son of God. They do not believe that He is able to save them, and so many people do not understand they need to be saved. They say, "Saved from what?" It's saved from Hell. You're justified through the blood of Christ.

Well, what judgment awaits the unsaved? It's sad that the Great White Throne awaits those people who have never been saved. The saved people will not be judged at the White Throne Judgment. We've already been judged. We've already been justified through the blood of Christ. We're justified sinners. We're saved by grace, the grace of God. *⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.* Ephesians 2:8-9.

Then we see in Romans 5:7, it says, *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.* Christ died for the ungodly. He died for us so that we could be with Him and so that we could rejoice today in any sufferings that we go through, because we're suffering for our Lord.

In I Peter 4:19, the chapter concludes by saying, *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* We're to suffer according to the will of God. What does that mean? It means to commit your soul to God and do good. Commit your soul to God. Be faithful to the Creator. You don't get saved over and over and over again. It's not talking about that committing your soul to God. It's talking here about doing good for the Lord, of bringing honor and glory to His Son, Jesus Christ. Everything we do as a Christian is to glorify our Savior, and as we glorify Him, that brings glory and honor to the Father.

As we look on now in chapter 5 of I Peter, a description of this chapter would be this: to examine the duties of elders in their role as shepherds and pastors, overseers or bishops, to note the importance of submission and humility in our relation to elders, one to another and God, and to consider how we might best counter our adversary, the devil, and then we see it's to glean how Peter sought to encourage his brethren in their suffering. Remember, we just left chapter 4 and it talks about our sufferings, and we suffer for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want you to note something in I Peter 1:1. Peter's epistles, like those of James, were written primarily to Jewish Christians of the dispersion. Although it's evident that there were also Gentiles in the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. These five Roman provinces were all in what is now Turkey. And Cappadocia in particular was not far from Babylon. We see that Peter and James spoke to the Christians. They spoke to the Jewish

believers, as well, and we need to glean from these writings what God has for us as the church today, as the children of the Lord. Look first with me, if you would, to verses 1-5 of I Peter chapter 5, and we see the duties of shepherds and the flock. Verses 1-4 talk about the elders and the duties as shepherds. In verse 1 of chapter 5, it says, *¹The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.*

Peter identifies himself here in verse 1 of chapter 5. He's an elder. This means he has authority, and he also tells us that he saw the sufferings of Christ. He was an eyewitness of what Christ went through. You can go back and read all of that about how that he walked with the Lord and the many things that he did with the Lord and how he denied the Lord just before the Lord was crucified and how that he went out and wept bitterly after he denied the Lord. You read about all of this in the Word of God. He is an elder here, he's saying; he's got the authority, and he saw the sufferings of Christ. It talks there that he will be with Jesus, and you and I will be with Jesus if we've named Him as our Savior.

Now look at verses 2-3 of I Peter chapter 5. *²Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.* Here we see the duty of the elders is to take care of or to shepherd the flock of God. You remember, in John 21:16-17, Jesus tells Peter, "Feed my sheep." Peter says that he is an elder and he has authority, and he's telling the elders of the church of God now, of the people who God has placed in the care of the shepherd of the flock of the local church. He says take care of the flock of God. "Feed my sheep" is what He's saying here. And this means to watch

over, to shepherd, to watch over the flock of God, take care of them, watch over them.

And in verse 2, the elders are to take the oversight without being forced, according to that verse, not to be forced to take care of the flock, not simply for profit, filthy lucre, not just simply to get money, not as tyrants, not browbeating or thinking you are greater than anyone else. You're still a child of God. You're still just doing the work of God, and I say "still just doing the work of God." You have an important work to do as an elder of a church. You're to be a shepherd. You're to take care of the flock of God. You're to feed them. You're to watch over them. And not only that, you're to be an example, Peter is saying here. As an elder you're to be an example to the flock.

Verse 4 says, *⁴And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* For being a good shepherd, according to verse 4, there's an achievement award, a crown, the crown of glory that does not fade away. This crown of achievement will always be seen. It's not going to leave. It's not going to tarnish. Nothing's going to happen to that crown for that faithful servant who takes care of the flock of God.

Then we see in verse 5 the congregation has duties as well. In I Peter 5:5, it says, *⁵Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

There's a twofold duty for the flock. First, it's to yield or submit to the overseers, the elders, and to one another. It means to be humble, to humble yourselves and don't think of yourselves too highly. You're to yield, submit to each other, not only to the elders but to each other. We think of fellowship many times as just simply gathering together to eat or something like that,

but fellowship means that we're to work with one another. That's fellowship of being together, doing the same thing for the cause of Christ to bring honor and glory to the Lord.

Well, why yield? I've mentioned here in this verse it's talking about yielding in verse 5. Well, why yield? It's because God resists or opposes those who think more of themselves than others. But to those who think more of others than self, God bestows his favor according to verse 5. You want to have God's favor bestowed upon you? Then, you need to not think of yourself more highly than you should, but think of others first, especially those people who are your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Now, in verses 6-9 we see something concerning God and Satan. Verses 6-7 say, *⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: ⁷Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.* We see here duties regarding God in verses 6-7. Exhortations are given in relation to God here. Be humble, according to verse 6. Be humble.

And in verse 7, rely on God. We're not to be proud, thinking we're more than we are. We're only what we are through the blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus is all in all, all to Him I owe, and I am to give everything to Him, and as I think of that, how He was humbled on this Earth, and how He gave His life for me and shed His blood, then I need to be humble like that. I need to be willing to help those who are around me. I need to rely on God to help me to do that, as well.

The reason for these exhortations in verses 6-7 is so, when it is necessary in due time, God can promote me, promote you. And verse 7 says that He loves you. He loves you. He loved you so much that He gave His life for you. He came to this Earth. God says He loved us so much that He sent His only begotten Son that

whosoever believed in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. God loves you, and Jesus laid down His life for you, because He loves you.

Well, notice here in verses 8-9 duties regarding Satan. *⁸Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: ⁹Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

Well, things to do in regards to the adversary, according to these verses, are first to be serious, be sober. It's not something to be making fun of. You know, a lot of people dress up like the devil at Halloween and they make fun of the devil. They say, "The devil made me do it." Well, we need to be serious. He's real. We need to be serious, not making light, but be on guard, be vigilant, because he's walking about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, to whom he may cause trouble. Note this, even before the adversary is identified, the alarm is sounded. Be alert. Watch out, knowing that he is walking about. He is real.

And you need to understand that today, as a Christian, you need to live close to the Lord. You need to get in His Word. You need to pray. You need to belong to a good Bible-believing, Bible-preaching church. Serve God as a child of God.

You've been listening to "It's a Good Life." To request a free transcript of this program, you can write to Dr. Lewis Woodard at 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. You may also visit our Websites, www.LRWM.org or www.ItsAGoodLifeRadio.com.

Until the next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.