

# 1 Peter

## Lesson 7 Chapter 5:1-14

### Leader Guide

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## Lesson 7

### 1 Peter 5:1-14

#### Final Encouragement to Elders and Young Men

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers  
—not because you must, but because you are willing. 1 Peter 5:2

#### Prayer

#### Read 1 Peter 5:1-14

<sup>1Pe 5:1</sup> To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed:

<sup>1Pe 5:2</sup> Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve;

<sup>1Pe 5:3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

<sup>1Pe 5:4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

<sup>1Pe 5:5</sup> Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

<sup>1Pe 5:6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

<sup>1Pe 5:7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

<sup>1Pe 5:8</sup> Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

<sup>1Pe 5:9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

<sup>1Pe 5:10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

<sup>1Pe 5:11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

#### Final Greetings

<sup>1Pe 5:12</sup> With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

<sup>1Pe 5:13</sup> She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark.

<sup>1Pe 5:14</sup> Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

#### Discuss

1. Peter closes his letter by addressing the church leaders: elders (literally seniors), shepherds, and overseers (supervisors). What necessary attitudes for leadership does Peter list in verses 2-3?

**Peter lists care, willingness to serve, not being greedy, and humility as qualities for leadership. Shepherding implies guidance and a sense of protection, desiring unity and sound teaching for the congregation. Being an elder implies wisdom, sound judgment, knowledge of the gospel, and the ability to communicate the gospel message of Christ.**

2. Paul discusses the qualifications for leaders in his letters to Timothy. What are other attitudes necessary for church leadership?

<sup>2Ti 2:15</sup> Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

<sup>2Ti 2:16</sup> Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.

<sup>2Ti 2:17</sup> Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>2Ti 2:18</sup> who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.

<sup>2Ti 2:19</sup> Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."

<sup>2Ti 2:20</sup> In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble.

<sup>2Ti 2:21</sup> If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

<sup>2Ti 2:22</sup> Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

<sup>2Ti 2:23</sup> Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.

<sup>2Ti 2:24</sup> And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.

<sup>2Ti 2:25</sup> Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, <sup>2Ti 2:26</sup> and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

- a. Verse 2:15 **Is skillful in knowledge of the scriptures**
  - b. Verse 2:16 **Avoids godless chatter – idle talk, gossip, foolish quarrels (politics!) heretical teaching.**
  - c. Verse 2:21 **Is prepared for any good work**
  - d. Verse 2:22 **Pursues righteousness and is a person of faith, love, and peace.**
  - e. Verses 2:23 **Avoids foolish quarrels and arguments (as in verse 16).**
  - f. Verse 2:24 **Is kind, able to teach, and forgiving**
  - g. Verse 2:25 **Can gently correct and instruct.**
3. What are two bad reasons to serve in a church leadership position (verses 5:2-3)?

**Peter singles out greed and serving out of a sense of obligation rather than willingness. Greed would also include serving for recognition. A Christian leader's two most important qualifications are a love for Christ and a servant's heart.**

4. Young men who serve need to have the same attitude as older men. What caution in verses 5:5-6 does Peter give them because of their age?

**Peter cautions young men to be humble, not prideful in their position and tells them to be submissive to their elders – giving deference to their leadership. Submissive does not mean quiet and passive; their views are important. Submission means that once a decision is made, they need to be supportive of their leadership and not divisive. This submission applies to older men too.**

5. What additional pressures do leaders face today and in Peter's day, particularly with regard to 1 Peter 4:12-16 and 5:8-10?

<sup>1Pe 4:12</sup> Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

<sup>1Pe 4:13</sup> But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

<sup>1Pe 4:14</sup> If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

<sup>1Pe 4:15</sup> If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.

<sup>1Pe 4:16</sup> However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

<sup>1Pe 5:8</sup> Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

<sup>1Pe 5:9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

<sup>1Pe 5:10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

**In Peter's day, church leaders were targets of persecution. Peter wrote his letters shortly before his death in Rome, and Paul was executed a few years later or possibly at the same time as Peter. Church tradition holds that all the apostles, except John, were martyred for their faith. Today, church leaders are targeted wherever the gospel is advancing, particularly in autocratic and Muslim countries.**

**Peter discusses Satan in his instruction to leaders, suggesting Satan targets leaders. Revelations or allegations of a leader's lack of self-control, including theft, lies, adultery, pornography, or child abuse, shatter congregations and discredit the church.**

6. What can you do to encourage your leaders?

**I have been very fortunate to enjoy close fellowship with all my pastors. Pastors need our thanks, appreciation, generosity, encouragement, prayers, willingness to serve, and good company.**

7. In verse 3:8, Peter instructs all believers to be compassionate and humble. Why would he separately address the leaders, young and old, to be humble in verses 5:5-6?

**Peter was all too familiar with the danger of pride in leadership from examples in his own life. He told Jesus he would never be killed and raised to life, that Jesus would never wash his feet, and that he would never betray Christ. Completely broken after Christ's crucifixion, the risen Lord appeared to Peter three times to restore him to his position as the Rock on whom Christ would build his church and give him his Holy Spirit.**

8. Every letter in the New Testament includes instructions to be humble. Review the following teachings of our Lord and the Apostles and discuss why humility is necessary for church growth.

- a. **“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. Luke 6:41-42**

**Without humility\_\_\_\_ believers would be judgmental hypocrites, a view that many unchurched people hold of the church. We recognize that we all are sinners.**

- b. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. (Romans 12:16)

**Without humility\_\_\_ only the rich would be welcomed; the poor and broken would feel unwelcomed despite Christ’s teaching on the perils of wealth and blessing the poor in spirit.**

- c. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. Romans 12:3-6

**Without humility\_\_\_\_\_ the church would be filled with envy and division. Members would envy the gifts of others, disparage their own gifts, or exalt themselves over others. The church would not be one body but individual members who do not work together for the common good.**

- d. What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.  
But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:1-3, 6)

**Without humility, \_\_\_ believers would quarrel and fight. They would not come together in prayer to ask that God advance the gospel in the world through them.**

9. In verse 3:8, Peter tells Christians to be self-controlled and alert. How do we live self-controlled lives?

**Opinions will vary on this question. Three views need to be raised. The first is that our ability to live perfectly self-controlled lives is impossible in our strength. We can resist temptations for a while by our own strength and will, but we will not be able to sustain it. The second aspect of self-control is acknowledging our spiritual battle is only won through the power of the Holy Spirit. We need to look for his power and guidance daily, sometimes moment by moment. Another aspect of self-control is**

**our need for spiritual transformation. Through the Spirit's guidance, we use good judgment, avoid situations that tempt us, pray, and fill our minds with good, excellent, and praiseworthy things (Philippians 4:8).**

10. In verse 3:8, Peter describes the devil as a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. The Bible actually says little about the devil (or Satan). He is a fallen angel, the tempter, the father of lies, and can influence thoughts, possess the wicked, thwart the spread of the gospel, and seeks to destroy the world. C.S. Lewis said Christians make two mistakes about the devil: to disbelieve in his existence and to have an unhealthy interest in him. Refer to the following verses on the devil's work and discuss how Peter's advice to be self-controlled and alert helps us resist the devil.

In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. (James 3:14-15)

Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to. Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan. (1 Timothy 5:13, 15)

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

Those [seeds of the gospel sown] along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. (Luke 8:12)

**I admit that I have difficulty distinguishing between the works of the devil and my sinful nature, but Peter's advice speaks to both. We can resist sin and the devil when our minds are on God through reading the scriptures (the seeds on the path). Anger, envy, selfishness, idleness, and gossip are just a few negative thoughts and feelings that lead us into progressively more sinful actions, giving the devil a foothold in our lives. God uses the scriptures and circumstances in our lives to turn our thoughts to him. As the saying goes, God whispers to us in pleasure but shouts to us in our pain.**

11. Peter closes his letter by referencing that Mark and Silas are with him as he is in prison in Rome. Silas helped him write the letter. Silas and Mark were experienced missionaries. Silas was a prophet from Jerusalem sent by the Council of Jerusalem to accompany Paul and Barnabas in their ministry to the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Silas accompanied Paul and Timothy on their missionary journeys throughout Asia Minor and Greece. Silas was likely with Paul at his arrest in Jerusalem following their return. It is very likely Silas acted as Paul's secretary, assisting with writing Paul's letters as he did for Peter.

Mark was the cousin of Barnabas, who was an apostle from Cyprus. Mark accompanied Peter and Paul and authored the gospel that bears his name. Mark's gospel was first written and is quoted verbatim in Matthew and Luke. For some reason, Mark abandoned Paul on his first missionary journey in Asia Minor. Afterward, Mark went to Cyprus with Barnabas, where, by church tradition, Barnabas was martyred. Later, Mark was with Paul while he was under house arrest in Rome, where Paul wrote Colossians and Philemon. As Paul awaited his death in Rome following his

second arrest, Luke was with him and asked Timothy to send for Mark to help him in his ministry. Consequently, Mark and Silas were present with Paul and Peter in their last days, assisting the apostles in proclaiming the gospel and encouraging believers to continue in their faith in the face of persecution.

What does the presence of Silas and Mark tell you about the importance of partnership in church leadership?

**Without the work of Silas and Mark, we would not have the gospel as we know it. Just as Jesus sent out his disciples in groups of two, the apostles continued to work in teams of two or more. They could encourage one another and provide for each other's needs in the face of hardship and imprisonment. Silas was also an evangelist, preaching the gospel and establishing churches with Paul.**

12. Most scholars think Babylon in verse 13 refers to Rome, while some think it is Jerusalem. Who is "She" who sends her greetings?

**"She" would be the Christian church in Rome (or Jerusalem).**

13. Peter closes his first letter with five important themes. Which of the following themes addresses your situation and needs?

1. Qualifications for church leadership
2. Encouragement in the face of persecution by being united with Christ
3. Being self-controlled, finding Christ as our righteousness
4. Standing firm in faith, resisting temptation and the devil
5. The importance of humility

**Closing Prayer**