

1 Peter 5:5-7

Humbling Yourself

The theme of pride versus humility is the main focus of 1 Peter 5:5-7. Having admonished pastors to not be “lords over *God's* heritage, but [examples] to the flock” (1 Peter 5:3), Peter expands on the idea of being an example of humility. All Christians should live humbly because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

I. Humility Toward _____ (1 Peter 5:5a)

- To submit is to willingly place yourself under someone else’s _____.
- Much damage can be done to a church when those in _____ are operating in pride. Contention and strife will be the inevitable result. (*Proverbs 13:10; 1 Corinthians 14:40*)
- Those who are older than us have often experienced more than we have and gained a certain amount of _____ that we may not have. (*1 Timothy 5:1; Leviticus 19:32; Proverbs 16:31; Job 32:4-9*)
- Christians should practice _____ submission. (*Ephesians 5:21; Romans 12:3*)
- This kind of humble submission prevents _____ and promotes unity. (*Philippians 2:3*)
- The command is to submit ourselves, not to _____ others.
- To help us understand this attitude of humility that we are to demonstrate to one another, the Holy Spirit instructs us to “be clothed with humility.” Humility is always _____ for the Christian. (*1 Peter 3:3-4*)
- Jesus took off His garment of _____ and put on a robe of humanity in the ultimate act of humility. (*Philippians 2:5-7*)

II. Humility Toward _____ (1 Peter 5:5b-7)

- When we refuse to humble ourselves, we shut ourselves off from the _____ of God.
- Pride is an attempt to _____ God by a heart that has rejected His authority. (*Proverbs 6:16-17*)
- God will work against you and not for you if you are a _____ person. (*Luke 18:9-14*)
- The benefit of humility is that God will give you grace and He will _____ you “in due time.” (*Romans 8:17*)
- The word for “cares” has the idea of “concerns that _____ us.”
- Our focus is supposed to be on _____, not on our problems.
- Worry and anxiety, then, are acts of _____. They are based on the thinking that by hanging on to the problem you can arrive at the correct solution.
- No one is capable of solving every problem, except God, and He invites you to give Him your _____. (*Psalms 55:22*)

Conclusion

All Christians should be humble. If we do not humble ourselves, we are setting ourselves for failure. (*Proverbs 16:18*) We must _____ ourselves before each other and before God, submitting to each other and casting our cares on the Lord.

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At the root of every sin that we commit is a prideful heart. Sin originated when Satan (Lucifer) said “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.” (Isaiah 14:14) Pride is the defining feature of all rebellion against God.

Humility, on the other hand, is at the heart of holy living. Christ demonstrated the superiority of humility when He humbled Himself to come to earth and die for our sins. Those who are truly following Christ will strive to live humble lives like He did.

This theme of pride versus humility is the main focus of 1 Peter 5:5-7. Having admonished pastors to not be “lords over *God's* heritage, but [examples] to the flock” (1 Peter 5:3), Peter expands on the idea of being an example of humility. But the commands and principles are not for pastors only. All Christians should live humbly because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

I. Humility Toward Each Other

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility:

In the previous verses, Peter is giving instructions to the “elders” of the church. It is in this context of pastoral instruction that this command, “likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder” is given. To submit is to willingly place yourself under someone else’s authority. The primary application, then, is to the order of authority among church leadership. The general rule is that those who are younger in age or experience are to submit to those who are older and more experienced.

Acts 15 records an excellent case study of this truth. At the Jerusalem council, there were many “apostles and elders” present. After much debate, Peter, who had seniority of experience if not age, stood up to give his testimony about the conversion of the Gentiles. Then Barnabas and Saul shared what God had done through them. Finally, James, who was likely the pastor of the Jerusalem church, stood up and concluded the debate. There was a plurality of leadership, but there was order and authority as well. As God blesses a church with multiple men involved in leadership and pastoral care, it is important that order and authority are maintained properly. Much damage can be done to a church when those in leadership are operating in pride. Contention and strife will be the inevitable result. (Proverbs 13:10) “Let all things be done decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40)

From this instruction, Peter works outward to include mutual submission between all Christians. First, let’s consider the general principle drawn from this passage, that the young should respect their elders. This is not just a culturally accepted practice. It is a Bible principle. Those who are older than us have often experienced more than we have and gained a certain amount of wisdom that we may not have. They should be treated respectfully in acknowledgement of these facts.

1 Timothy 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

Leviticus 19:32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.

However, just because someone is older, that does not necessarily mean that they are wiser. “With age comes wisdom” is not always true.

Proverbs 16:31 The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.

When Job's three friends tried to help him by indicting him of secret sins, it was the young man Elihu who finally spoke up and began to set things right.

Job 32:4-9 Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he. [5] When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled. [6] And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion. [7] I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. [8] But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. [9] Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.

Yes, the younger should respect the older, but the verse doesn't stop there. The Bible goes on to say, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another." Here the concept of mutual submission is clearly stated. Older people have no right to lord their age and experience over younger people anymore than the elders of the church have a right to lord themselves over the flock of God that is the church. Christians should practice mutual submission. Ephesians 5:21 commands us, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." We do not submit to each other for our own sakes, but for the Lord's. Christians should submit to each other because of their fear of God. I should respect God enough to respect you, because He values you highly. That respect should be demonstrated in mutual, humble submission.

Each of us tends to think too much of ourselves either in quality of thoughts or quantity of thoughts. Instead, we must "think soberly," realizing that God has made us who we are and therefore we have nothing to boast about in ourselves.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

This kind of humble submission prevents strife and promotes unity. Humility is the oil that keeps the work of the Lord running smoothly.

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Notice that the command is to submit ourselves, not to subjugate others. These verses are not a club to beat others with, but a measuring stick to judge ourselves by. Christ is the ultimate example of this mutual submission. Jesus had to humble Himself to become a man. He "made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant." He humbled Himself even further by consenting to die on the cross for the sins of the world. Execution on a cross was one of the most humiliating forms of death that depraved man has ever invented. He hung on a cross for all to see, shake their heads, and mock him. Why did Jesus submit to so much humiliation? He did it for you and me. By humbling Himself and dying on the cross, Jesus paid the penalty for our sin so that we might be saved. If Christ would do that for us, then we ought to be willing to humble ourselves and submit to one another for Christ's sake.

To help us understand this attitude of humility that we are to demonstrate to one another, the Holy Spirit instructs us to "be clothed with humility." Just like we get dressed before heading out of the house to face the world each day, we are to put on a humble spirit. Humility is always in style for the Christian.

Outward fashion and style or important to the world. The global fashion industry is valued at \$1.7 trillion as of 2022. Our culture is obsessed with appearances. But God is more concerned about matters of the heart. Peter touched on outward appearances versus inward character previously in 1 Peter 3.

1 Peter 3:3-4 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; [4] But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

This instruction is not just for married women. No Christian should be consumed with worldly fashion, clothing trends or current styles and neglect the “hidden man of the heart.” That doesn’t mean that we dress sloppily or gaudy, but it does mean that focus should be on more important things. And whatever style of clothing we might wear at any given time, we are to be covered with humility. Again, we find the perfect model of this in the life of Jesus. Jesus took off His garment of glory and put on a robe of humanity in the ultimate act of humility.

Philippians 2:5-7 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: [6] Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: [7] But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Christians must have humility toward each other and demonstrate it through mutual submission.

II. Humility Toward God

1 Peter 5:5b-7 for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. [6] Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: [7] Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Humility is not an option for the Christian, and we learn why in the last phrases of 1 Peter 5:5. When we refuse to humble ourselves, we shut ourselves off from the grace of God. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Proud people are consumed with themselves. They want everyone to look at them and to think about them. That is why pride is an offense against God; it is an attempt to exalt one’s self above God, taking the attention that should go to God. Pride is an attempt to displace God by a heart that has rejected His authority. It is no accident that the celebration of desires and behaviors that God calls an abomination is designated by the term “pride.” (i.e. “Pride Month) God hates pride.

Proverbs 6:16-17 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: [17] A proud look...

What does the Bible mean when it says “God resisteth the proud”? Jesus told a parable in Luke 18 that illustrates how God rejects the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Luke 18:9-14 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: (10) Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. (11) The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. (12) I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. (13) And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Notice how the pharisee was obsessed with himself. Five times he uttered the word “I” in his “prayer” to God, exalting his own virtues. His thoughts about himself were excessive in both quality and quantity. The publican, however, wouldn’t even look up to heaven but simply begged for God’s mercy because he knew he was a sinner. Jesus said the publican was justified that day and not the pharisee because the publican humbled himself. Luke 18:14 is also a warning to the proud. God knows what it takes to humble us. If we will not humble ourselves, then God will have to humiliate

us. He does that by setting Himself against us. That is the literal meaning of the word “resisteth.” God will work against you and not for you if you are a prideful person.

The benefit of humility is that God will give you grace. He will enable you to do what you need to do. He will bless you with many good things above what you strictly need in this life. And He will exalt you “in due time.” It may not be in your time, but it will be at the right time according to God. For some, that might mean in this life. It might mean that you will see advancement, growing influence and a measure of fame. But for others the “due time” might not be until you get to heaven. Being glorified with Christ is the ultimate exaltation, and that is reserved for those who have humbled themselves and accepted Christ as their Savior.

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

1 Peter 5:7 reveals one of the indicators that someone is truly humble before God. This verse is often quoted by itself, but when we put it in this context of humility before God, it takes on another level of meaning.

First, what does it mean to cast our cares on the Lord? The word for “cares” has the idea of “concerns that distract us.” These concerns are often based on real circumstances that could potentially result in a negative outcome ranging from merely an inconvenience to the totally life-altering. They create in us a certain measure of anxiety which is a dread of what could happen. They morph into worries when we begin to repeatedly imagine the possible outcomes and we live in fear what might happen. The problem is that we give our attention to the concerns instead of keeping our attention on God. They distract us from the One Who has promised that He would care for us. That’s why we are commanded to “be careful for nothing” and “Take no thought for the morrow.” Our focus is supposed to be on God, not on our problems.

How then are we supposed to deal with our problems? We live in a real world where things cannot be neglected without causing even more problems. The answer is to cast our cares upon God. We have to off-load our worries onto God. That is an act of humility because before you do that, you must first admit that you cannot solve the problem. Only then will you be willing to trust God to solve it for you.

Worry and anxiety, then, are acts of pride. They are based on the thinking that by hanging on to the problem, thinking it over and evaluating it, war gaming and simulating outcomes in your mind, you can arrive at the correct solution.

No one is capable of solving every problem, except God, and He invites you to give Him your cares. He promises in return that He will care for you. He will solve your problems and supply your needs.

Psalms 55:22 Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Humility toward God brings God’s grace into your life in a real way as you let go of your problems and trust God to solve them. He will work on your behalf instead of against you. He will lift you up in His time.

Conclusion

All Christians should be humble. If we do not humble ourselves, we are setting ourselves for failure. “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18) We must humble ourselves before each other and before God, submitting to each other and casting our cares on the Lord.