

THE CROWN OF GLORY TO THOSE WHO SUBMIT TO GOD

1 Peter 5:1-11

Shepherd the Flock

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Submit to God, Resist the Devil

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The foundation of the Christian faith is in Jesus being the Christ, which is the transliteration of the Greek word that means Christos. The Hebrew Word for Christ or Christos is Mashiach, of which the English form of that is Messiah. Christ or Messiah both terms then mean Anointed One. The Apostle Peter, of whom wrote this epistle of 1 Peter, and was addressing the churches that had been dispersed from their homelands due to the present political environment, which included the persecution of the Christians, he testified of Jesus being the Christ and as being the Anointed One of God. When Jesus asked His disciples who they thought Jesus was, whether they thought He was just a prophet, or just a great teacher, or what, Peter proclaimed, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (**Matthew 16:16**) What Peter was professing was not just that Jesus was anointed by God but that He was THE Anointed One. He was referring to THE Anointed One from the Holy Scriptures such as what Isaiah the prophet spoke, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound." (**Isaiah 61:1**) By the way, that is the Scripture that Jesus quoted when He read in the synagogue and to which He stated, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled

in your hearing." (Luke 4:21) In Acts 10:34-43 Peter spoke to the house of Cornelius (who were by the way not Jews but Gentiles). Peter testified to Jesus being the Christ but also of His death and resurrection that was all part of God's perfect plan, and of what we call the gospel (or good news) of Jesus Christ saying, "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality [meaning God has chosen to save the Gentiles as well as the Jews]. But in every nation **whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him**. The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all— that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: how God **anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power**, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be **Judge of the living and the dead**. To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, **whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**"

The great mystery of the salvation of God has been revealed to us in Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God. What that means to us and it should to all of the peoples of this world, is that Jesus alone is THE Way, THE Truth, and THE Life and that there is no other way to God and of His salvation for His creation, meaning us, other than in Christ Jesus. There is also no other revelation needed for us to make it into God's eternal kingdom. It is as Martin Luther stated, in Christ alone. Muhammed and Islam, Joseph Smith and Mormonism or the Latter Day Saints, or Jehovah's Witnesses, have nothing to add other than a watering down of the Truth that has already been revealed to us in Christ Jesus. In regards to Islam, they have the addition to the Bible called the Quran. "The Quran asserts that Jesus wasn't crucified nor died on the cross, but was miraculously saved by God."^{1 2} With Mormonism, Joseph Smith supposedly had a personal visit from God and that "[he] then set out to "restore true Christianity" and claimed his church to be the only true church on earth."³ His inclusion to the Bible is the "Book of Mormon." Jehovah's Witnesses can be quickly dismissed as they don't even believe in the Trinity of God, that is, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They also add to the Holy Bible and if you ever have them come up to you and witness to you, they will give you a book like, "You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth." I didn't mention Buddha and other

1 Jesus in Islam, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_in_Islam

2 Koran, The, 4:157, Translated with notes by N. J. Dawood, Penguin Books

3 What is Mormonism?, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Mormons.html>

eastern religions that were before Christ but suffice it to say that we are not going to ever become enlightened so that we can be our own gods. That is basically what all of the New Age mumbo jumbo secret societies and mystery religions will lead one to believe. One that is most known is the Masons. Them and the Knights Templar, Rosicrucians, are all from a form of Gnosticism. Gnosis means to know, or knowledge and gnosticism is in the tapping into the realm of mystical knowledge that one becomes enlightened. You want to know how all of those religions that I have mentioned are of the devil, meaning Satan? They all contradict the Word of God. Once again going to the Apostle Peter who was speaking to the religious leaders when they were dumbfounded as to how a lame man was healed, he said "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (**Acts 4:10-12**)

What that should say to us is that first of all, that Jesus IS THE ANOINTED ONE OF GOD to grant the remission of or the taking away of our sins against God and only the Divinity of Christ could do that (meaning that Jesus is OF GOD). Sinning against God is the disobeying God, not doing what we know we're supposed to do as James says, "to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin." (**James 4:17**) Sinning against God is in living and operating in a way that is contrary to the will and character of God. God tells us, first of all, "that you might know that the Lord [YHWH or Jehovah] Himself is God; there is none other besides Him." (Deuteronomy 4:35) And God Almighty tells us of His great love for us. In the Words of Jesus, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) The Apostle John tells us, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." (**1 John 4:7-8**) God is love therefore we should be operating in the love of God. Jesus went so far as to say that the greatest commandment of God is that we should be loving God with all of our heart, soul, strength and mind and that we should also be loving our neighbor as ourselves!

Jesus didn't say that it would be kind of nice if we'd all just try and get along or that we should do our best to tolerate other people. In fact, Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (**John 13:34**) Jesus could only have spoken that if He was (and is) OF GOD!

But wait a minute, one may say, Peter said "whoever [just] believes in Him will receive remission of sins." Notice I added to that verse the word just. Ultimately what Peter is saying is that one who believes in Jesus as the Christ will take heed to His teachings, they will fear God and work righteousness. Going back to what Jesus COMMANDED us, we are to love God with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind and we are to love others as Jesus has loved us. I shudder at the thought of how many so called Christians do not even make a faint attempt at that. If we are continually operating in selfish motives then it is for certain that we are not pleasing God and we are then not fully believing on Jesus.

In getting to our passage of Scripture in 1 Peter 5:1-11, Peter first addresses the elders and tells them that just as Jesus is our Chief Shepherd, the elders should be leading by example as a shepherd of the flock. While the elders were in a way the same as what we'd call pastors today, it could really be said that we are all to be leading by example. We may all have different gifts and callings of God through the Holy Spirit but we all have the same Holy Spirit that leads us in Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification (which is a setting us apart in His holiness, a special empowering us to be holy as He is holy), and then His Redemption. So then let him who glories glory in the Lord (**1 Corinthians 1:30-31**) We are supposed to, as Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (**Matthew 5:16**) Really what that is saying is that we should be such believable witnesses to God working in us that others will naturally follow in that example. So tying together the phrases in the passage of Scripture of Peter's speech in Acts, Peter says, "But in every nation whoever fears Him [God] and works righteousness is accepted by Him," that is those that, "believes in Him [Jesus and] will receive remission of sins." We know from Scripture (Ephesians 2:8-9) that we are not saved by works but by the grace of God, but as we are led to believe on Christ we are also led to repent of our sins against God, to have a willingness to live in His righteousness and no longer in sin.

The Holy Spirit therefore leads us to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that God sent His Son Jesus to die on a cross for our sins and that He rose from the grave on the third day, conquering death, and therefore paving the way for us to have eternal life. The Holy Spirit also leads us to repentance, that is, to have a change of mind to no longer live a life in sin, in dishonoring God but to live a life a righteousness that pleases God. As Jesus explained, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." (**John 14:23**) Tying the receiving of Christ in our hearts and believing on Him is this, "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." (**John 1:12**) And we don't just believe on Jesus and obey God [just] long enough to "be saved" and

then we can go back to our old way of life. After giving a list of ungodly ways of living the Apostle Paul then says, "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience." (**Ephesians 5:6**) Paul then says to not be partakers with them. What that means is that if someone is getting high or drunk, then leave. If someone is talking with vulgar and ungodly talk, then leave. If someone tries to entangle you in their web of deception, look for the way of escape and go. Before you go, the wisdom of God may lead you to say something to them by warning them (in love) or you may just need to get going. "A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished." (Proverbs 22:3) Amen?

'When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away." God certainly knows what we are going through down here. It isn't easy. If anyone tries to tell you that living for the Lord is easy and fun and just full of wonderful blessings then they probably aren't really living for the Lord. That doesn't mean we won't be richly blessed in the spiritual things but Jesus promises us in saying that, "**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**" (**John 16:33**) Likewise the Apostle Paul stated, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (**2 Timothy 3:12**) I looked at that word "tribulation" that Jesus spoke of. It comes from the Greek word thlipsis which is translated as persecution, affliction, distress or tribulation. From Biblehub.com we get this explanation of that word thlipsis, "pressure (what constricts or rubs together), used of a narrow place that "hems someone in"; tribulation, especially internal pressure that causes someone to feel confined (restricted, "without options"), no way of escape, being hemmed in".⁴ You know, what I see in that, is that not only do we get tribulation when we are overtly persecuted such as when we begin talking to someone about Jesus and they become violently angry and start pushing us and calling us names. That would likely be classified as severe persecution or tribulation. Yet, how many of you feel that way generally speaking? You know, like the evils of this world just seems to be squeezing in upon you. I feel that way a lot of times for sure. I said the other day to Susie and the Lord that I feel hemmed in, where the evils of the world so to speak are coming in against me. If all the evil that is going on in society doesn't grieve you and lead you to be praying for God's mercies and grace, not only for yourself but for others as well, then might I plead with you to be praying for others. Sometimes, God will lift us up out of the valley of the shadow of death to where it seems as though we could float with the clouds. Yet the work to be done is down here in the valley. That is where we CAN be leading by example.

4 2347. thlipsis, <https://biblehub.com/greek/2347.htm>.

Peter says, "be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility." Right away what I get from that is that there is but one God almighty and then there's us down here. We're all in this together, or we should be anyways, and we should be doing all that is in us to be humble loving servants of God in Christ Jesus. In none of what I am saying am I intentionally singling anyone out. This message, at the very least, should be a reminder to us, including myself, to walk humbly before our God. Yes, we live in the grace of Jesus Christ, but we also need to be humbly submitting ourselves to God and others, and then be clinging to Jesus, for He is our life. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up." (**James 4:10**) Just before that James said, "Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (**James 4:5-6**) His Spirit yearns jealously for us personally but for others around us as well! Peter said the same, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world." Where have we heard that elsewhere? Going back to James, he tells us, "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." (**James 4:7-10**) What can be going on in those times of feeling squeezed in by the evil of this world and even in the temptations that come against us, God can be testing our character, or refining our character. Not that God causes evil to do what it does, but He will allow it, just as He allowed Jesus to suffer. "For we do not have a High Priest [Jesus] who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (**Hebrews 4:15**) None of us can say that, of course, that we are without sin, but we can give our cares to Jesus, for He knows what we are going through and He knows the way to overcome. Once again, "In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." In Christ, meaning if we go to Jesus and rely upon Him, He will lead us in overcoming the world and all of its evils. We must submit to God and resist the devil. For myself, much of the time of going through the pressures that come against me I am going to God, pleading for His mercies, for myself and others, and hanging on to the hope that I have in Jesus. I'm not saying I'm perfect at it but we have God's Word telling us how we can overcome in Christ Jesus!

It may not be of comfort to us in the time of trial and tribulation but once again, Paul tells us, "And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." When Paul says that they glory in tribulations, the word glory there is not what we'd call the glory of God. It is a word that means to boast or proudly exult. I can understand being put in prison for preaching the gospel and then singing along with Paul, praises to God, and then to be basically glorying in that tribulation. Much of what we have to endure and suffer through is the sin and evil that surrounds us to the point of feeling squeezed in. If anything that should grieve us immensely as it did Jesus when He cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (**Matthew 23:37**) Repentance is a call to us to turn to God and to follow Jesus and His ways, to obey Him. Jesus said, "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (**Matthew 9:13**)

Just as Jesus knew all too well, there are many who will not heed the call to repentance, hanging on to their idols of sin and pleasure, lust and rebellion. As we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us that bears the fruit of "love, joy, peace, **longsuffering**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self-control" (**Galatians 5:22-23**) it will or should break our hearts as it did Jesus' and lead us to pray for God's mercy for ourselves and others that will lead others to repentance. None of us may be trained clinical psychiatrists, none of us can save, deliver, or heal what may need mending or fixing, but Jesus can! That doesn't mean that God doesn't use addictions or abuse counselors or recovery clinics or other means to help someone in need but our first step is to submit to God, praying for His mercies, and then to follow our Chief Shepherd as He leads us. There is power in the name of Jesus! "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes." (**Romans 1:16**) "Jesus answered them, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.**" (**John 8:36**) Will you join me in praying for the mercies of God to lead the people in our community to repentance? Our loved ones, our family members? The folks we interact with regularly?

We are told by Isaiah the prophet "Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." (**Isaiah 43:7**) We were created by God for His glory, yet we are promised that when the Chief Shepherd appears we will "receive the

crown of glory that does not fade away". God wants for us to partake in His glory. He will always be God on His throne but He is promising to reward us for trusting in Him. The Apostle Paul ties it up nicely for us in the contrast of our present suffering to the glory that God is going to reveal in us, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (**Romans 8:16-18**) We don't need any further revelations beyond Jesus. That should be the hope that we have---in Jesus and it should be the hope we have for those who God has placed in our lives. God is presently building His eternal kingdom, and calling all who will listen, just as Jesus said to His disciples, "Come follow Me."

To close let us receive this prayer of Peter's at the end of our passage of Scripture for today, "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."