

**Text: 1 Pt 5.5**

We've been talking about elders (pastors) for several weeks. I've applied this to everyone on the theory that, though not everyone is or can be a pastor, everyone needs to grow spiritually.

Our passage tonight makes this extended application specific:

*You Younger Men Likewise*

Let's read 1 Pt 5.1-5, text 5

There is some discussion on verse numbers and paragraph arrangement in some of the commentaries. Some think that we should have a new verse/paragraph at "and all of you..." I see this verse as transitional verse from one section to the next, but the themes are tightly connected.

We are going to work on a theme that addresses every one of us, and one where everyone *should* feel some conviction.

Believers are redeemed, are being sanctified, but are not yet glorified.

Consequently, we still sin. One of the greatest and most fundamental sins is *pride*. That sin is especially addressed in this text.

**Proposition:** The great need of growing believers is submitting their pride to God's diagnosis so that the believer can live in grace.

**I. The application of elder-like attitudes to the young**

A. The first word in the Gk: "likewise"

1. This word ties the instructions of vv. 1-4 to the "younger men" here

2. Who are the "younger men?"

a. Options:

1) A younger group among the elders (but... redundant)

2) Young men training for the ministry

3) Young men in general

4) Young people (word is simply "younger") without respect to gender (word is masculine, however)

Hiebert for example, “The term ‘young men’ was commonly used of young people of both sexes.”<sup>1</sup>

### b. Some thoughts

- 1) “And all of you” extends the application further, so the first seems directly to younger men
- 2) The command here points to a notorious problem with young men: they aren’t submissive
- 3) Whether “younger men” are young men in general or trainees depends on what “elders” means

### 3. Who are “elders” here?

#### a. Options:

- 1) The same elders as addressed in vv. 1-4, *i.e.*, pastors
- 2) Older men in general

#### b. The whole question is up for debate

- 1) Most commentators opt for “older men in general”

“The reference here and in πρεσβυτέροις is to age and not official rank. Cf. Acts 5:6, 10, 1 Tim. 5:1, Tit. 2:6.”<sup>2</sup>

- 2) Interesting fact:

“Many adults in antiquity did not reach old age. An estimated half of children born died by age ten (half of these in their first year), but those who survived childhood may have averaged only ‘another thirty-five to forty years.’”<sup>3</sup>

- 3) Nevertheless, I see some merit in limiting this first phrase to a special class: trainees

<sup>1</sup> D. Edmond Hiebert, *1 Peter* (Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, 1997), 307.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1946), 233.

<sup>3</sup> Craig S. Keener, *1 Peter: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2021), 373.

## B. The duty of the young: submit to elders (“your” NAU in italics)

1. Submission is a theme in the epistle
  - a. To every human institution (2.13)
  - b. Servants to masters (2.18)
  - c. Wives to husbands (3.1, 5)
2. The elders (pastors) called to submit to the Chief Shepherd (vv. 1-4)

The whole tenor of our previous discussion emphasizes what is called “servant-leadership”

3. Submission is needful for all of us, but especially younger men
  - a. Exceptions
    - 1) When an authority contradicts the Bible
    - 2) When an elder refuses congregational accountability
    - 3) When an elder acts as a dictator rather than a servant (Diotrephes, 3 Jn 9)

### b. Submission involves self-control and respect

“The young, with their eager energies, should guard against the impulse to thrust the aged into the background and insist on their own ideas or ways in the face of the more mature views of the elderly.”<sup>4</sup>

## II. The broader command of humility for all

### A. All means all (surprise!)

1. Both elder and younger
2. Both male and female
3. All disciples

### B. The command calls for humility

1. Humility isn’t “self-abnegation” *i.e.*, “I’m just a worm”

---

<sup>4</sup> Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 309.

## 2. Humility is the attitude of the servant

“The term [humility] does not involve an attitude of self-disparagement or servility, but willingness to assume a lowly position to serve others.”<sup>5</sup>

## 3. One commentary called it “self-killing”

4. Like meekness, but humility more how you understand yourself, meekness how you act towards others

## 5. Contrary to the mind of the Gentiles:

a. Gentiles did have an appreciation of gentle and merciful leadership

b. But Trench points out that the word seems to be invented by Christians before used in Gentile writing

c. A “fruit of the Gospel”<sup>6</sup>

## C. The picture of humility

“clothe yourselves with humility”

1. The word has the idea of “tying on an apron”

2. The servant/slave in 1<sup>st</sup> century often wore an apron tied about his tunic as a mark of his service

3. This recalls Jn 13.4:

Jn 13.4 got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.

When we think of our own nature, this attitude isn’t our “regular clothing.” We might wear it when we go to church, but do we wear it every day?

<sup>5</sup> Hiebert, 310.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Chenevix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1880), 148.

### III. The theological underscore: God opposes pride

A. Peter quotes Pr 3.34 in the Greek (LXX) as opposed to the Hebrew

Pr 3.34 Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He gives grace to the afflicted.

1. Septuagint (LXX) uses “Lord” rather than “God”
2. Otherwise LXX almost identical to 1 Pt 5.5

B. Pride takes its stand at the forefront of the phrase for emphasis (and as an illustration)

“Standing emphatically forward, the term portrays them as individuals who display an attitude of haughty superiority toward others, as those who proudly regard themselves as the standard of excellence, and disdain those who fall short of the standard.”<sup>7</sup>

C. Nevertheless: God stands against pride

1. The verb “submit” has the same root – “stand under”
2. God “stands against” pride
3. But that’s not all: God gives grace to the humble

#### Conclusion:

**Proposition:** The great need of growing believers is submitting their pride to God’s diagnosis so that the believer can live in grace.

Whenever I think about pride, I recall this verse:

Pr 13.10 Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.

KJV Pro 13:10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.

<sup>7</sup> Hiebert, 311.

And also:

Pr 28.25 An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.

Charles Spurgeon:

“Pride is a sin with a thousand lives; it seems impossible to kill it. It flourishes on that which should be its poison, glorying in its shame. It is a sin with a thousand shapes; by perpetual change it escapes capture. It seems impossible to hold it; the vapory imp slips from you, only to appear in another form and mock your fruitless pursuit. To die to pride and self, one would need to die himself.”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Spurgeon, *1 Peter*, 1 Pt 5.5.