

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Holy Behavior for a Dynamic Church

I Peter 5:1-11

¹ This session deals with relationships between members of the church. ² Remember, the Lord commands the development of holiness. ¹ ³ We can even miss God's grace by not developing holiness! Hebrews, chapter 12, verses 14 and 15 state, **Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.**

The church's purpose is to nourish, build up and encourage one another. It is also to reach out to the world! When times are tough, the solidarity of the Body of Christ is what keeps each of us strong in our faith. ⁴

What does the Lord want in our church member relationships? That's what this scripture talks about. ⁵ From First Peter, chapter 5, verses 1 through 11, we

¹ I Peter 1:15-16 - But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

read, 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: 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; not lording it 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 will never fade away. ⁶

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." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁷

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 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. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen. 8

The first four verses deal with . . .

I. Holy Behavior for the Church Leaders - v1-4

. . . holy behavior for the church leaders. 9 So, who are the elders? 10

From the Jewish background we find that Moses chose elders to help him with administration. 2 11 Every Jewish city had elders who sat at the city gate administering justice. 3 The elders formed the Sanhedrin, the national ruling council, and had authority over the local synagogues. 12

Elders were appointed in every church and city. 4 13 The elders and the apostles were the chief authority in

² Numbers 11:16-30 - The LORD said to Moses: "Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. . . I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone.

³ Deuteronomy 25:7 - if a man does not want to marry his brother's wife, she shall go to the elders at the town gate.

⁴ Acts 14:23 - Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. See also Titus 1:5 - The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

the churches. ⁵ ₁₄ James, chapter 5, verse 14 tells us that the sick should call on them for anointing with oil and prayer. ⁶ ₁₅ They were the primary teachers in the church and some of them got paid for doing it. ⁷ ₁₆

What are the elders supposed to do? ₁₇

Verse 2 tells us they were to be shepherds. Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care . . . ₁₈

The term "shepherd" ⁸ here means to act as a sheep tender, supervising the feeding, watering and sheltering of the flock. When Lord Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him at the Sea of Galilee after

⁵ Acts 15:2 and 16:4 - So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question . . . As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.

⁶ James 5:14 - Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

⁷ v2-3 & I Timothy 5:17 - 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; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock . . . The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

⁸ ποιμαίνω.

the resurrection, He told Peter the second time to "Take care of My sheep", to be a shepherd for them. ¹⁹ The Apostle Paul instructed the elders at Ephesus to keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. ⁹ ₂₀

Verse 2 continues, . . . serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be . . . ²¹ The word "overseer" ¹⁰ means to take the oversight, look upon, so, to care for. We get our English word "Episcopal" from this word. ²² Hebrews, chapter 12, verse 15, tells them how to oversee, See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. ²³

⁹ Acts 20:28.

¹⁰ ἐπισκοπέω.

Verse 3 continues with another characteristic, . . . **not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock**. They are to be examples to the flock by their character. ²⁴

The word "example" ¹¹ here is an important concept. It means to be a stamp which produces a mark or impression. It's like the type on the old printing presses that left impressions on paper. ²⁵ So elders are to be the type, or the stamp, a model to imitate and a pattern to follow. They are to be the model of Christian character and behavior. ²⁶

Incidentally, Christian baptism is the "anti-type", the image produced by type or a stamp, of the water in Noah's flood (the type). ¹² ²⁷

¹¹ τύπος.

¹² | Peter 3:20 21 - In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes (anti-type) baptism that now saves you also — not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God.

Lord Jesus said, I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.¹³ ²⁸ The Apostle Paul admonished, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.¹⁴ Again, ²⁹ Second Thessalonians, chapter 3, verse 9, We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.³⁰ First Timothy, chapter 4, verse 12, Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.³¹ Titus, chapter 2, verse 7, In everything set them an example by doing what is good.³² Then, again, in First Peter, chapter 2, verse 21, To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.³³

What are the temptations an elder might have? Verse 2 and 3 might express them, . . . but because you are

¹³ John 13:15.

¹⁴ I Corinthians 11:1. (King James Version)

willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ³⁴ They might be tempted to serve out of duty because no one else will. ³⁵ If they get a salary, they might be tempted to work for the pay rather than for the Lord. ³⁶ Then, there is always the chance of the authority of leadership of the church going to their head. ³⁷

Now this passage takes a look at . . .

II. Holy Behavior for the Saints - v5-11

. . . holy behavior for the saints! That's you! ³⁸

In verse 5, we are to follow the leaders. **Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another . . .** ³⁹ The word "submit" ¹⁵ means to arrange your plans under an authority. ⁴⁰ This is the same word used in the submission passage of Ephesians,

¹⁵ ὑποτάσσω.

chapter 5, verses 21 through 24, - Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ⁴¹

The next characteristic is that the saints need to remain humble. This scripture continues, All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁴² This phrase ¹⁶ literally means to wear a humble attitude like you would your clothes. It is to the humble that God gives His grace, His underserved

¹⁶ ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε.

favor. ⁴³ It's only by grace that you have been saved, not because of your good life! ¹⁷ ⁴⁴

Verse 7 tells you not to be a worry wart! **Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.** ⁴⁵ The word "cast" ¹⁸ means to throw something on to something else. ⁴⁶ Where do you cast it? God is all powerful and He can do anything! He loved you enough to go to the cross for you. He, then, tells you to give Him all your worries. Do it! ⁴⁷

Verse 8 tells you to be mentally focused and alert. **Be self-controlled and alert.** Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁴⁸ "Self-control" ¹⁹ is the word for abstaining from wine; to be completely sober so you can keep your mind clear. ⁴⁹ "Alert" ²⁰ means to stay awake.

¹⁷ Ephesians 2:8-9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.

¹⁸ ἐπιρρίπτω.

¹⁹ νήφω.

²⁰ γρηγορέω.

This is the Bible's favorite term for the Second Coming. Since it is important to be in control of your thinking always, stay away from substances which could destroy your brain like alcohol and drugs. Since you have trusted the Lord as your savior, Satan is out to get you through his temptations. He will try to turn you away from the Lord if he can! ⁵⁰

That's why it's so important to observe verse 9, Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ⁵¹ Spiritual warfare is not something you can take lightly. The devil wants to devour you! ⁵² So resist the devil and he will flee from you! ²¹ ⁵³

So, stay solid in your faith! How do we do that? ⁵⁴ Stay in the word of God. Make it a daily habit to learn something from it. That's the main way God speaks to you. Pray habitually. That's the main way you speak to

²¹ James 4:7.

Him. Then, trust the Lord more and more with your life. 55

We really need one another in the church. Continue to encourage one another and to build one another up in faith!

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