



Series Title: "Exiles: A Study of the First Letter of Peter"

Date: April 10, 2022

Message Title: "Humble. Watchful. Ready."

Teaching: Neal McKinney

Reference: 1 Peter 5:6-14

Here are some key points from the passage:

- As exiles in a culture that increasingly opposes us, and in the face of suffering, we are to be marked by our humility (v. 6)
- We are to place our trials—our suffering—in the hands of the God who is sovereign over all, and who loves us fully (v. 7)
- As we read in chapter 4, verse 7, we are to be sober-minded in our thoughts; applying discernment to what goes on around us (v. 8)
- We are also to be vigilant, because the enemy of our souls works to draw people away from God (v. 8)
- We can resist the enemy's efforts through faith and the knowledge that others face the same challenges (v. 9)
- Our sovereign God will "restore, confirm, strengthen and establish" his children (v. 10)
- Stand firm in the true grace of God; others are with you in your suffering (v. 12-14)

Message Notes:

As we wrap up our study of 1st Peter, we once again ask ourselves: after 14 years as a church, how well do we understand the vision and mission God has for us? Are we "on point" with the Great Commandment and the Great Commission?

The call to follow Jesus is a call to be exiles, at odds with the culture in which God has sovereignly placed us. And he has placed each of us to be an ambassador for Jesus Christ in a world that would rather not hear his message.

As exiles we are called to suffer... but we do so with great hope! The Holy Spirit in our lives gives us glimpses of the hope that awaits us.

So... how do we live in a culture that becomes more and more combative toward the gospel? "Humble yourselves," Peter writes, "under God's mighty hand." This is how we face the trials and challenges before us. God is sovereign over all things, ordering our steps, caring for us. He uses difficulties to change us, to conform us into the image of his Son, Jesus. And why? Because he loves us.

We can trust God with our anxieties. "Cast" means "deposit." It's like depositing our money in a bank, trusting them to take care of it. And it requires discipline on our part not to try and withdraw them back.

Pay attention, Peter writes, "be sober-minded and watchful." We are to view everything through the lens of the gospel. We are to protect our minds with the truth that salvation is ours through Christ. Again, this is discipline. It takes work, diligent effort. See 2 Cor. 2:5.

Only Christ and his gospel stand before the demonic powers to defeat them. We must remember this. We need to fill our minds with Scripture so we can withstand the enemy's efforts to pull us away.

We will be tried, tested as we follow Jesus. But in the midst of our suffering, God is blessing us by changing us, growing us, maturing us.

Peter promises that God will restore ("mend") and confirm ("reassure") us. He will strengthen us to face suffering and to serve. And he will establish us in his sovereign will.

God is the only one with the power and the grace to do these things.

So now we each ask ourselves, what will my kingdom legacy be? How will I be an ambassador for Christ in a world that wants us silenced? Will there be those coming after us whose lives bear the mark of our presence?

- Now that we've finished Peter's first letter, how do you feel about your own life? About the world around you? Do you feel like an exile, or are you comfortable in the culture around you?
- What are some key words and ideas that Peter's emphasized again and again in this letter?
- What has troubled you the most in Peter's letter? What has encouraged you?
- How is culture actively opposing the gospel? What does that look like in your own life?
- How do you respond to the world's opposition? Do you get angry? Do you withdraw? How does Peter say we are to respond?
- Peter has spoken of opposition in his letter (2:12-14, 18; 3:1-16; 4:3-4). How do those verses relate to the opposition he identifies in verse 8 of this chapter?
- How are we to defend ourselves against the attacks that come our way?
- How will you apply what we've read in 1st Peter to your own life?
- God uses his Word to change us. How will your life be different from what it was three months ago?
- What kind of kingdom legacy will you leave behind when you depart this world? What are you doing now to build that legacy?