

Blake Gillen
Cornerstone Bible Church
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Put Me In Coach
1 Peter 5:1-5

Good morning. Thanks for being here this morning. As summer winds down and we get ready to get back to the normal routine of life we wanted to get together and talk about being a faithful servant of Christ. One of my goals in this study is to help you see two things - There is nothing more important than making sure you are saved by Christ and if you are saved there is nothing more important than serving the body of Christ. In Galatians 5:13 Paul connects our salvation and service.

Galatians 5:13, "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." **I think we would all agree that our freedom from sin was purchased at a great cost.** God the Father sent and sacrificed God the Son to purchase our redemption. Why did God do that? God did that so we would glorify Him by serving one another in love.

When I was a young boy my mom signed me up to play basketball. I got put on a team with boys a few years older than me. I remember two things about that season - we won the championship and I never scored a point all season. It is strange to receive a trophy when you make no contribution. As you know, we make no contribution to our justification other than sin. Sin is our part of the contribution to salvation. God does all the work in our salvation. It's all a gift of God's grace through the work of Christ applied to our hearts by the Spirit.

But once we are saved we are to be zealous for good works (Titus 3:8). God not only planned our salvation before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-5), He also planned a life of good works for us to walk in once He saves us

(Ephesians 2:10). What does that mean? It means that everyone who is saved is saved to serve Christ. It's not about earning salvation or doing something to make God love you more. You cannot earn your salvation and He already loves you with perfect love. No, serving is all about worship.

As we saturate our souls in the glories of our salvation and serve one another in the strength of the Spirit God is glorified and our souls are satisfied. This is really what I want to remind you this morning from Scripture. **Everyone who receives the new birth through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ has a role to play in the body of Christ. When we know what our role is and live it out by faith in Christ and in reliance on the Holy Spirit God is glorified and our souls are satisfied.** I assume you want to have joy in life. I assume you want your soul to be satisfied. Make sure you're born again and make sure you are doing your role in the body of Christ in God's power for God's glory and you will be.

This is what I want you to see this morning. This is a ministry conviction. Please take your Bible and turn to 1 Peter 5. **1 Peter 5:1-5 reminds us that there is a role in the local church for every born again believer.** No one is left out. If you have the Spirit you have a position in the church. When God saves us He clothes us with a jersey called the righteousness of Christ and in these 5 verses he provides positions for us to play. In 1 Peter 5:1-5 the apostle Peter huddles up the local church and he explains what role we all play in the body of Christ.

Let's read together 1 Peter 5:1-5:

1 Peter 5:1-5

- 5:1** So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed:
- 2** shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

- 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.
- 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- 5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

Let's start by remembering the context of 1 Peter. Why did Peter write this letter? Peter wrote this letter to help Christians who were suffering for their salvation. 1 Peter was written to help local church's spread out through Asia Minor glorify God by enduring persecution.

I know we don't like to talk about this side of following Christ. This is something we should all expect moving forward. **Before Christ returns we should expect the world to turn up the heat on people who believe the Bible is the word of God, call sin what the Bible calls sin, and point people to Jesus as the only Savior.** If we don't go along with the world's agenda we must expect some push back along the way.

When Peter wrote this letter worshipping Christ alone was forbidden by the government. Persecution was heating up and it was going to get a lot worse under an emperor named Nero. What's a temptation for Christ followers when gathering together for worship is forbidden by the government as it will be a few years after Peter wrote this letter? A temptation when persecution comes against the church is to distance yourself from the church.

Imagine a day when the government passes laws forbidding anyone to speak against the LGBTQ movement. **If you attend a church that says homosexuality is sinful that's considered hate speech and you could be arrested for attending a church that believes such things.** Imagine that as a young mom. Imagine if you are a young mom getting your kids ready for church in the morning and you're driving here in your minivan knowing that you could be

arrested for attending a church that preaches the whole counsel of God's Word. Who is going to take care of your kids? These are the thoughts that would be running through your mind. I think that might be a tough decision.

The temptation for believers when the heat gets turned up on the local church is to stop meeting together. We see this in Hebrews. Hebrews was written to suffering Christians and the author has to remind God's people to not forsake assembling with the brethren because some were. Stay with me here - Peter's point is this - **When persecution comes we do not need less of the body of Christ, we need more of the body of Christ.**

Here is an interesting connection the Scripture makes for us - Both Salvation and suffering are gifts of God.

Paul says it this way in Philippians 1:27-30

- 27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,
- 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.
- 29 **For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,**
- 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Do you know what persecution should do? Inevitable persecution should unite us around a common cause. It should bring us together even more. Salvation and suffering come to us from God as a gift. We can't receive one and reject the other. **When we suffer well our Savior is glorified.** When we suffer well we show the world that we value Christ more than anyone or anything else. Persecution should produce a desire to be together more and to encourage one another all the more as we see the day approaching.

Scripture continually reminds us we were never meant to live out our faith in isolation, especially when it's hard to be a Christian. Lone Ranger Christianity is foreign to the Bible. We follow Christ together. Sanctification, as John Piper says, is a community project. The church is the place God uses His Word to grow us, encourage us, and we get to use our gifts for His glory. Peter reminds persecuted people in 1 Peter 5 that instead of focusing all their mental energy on what is happening outside the church they need to focus on being who God wants them to be inside the church.

Peter begins his letter with a reminder that God caused us to be born again and he ends the letter showing us how to live as servants of Christ:

He starts with the role of elders in the first four verses:

1. Elders Set the Pace Under Christ - 1 Peter 5:1-4

1 Peter 5:1-4

- 5:1** So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed:
- 2** shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;
 - 3** not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.
 - 4** And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Look at verse 1. What is the basis of Peter's exhortation for elders? Peter was an eyewitness of both the sufferings of Christ and the glory that is to be revealed. **Peter saw Christ suffer and Peter saw Christ after His suffering in His resurrected glory.** What Peter saw is what motivated his service. The

sufferings of our Savior and the future glory that is coming motivate Christian service.

On that basis Peter tells elders what to do and why in verses 2-4. Elders shepherd the flock of God that is among them. Notice it says flock of God. The church belongs to Christ. He bought her with His own precious blood. Elders shepherd God's people through the public and the private ministry of the Word and by providing an authentic example.

At Cornerstone, as you know, we have a plurality of elders. 8 men who by God's grace fit the qualifications of Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3 who provide oversight to the body of Christ. Pastors are not Christ. I think you know that. We don't walk on water. I forget where I park most Sunday's. Elders shepherd the flock by pointing the church to Christ through our words and through our example.

One thing I have learned as a Christ follower is that who I learn from is a really big deal. Have you ever been to a church where you weren't really sure if you could trust the leadership? Maybe you heard things said in sermons that weren't doctrinally sound or you knew people were living in sin in the church without being confronted. It's hard to jump in with both feet and serve in a church where you're always wondering if the men leading the church under Christ are trustworthy men.

Elders are not perfect. Only Christ is perfect. He's the chief shepherd. But elders are men we should be able to look at and say, "Follow him because he follows Christ." I think we have those kinds of men here. Again, this is all of grace. One of the reasons I moved my family here is because I got to know the elders of this church and I wanted to serve with these men and learn from these men.

This summer early on Wednesday mornings we have been going through a study called A Godly Man's Picture. We've been looking at 8 or so characteristics of a godly man. I spoke at the first meeting and then assigned all of the men to take a topic and teach on it. It's been so encouraging for me to listen to each of the elders step up to the plate and knock their lesson out of the park.

Scott spoke from Colossians 3 about being raised up with Christ and how that leads to replacing sin with righteousness. Kirk talked about servant leadership from John 13. Eric Moore taught on a godly man's love for Christ. Greg taught on a godly man's concern for lost people and a desire to take the message of reconciliation to the world. Chad taught on glorifying God in the workplace. Steve taught on loving your wife like Christ loves the church. Week after week these men show that they are trustworthy men. They love the Lord, they love His Word and they love His church. They're examples to the flock.

I say that because I know we have a lot of new people coming and I think you're in good hands here. This is a safe place to mature in Christ. I think this is a place you can and will be cared for biblically. But as you know 8 men cannot love 800 people well. That's impossible. **Pastors set the example for the church but they cannot do everything required in the church.** Maybe you've heard of this thing called burn out. Burn out is a real possibility for pastors who take on too much. **Our role according to Ephesians 4 is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.** Ministry in the church is we, not me.

A few years ago we went through 1 Thessalonians at the church I was serving. I had never been to the Indy 500. When our missionaries from Spain came to visit a few months ago and we took them to the track. Honestly, I was surprised to see the kind of cars they drove in the Indy 500. I thought it was more of a nascar event so I was surprised to see F1 cars. I know this might offend some of you. I needed to be educated. But as we went through 1 Thessalonians I got a picture of pastor ministry from Paul's example that made me think of this race.

Paul was only in Thessalonica for a few months. He went there and preached the gospel and God started saving sinners in that city. Paul modeled faithfulness to Christ, mentored people in the church and then wrote a letter back to the church motivating all of them to serve by remembering his example. **Paul was like the pace car who preached the gospel, set the example for the church, and then he moved out of the way to let the believers do what God saved them to do.** Paul knew he couldn't do everything to help the church grow. He regularly ministered with a team and then he calls on all Christians to serve.

That's the way it is in the body of Christ. In 1 Peter 5:1-4 Peter starts with the role of elders in the church. Elders have a role to play, but elders are not the only ones who have a role to play.

Next, Peter turns his attention in verse 5 to younger people.

2. Younger People are Submissive - 1 Peter 5:5a

1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders."

What does likewise mean? The New American Standard begins with, "You younger men, likewise." The NIV - the nearly Inspired Version (I'm just kidding) begins with, "In the same way." **Likewise means that just as God has a role for undershepherds in the church in the first four verses, He also has a role for younger people in the church.** Peter is moving from leaders in verses 1-4 to those who are younger in verse 5. "You who are younger."

The role of young people in the church is just as serious as the role of shepherds. Young people play a vital role in the local church. Young people are mentioned throughout the New Testament, especially in the pastoral letters (1-2 Timothy and Titus):

1 Timothy 5:1-2

- 5:1** Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers,
2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Titus 2:4-6

- 4** and so train the young women to love their husbands and children,
5 to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.
6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

Younger probably has to do with more than just age. **It also has to do with those who are younger in the faith and in their own Christian experience.** *Young people need wisdom to grow. They need men and women with grey hair or no hair who have gone through some trials and learned a few things to take them under their wing and help them grow up in Christ.*

What attitude does Peter call the younger people in the church to display to their God appointed under-shepherds? 1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders." That is a present imperative command for all younger people in the church.

It is an attitude of voluntary submission. God commands young people to intentionally place themselves under their God appointed leadership and to learn from them. **To be subject indicates a spirit of cooperation as opposed to dissatisfaction with the leadership.** It describes a willingness to support the pastors' directions, as long as pastor's are not leading them into something God's Word clearly forbids.

I think each age group the Bible also has their own unique temptations. I think that's why Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:22 to flee youthful lusts. There are specific temptations for young people. What is a specific temptation for a younger person? **A temptation for young people is to think they know more**

than they do and to not be teachable. When do kids become omniscient? I think it might start in their teens but I am not sure.

Throughout the gospels Peter is an example of a young man who was an arrogant younger man who was unteachable. Peter could remember times when his younger self was prone to talk to Jesus or at Jesus more than he was to listen to Jesus. Peter's younger self was prone to draw up his own plan when it conflicted with what Jesus said was going to happen.

Right after Peter gets Jesus right, we read in Matthew 16:21-23

- 21** From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.
- 22** And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you."
- 23** But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Peter was saved by Christ and not being submissive to Christ. Later on when Jesus told Peter he would deny him the night before the cross Peter, what did Peter say? Instead of asking Jesus to help him stay faithful, proud young buck Peter said in Matthew 26:35, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" As a young man Peter did more talking and than listening. More promising than praying.

Peter could look back on his life as a young man and he could see evidences of pride and not humility. Peter had a submission problem and it eventually caught up to Him and God broke him. As an older man he writes to younger people in the church and says, "Learn from my mistakes." He is telling younger people in the church to willingly put themselves under the leadership of people put in leadership by Christ. Learn from them. Don't assume you already know everything there is to know. You don't and you need help to grow.

God commands younger people in the church to have the right attitude toward older people in the church, especially undershepherds. D. Edmond Heibert says, "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."

Do we need younger people serving at Cornerstone? You bet. Younger people's enthusiasm for Christ is often contagious. Younger people are worthy of our investment. If you go to Panera throughout the week you see different groups gathering for Bible study. You see older men pouring into younger men. I know the same is true for the ladies ministry, but the ladies are busy trying to get their kids ready in the morning while their husbands sip coffee and talk Scripture. We don't need less of this. We need more of this. More younger people learning from older people, not just elders, about how to mature in Christ.

Peter has provided the role of elders and younger people. The next group Peter addresses in verse 5 leaves no one out. The end of verse 5 includes a description for the attitude we all need to have to glorify God in the church.

For all people to glorify God in the church we all must:

2. Everyone Serves - 1 Peter 5:5

1 Peter 5:5

Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Before we get to the clothes part, what does all of you mean? Peter huddles up the local church and he looks all of us in the eye and he commands that all of us change the way we think about how we treat one another. If we are commanded to clothe ourselves with humility, what does that mean? If we have to put

something on it means it is not on us by nature. It means that humility is not natural. **Humility is supernatural.**

The only way relationships work in the body of Christ is through all of us having an attitude of humility. Humility is the glue that holds relationships together in the church. **To clothe yourself means to adorn yourself.** The picture is of putting on a beautiful garment. The original audience would have pictured a household slave tying on an apron to serve. **The wearing of an apron set the person apart as a servant.** That's what we do here. We put on Christ and we serve each other.

Do you know what makes people miserable? Self focus. Too much focusing on ourselves will make us miserable but denying ourselves and taking up our cross and following Jesus makes us joyful because the world does not revolve around us, it revolves around Jesus. Colossians 1:16, "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him." All things includes us - we were made by Jesus, redeemed by Jesus to live for Jesus.

People who are proud are opposed by God. Pride exists naturally in every human heart according to Mark 7:21-23. We're all proud by nature. **Only the gospel has the power to turn a proud person into a humble person.** That is why Peter begins with being born again in chapter 1 and then he applies it to life in the church in chapter 5. The new birth is needed before we can clothe ourselves with humility.

True greatness in Scripture is an expression of true humility. Where did Peter learn humility? **Peter learned humility from the Master Himself.** Peter learned humility from watching Christ. Peter saw the ultimate service and the ultimate sacrifice lived out in the Lord Jesus Christ. Look with me in your Bible at

John 13. John 13:1-5 is a beautiful portrait of humility at work as God in human flesh assumes the role of a servant the night before the cross.

John 13:1-5

- 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
- 2 During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,
- 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,
- 4 rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.
- 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

What freed Jesus to serve others? Jesus knew where He came from and where He was going. Jesus' security in who He was and why He came is what led to His service. Because Jesus knew who He was and where He was going He took the role of a servant and washed the disciples feet. **I don't think Peter ever got over that.** The night before Jesus shed His blood on the cross He wasn't thinking about Himself - Jesus was taking the role of a slave and serving others. Some images stick in our minds forever and I think this image stuck in Peter's mind.

Jesus modeled and taught servant leadership.

Look over at Mark 10:42. When the disciples were arguing over who was going to be greatest in the kingdom remember that Jesus told them in Mark 10:42-45:

Mark 10:42-45

- 42** And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.
- 43** But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,
- 44** and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Believers are called to imitate Christ by taking the attitude of a servant.

Philippians 2:3-5

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

Sadly, many people in the church who should know better treat the church more like someone who will go to lunch after church and sit down and only look to be served. I'm here to be served. What you got on the menu for me today? If they don't like what's being offered they keep looking until they find a church that suits their needs. It's all about me. A consumer mentality in the church dishonors Christ. We are not saved to be a consumer, we are saved to be a servant to everyone else. This is what Jesus Christ died to set is free for.

Galatians 5:13-15

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

If the Spirit is really working in our lives, what will it look like in our relationships? What 9 character qualities will the Holy Spirit be producing in people who are saved and being led by the Spirit:

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

That's what the Holy Spirit produces in Christ followers who are yielding their lives to the power of the Holy Spirit. We can't produce that on our own. That's what the Holy Spirit does in us and through us as we yield our will to His Word.

So, how many of us have a role to play in the body of Christ? How many of us have a position? According to 1 Peter 5:1-5 everyone in here who knows Christ has a role to play in the body of Christ. We all have a role to play. If we know our roles and we do them for the right reasons God's glory will be manifested through Cornerstone Bible Church. That's what's at stake.

No matter how large our church gets you all have a jersey called the righteousness of Christ and you all have a role to play in the body of Christ. We really are all together for the gospel. When we know our roles and live them out in the Spirit God is glorified and our souls are satisfied. Let's pray.