

**TITLE: "Faithfully Fighting the 'Fight of Faith' to the Finish"
(Part 1)**

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 5:6-7

THEME: Humility

NUMBER: 01101Pe5.6-7(98)

DATE: January 31, 2010

[i] Back to 1 Peter - turn to chapter 5 . . .

Hard to believe, but we have 3 weeks left in 1 Peter. Hope to finish t/letter on Feb. 14th – my valentine's day present to you.

{{Read Passage}}

[ii] Note that key word in v. 6 ==> "therefore"

Word that points us to t/preceding context – in this case back to v. 5.

As we noted back when we were in that verse, some scholars contend that this is an awkward verse division & that t/first half of t/v. {cite} should really be t/end of v. 4; while t/2d half of t/v. {cite} should be t/beginning of v. 6.

Evident that verse 5 looks both ways – back to vv. 1-4 and forward to vv. 6-11.

[ii] As we look forward the key word is humility

Every believer in JC is to be clothed w/an attitude of humility.

If humility were your clothing, how much would you have on? Would you be well clothed, or (embarrassing thought) - would you be sitting here this AM naked.

As Thomas a Kempis wrote: "God walks with the humble; He reveals himself to the lowly; He gives understanding to the little ones;

He discloses His meaning to pure minds, but hides His grace from the proud."

. . . And all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another . . .

[iii] Remember: Humility is a word that describes an attitude (it starts in the mind)

Starts in the mind and demonstrates itself in attitudes and actions.

It's to have the attitude of a servant:

Philippians 2:3-8 **3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

MAT 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MAT 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

MAT 5:5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Romans 12:3

It's to act like the servant. This was radical; humility was the mark of a slave in Greco-Roman culture. We are "slaves" of Christ!

[iv] That's the idea here

When Peter writes ==>

... clothe yourselves with humility toward one another ...

He uses a very descriptive word ==> ἐγκομβοομαι. From κομβος, a *roll, band, or girth: a knot or roll of cloth*, – something tied up or girded up. A related word referred to a slave's apron.

How fitting. Put on humility as a uniform. Not the uniform of a general or a king, but of a slave.

[v] It's to be girded with the mind of a servant

Something that no doubt brought to Peter's mind his experience with Jesus recorded in John 13: The Creator of the Word, the Lord of all, stooping down to wash t/dirty feet of His disciples.

You young men, likewise, be subject to your elders. And all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, FOR GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

God's showers of grace slide off of the mountains of pride into the valleys of humble hearts making them fertile for his blessing.

"For the Lord bestows his blessings there, where he finds the vessels empty" (Kempis - The Imitation of 'Christ).

[vi] How do we transition this to vv. 6-11?

While these 6 vv. begin with a call to humility, the context seems to be related more to suffering. There's "anxiety" (7); an "adversary" (8); direct use of t/word "suffering/suffered" in vv. 9-10.

How does that related to the call to humility that we see in vv. 5-6?
I'm glad you asked!!!

Humble dependence on God's sovereign will is that which carries us through the sufferings of this life to the finish line of faith.

Get that? {repeat section by section}

This week and next ==>

"Faithfully Fighting the 'Fight of Faith' to the Finish"

As for our outline, we're answering the question ==>

I. How to Persevere Through Suffering (6-11)

I suppose that heading could be used synony. w/our title {cite}.

Here are 4 things that we need to do if we are going to ==>

"Faithfully Fighting the 'Fight of Faith' to the Finish"

A. Humble Yourself Before God (6-7)

That's a simple statement. But there's a lot in these 2 vv. that elaborate on that single point.

If we are going to persevere thru suff // faithfully fight t/fight of faith to t/very end – we must have a humility that is characterized by 4 things:

First of all ==>

1. It is a Humility that Bows to God's Sovereignty (6)

Humble yourselves . . .

Aorist Passive Imperative (command). Similar in idea to Matt. 18:4.

Humble yourselves, therefore, . . .

Now note this ==>

. . . under the mighty hand of God . . .

a. We put this all together {restate} and we have a humility that bows to God's sovereignty

WDYMBY?

(1) The phrase "might hand of God" or "God's might hand" is an O.T. reference to 2 things: 1) God's dominion; 2) God's discipline

(a) God's dominion (or sovereignty {define}) is seen most clearly and forcefully in His deliverance of His people from Egypt DEU 26:8 and the \Lord\ brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders;

In many ways, the Exodus in the O.T. is a parallel to the Cross in the N.T. God's greatest work, the place where His power and glory are most clearly seen under the Old Covt. is in delivering His people from Egypt.

But that only foreshadows his Power and Glory in the life, death, and resurr. of His Son, JC.

(b) We noted that the reference to God's mighty hand not only points to dominion, it also points to discipline (judgement)

EXO 3:20 "So I will stretch out My hand, and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it . . . "

JOB 30:21 " . . . With the might of Thy hand Thou dost persecute me."

i. There may be an echo here to 4:17 {cite}

For [it is] time for judgement to begin from the house of God; and if [it begins] with us first, what will [be the] end of those who are disobedient to Gospel of God?

We noted back then that a key implication to this verses is that God's People May Suffer First and Most, but not Last and Longest (17-18)

This judgement connects to verse 12 of chapter 4 "do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you" The F.O. is God's judgement. But not His condemnation.

(i) Carry that idea forward to our text {summarize}

We must humble ourselves under his hand of discipline and in keeping w/His sov. will.

You cannot strive against God and win. All things bow to Him and Him alone. He does as He pleases.

The kind of humility that bows to God's sovereignty is also the only way that we can ultimately be delivered from our affliction.

(2) What a tremendous example of that in Daniel chapter 4

Finger in 1 Peter and turn to t/4th chapter of Daniel (O.T.)
{Go through context, 4:27 - 37}

There's a similar idea here ==>

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that He may lift you up in time:

I. How [do we] Persevere Through Suffering (6-11)

How do we "Faithfully Fighting the 'Fight of Faith' to the Finish?"

First ==>

A. Humble Yourself Before God (6-7)

1. It is a Humility that Bows to God's Sovereignty (6)

Not only that, but accepts his discipline. He disciplines all whom he loves.

2. It is a Humility that Looks to Eternity (6)

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God SO THAT . . .

a. ἵνα clause (ἵνα = "in order that," or "so that" w/the subjunctive mood indicating purpose or result)

SO THAT He may lift you up in time:

Your role is to be humble, to bow to God's sovereignty & meekly receive His discipline. He will then lift you up, or exalt you (but catch this) "In time." Or in "His time."

b. Million dollar question: "What time?" "When?"

Now? Sometime future in one's earthly life? Or is this "eschatological" meaning, in eternity?

As t/child in Sunday School opined, *"Don't tell me this is another one of those benefits that I can't have until I get to heaven."*

I'm afraid that it is . . .

c. That's not to say that there isn't a principle that applies in the here and now

One of my sports heroes, the future HOF QB for the AZ Cardinals is a recent example of that. On Friday afternoon he called a P.C. in order to announce his retirement from football. He had done what many thought would never happen: lead the perennially woeful Cardinals not only to the playoffs, but to t/SB! At age 38 he was still at the top of his game and holds several all-time QB records. At his PC he walked up to the podium carrying his Bible.

He thanked His Lord and Savior, JC and went on to say that he was just an ordinary guy, but like so many we read about in Scripture, God takes ordinary guys and gals and does extra-ordinary things w/their lives. Curt Warner didn't go to a big FB school like USC or Penn St. He wasn't even drafted. He played arena football for a couple of hundred bucks a week and stocked groceries on the side at a local supermarket. He humbled himself before God & God chose to exalt him to a place of recognition.

But it doesn't always work out that way. The world is filled w/folks who are out to make a name for themselves. True even in t/CH. And many manipulate themselves and work hard for recognition. To exalt themselves.

And there are others who are humble and Christlike who never get any public recognition for that.

So this has to point beyond the present to t/future.

(1) The phrase is literally $\epsilon\nu$ καιρω

That's not "in Cairo" as being in the city that's in Egypt.

$\epsilon\nu$ means "in" and καιρω means "time."

Lit. "in time."

In the N.T. it's a reference to "the last time" or "the time of the end." It's being used here in the same way that Peter uses the similar phrase in 1:5 {cite}

Cf. 1:13 - It's the "grace to be brought to you at the revelation of JC."

5:4 - It's when "the Chief Shepherd appears" the time when you will receive "the unfading crown of glory."

It is when, after suffering for a while, "the God of all grace..." {5:10}

John Chrysostom, the ECF who died in AD 407 ==>

"Peter says that this will happen in due time, because he is teaching them that they will have to wait until the next life for this exaltation."

[Catena]

Common refrain of the N.T. that humiliation must come before exaltation. That's the pattern est. by X (see that in 2:22-23).

One of the great reversals of Scripture. Before you can be exalted, you must first be humbled. If you want to save your life, you must lose it.

Again, that doesn't mean that God doesn't rescue us out of the midst of suffering. Some times he does. Some times he doesn't. It's in his sov. control; his timing, not ours.

The 17th c. Scottish Presbyterian Robert Leighton ==>

"In due time. This is not the time that suits you, but God's wisely appointed time. You think, 'I am sinking; if God does not help me now, it will be too late.' But God sees it differently. He can let you sink still lower and bring you up again. He only acts at the most appropriate time. You cannot see this now, but you will see someday that God has chosen the best time. *'Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him'* (Isaiah 30:18). Does God wait and you do not? What difficulty cannot firm belief in God's wisdom, power, and goodness surmount? So be humble under his hand. Submit not only your possessions, your health, your life, but your soul as well. Seek and wait for your pardon as a condemned rebel, with the rope around your neck. Lay yourself low before God, stoop at his feet, and ask permission to say, 'Lord, I am justly under the sentence of death. If I fall under it, you are righteous, and I do now acknowledge this. But if it seems good to you to save the vilest, most wretched of sinners, and to show great

mercy in pardoning such a debt, the higher will be the glory of that mercy. However, I am resolved to wait until either you graciously receive me or absolutely reject me. If you do the latter, I do not have a word to say against it; but because you are gracious, I hope that you will yet have mercy on me.' I dare say that the promise in the text belongs to such a soul, and he may lift you up in due time." [Robert Leighton, 233]

Then he asks ==>

"What if most or all of our life passes without feeling any spiritual comfort? Let us not overestimate this moment. Provided we can humbly wait for free grace and depend on the word of promise, we are safe. If the Lord will clearly shine on us and refresh us, this is much to be desired and prized. But what if he thinks it fit that we should be under a cloud of wrath all our days? It is but a moment. 'For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning' (Psalm 30:5). What follows a lifetime of his favor is an endless lifetime. No evening follows the morning of eternity." [Ibid]

No evening follows the morning of eternity . . .

What's it about? What's the BIG picture? It's about your best life in eternity, not your best life here and now.

What a fool - to gain the whole world and forfeit your soul.....

I. How to Persevere Through Suffering (6-11)

A. Humble Yourself Before God (6-7)

What kind of humility are we talking about?

1. It is a Humility that Bows to God's Sovereignty (6)

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God . . .

2. It is a Humility that Looks to Eternity (6)

... so that He may lift you up in time.

3. It is a Humility that Forsakes Worldly Anxiety (7)

casting all your anxiety upon Him . . .

a. I want you to note an important grammatical consideration

Our translations can be a little deceptive here. Esp. true w/the NIV which translates the word ἐπιρίψοντες which is a ptc. as "cast" instead of "casting."

This phrase ==>

casting all your anxiety upon Him . . .

Is a further elaboration on humility. IOW - one way that we demonstrate humble dependance upon God is by forsaking our anxiety.

Or to put it another way: anxiety can be a form of pride.

How can that be?

Some people are filled w/worries, anxieties, distractions, cares of this world – so much that they believe they must take control. Not only that, but they disbelieve that God is in control and is working all things together for their good. To trust in self is to trust in the god of self.

Conversely, when you cast your worries upon God, you acknowledge that He is your Lord and Sovereign King.

That's why, true humility is ==>

3. . . . a Humility that Forsakes Worldly Anxiety (7)

b. Let me add that this is more than the normal anxieties of life

There are times when it is expected that one be anxious.

There are fears and concerns that are normal and healthy. And there are fears that are part and parcel of our sinful estate.

This isn't addressing someone who suffers from panic attacks, per se. Or someone who nervous over some test results (even tho that, too, can be a lack of faith).

This is a worldly anxiety that focuses on worldly concerns and pursuits. It's being preoccupied with the cares of life to the extent that one loses sleep in the process.

Word that's used in conjunction with Martha in Luke 10.

Luke 10:38-42 38 Now as they were traveling along, He entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who moreover was listening to the Lord's word, seated at His feet. 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." 41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

It is the anxieties of this world that cause the word to be unfruitful (Matt. 13:22).

c. Whatever the cares or concerns, note t/word in verse 7 ==> cast ALL of your anxieties upon Him.

Not just some. Not just the big things. But all. All of our concerns, our fears, our doubts, our prideful desire for control over those things we cannot control – all are to be cast upon our loving Father.

One scholar translates the verse ==>

"All your anxiety you may throw on him, for he cares about you."

[Michaels, 296]

d. The word means just that: "Throw"

The only other place this word is used is in Luke 19:35 where it describes the act of throwing a garment, like a blanket, on a horse.

What a picture! When you are suffering // anxious // doubt // fear. Take those worries like heavy burden on your back, and cast it upon your God.

Bunyan's 'Pilgrim' who upon coming in his journey to the cross of Christ, found that his heavy burden fell off of his back.

I think Peter as he wrote this had in mind Psalm 55:22:

Cast your burden upon the \Lord,) and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

The word for 'burden' in the LXX of Psalm 55:22 (LXX 54:23) is the same word translated 'anxieties' here.

I. How to Persevere Through Suffering (6-11)

"Faithfully Fighting the 'Fight of Faith' to the Finish"

A. Humble Yourself Before God (6-7)

1. It is a Humility that Bows to God's Sovereignty (6)

Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God . . .

2. It is a Humility that Looks to Eternity (6)

. . . so that He may lift you up in time.

3. It is a Humility that Forsakes Worldly Anxiety (7)

casting all your anxiety upon Him . . .

4. It is a Humility that Rests in God's Care (7)

... for He cares for you.

MAT 6:25-26,33-34 25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, {as to} what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, {as to} what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and {yet} your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. 34 "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. {Each} day has enough trouble of its own.

a. Put all the pieces together:

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may lift you up in time: casting all your anxiety upon Him, for He cares for you.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, they follow Me. I give eternal life to them."

If you know JC as your Lord and Savior, if you have been born again by His grace, it is a work of God.

He called you to His eternal glory in Christ (verse 10).

He cares for you.

PHI 4:6 **Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** <=== He wants you to cast these things upon Him for your good and His glory!

"O You Who are good and almighty, You Who care for one of us as for one, and for all of us as for each." [Augustine, Confessions, iii.II.19]

That's Romans 8!

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; 30 and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 Just as it is written, "For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

PSA 56:3 When I am afraid, I will put my trust in Thee.

I. How to Persevere Through Suffering (6-11)

A. Humble Yourself Before God (6-7)

1. It is a Humility that Bows to God's Sovereignty (6)

2. It is a Humility that Looks to Eternity (6)

3. It is a Humility that Forsakes Worldly Anxiety (7)

4. It is a Humility that Rests in God's Care (7)

History records that Peter lived the truths of what he here teaches. Before one can be exalted, one has to be humbled. Suffering is for a time, it won't last. And it cannot strip away the inheritance that is ours in Christ.

Peter was reportedly martyred by "inverted crucifixion" (crucified upside down).

Some time in the 3rd c. Origin wrote: 'Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he had desired to suffer.'

Michelangelo later painted a portrayal of Peter's inverted crucifixion in Rome.

If this is true, than we can say that Peter's long hoped for exaltation came after an intense experience of humiliation.

In the end, for the Apostle Peter, the door to glory looked like a downward cross.