



Old Testament Reading: Joshua 1:1-9

New Testament Reading: Colossians 2:1-10

**A Living Hope – Preparing for Persecution
“Peter’s Passion for Spiritual Maturity”
1 Peter 5:5-14**

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The timeless truth of the Apostle Peter's first epistle to Christians in the 1st century who were severely persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord is **the only way to prepare for spiritual persecution is to become spiritually mature.**

- Throughout this letter, we have seen Peter's compassion for his fellow believers who were being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ and his passion for them to become spiritually mature believers.
- Peter's goal was to enable them to endure whatever the Lord allowed them to experience, with the conviction that, not only were they proving the power of the gospel in their own lives, but they were also witnessing to those who were persecuting them and leaving an example for those who would follow them.
- This is the divine path God has called every believer to walk today, demonstrating their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

If Christians in the 21st Century are to survive spiritually in this Anti-Christian environment, it will require us to:

- Deepen our devotion and dedication to Jesus Christ as the Lord of our lives.
- Develop spiritual courage to face the enemy in faith, not fear.
- Determine to do whatever it takes to remain true to our faith, regardless of the consequences.

Christians who accept this challenge will begin by establishing a "**Biblical World View,**" a lens through which they can examine the various issues of life, and discern God's purpose for allowing them, thereby gaining a clearer understanding of their spiritual journey and the trials they face.

- According to 1st Peter 5:5-14:
- To solidify our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.
- To be an effective witness for Christ to those who watch us handle life's challenges.
- To leave a convincing testimony to those who follow us.
- To become spiritually mature and prepared for persecution, we must adopt a worldview based upon these seven attitudes:

1. The Attitude of Submission – Vs. 5 – “*Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders.*”

The Greek word for *submit* is *hupotasso*, which means to be **under authority!**

- The reason Satan (Lucifer) was cast out of heaven was because he did not want to be above God or beneath God – he wanted to be “equal” with God – which was to be out from under God's authority.
- When Satan fell to this earth, he brought his rebellion with him, and because he “fell from heaven's grace,” his life goal is to lead others to “**sin and to fall short of the glory of God.**” (Romans 3:23)

Whatever authority God has placed over us is the method by which He will conform us to the image of Jesus Christ.

- To circumvent their authority would be to question God's authority and squelch God's desires for our lives.
- To respect and to submit to their authority is to reveal our submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

2. The Attitude of Humility – Vs. 5 – “*Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility.*”

- The attitude of “submission” rids us of the sin of pride and self-exaltation.
- The attitude of “humility” rids us of the sin of arrogance and self-love.
- The Greek word “clothe” means to put on the garment of the work you are about to do, such as when Jesus put a towel around His waist and washed the disciple’s feet.
- To grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, we must humble ourselves before the Lord by being willing to serve others, for until we do, we will never see the needs of others as God does.

3. The Attitude of Trust – Vs. 6 – 7 – *“Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”*

Casting means to “throw,” like a rider would throw a blanket on a horse.

- Peter said, to be spiritually mature, we must learn to cast our cares (our concerns of life) upon the Lord, knowing that He truly cares for us.
- True spiritual maturity is that ability to trust in the Lord with all our heart and not lean upon our understanding of things but make sure we know His will and ways in all the areas of our lives and then allow Him to direct our paths. (Based on Proverbs 4:5-6)

4. The Attitude of Self-Control – Vs. 8 – *“Be Sober.”*

- Peter is saying a spiritually mature believer cannot be taken in by the world’s “intoxicants” because they have their priorities in order and their life issues in balance. This requires the discipline of mind that only a very few Christians are determined to employ today.

5. The Attitude of Vigilance – Vs. 8-9 – *“Be vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”*

- Satan seeks those Christians who aren’t spiritually mature, so he can destroy the effectiveness of their faith.
- John called the devil the “**prince of this world**” – he is in charge of the world’s system, and he uses the world systems to persecute those who believe in Christ.
- Paul called the devil the “**prince of the power of the air**” – he is in charge of the demonic power of the universe, and he uses his legion of demons to achieve his demonic goal to “**steal, kill, and destroy!**”

6. The Attitude of Hope – Vs. 10 – *“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”*

- Spiritual maturity is the ability to endure the pain of the present to obtain and enjoy the glory of God’s presence forever!
- Our persecution may endure for our lifetime, but it is still “temporal” – and in no way compares with the glory we will share with God all eternity! That’s our hope!

7. The Attitude of Worship – Verse 11 – *“To him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”*

- The spiritually mature believer will always give praise and glory to God because they realize He is in full control over all, in all, and through all—they have learned not to question Him, but to worship Him.

