

# Reflection on 1 Peter 5

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 22 June 2025

Preacher: John Howard

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Okay. It's bigger than I figured. We've got more people.

! We've got 11 people who are off! Chapter 5 of 1 Peter.

This happens to be the last sermon in this particular book. Next time, I don't know, next week they're going to give a mission report. The next time we start, it'll be 2 Peter.

And so we go 2 Peter, and then we're going to do Jude. That's going to be an interesting book. And then we're going to start in Joel. So that sort of gives you an idea of where we're headed. Alright.

This particular chapter has some really great, profound lessons on leadership, humility, community, and faith.

[ 1 : 0 8 ]     Especially given the context, in the context of suffering. Suffering and community have been some of the major themes in this book. Everywhere Peter talks about something, he always puts it in context of why you're suffering, when you suffer, if you suffer.

this, this, this, this, and this. And it makes sense, because of the time that he was, he was probably in prison when he wrote this book in Rome. He was possibly looking at being executed, which ultimately he was.

And so he knew there was suffering going on in the churches that he was writing to. So let's read our, we're going to only read the first 11 chapters, or 11 verses, yeah, 11 chapters, first 11 verses, and then we'll talk about it.

So let's just read it. It said, would somebody read that for me? Because my voice is not good today. I think I, it got spent in Sunday school. Alright.

So somebody would read 1 Peter 5, 1 through 11. So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ's suffering, and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you, give a shepherd's care for God's thought.

[ 2 : 3 1 ]     Among you, exercising oversight, not merely as a duty, but willingly under God's direction, not for shameful profit, but eagerly, and do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but the examples to the flock.

Then, when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away. In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders, and all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble, and God exalts you in due time if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand by casting all your cares on him, because he cares for you.

Be sober and alert. Your enemy, the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the crowd looking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering.

And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

to him belongs the power forever. Amen. Amen. Alright, now, Peter is an apostle, but you'll notice that he's not writing this letter, or at least this section of the letter, but I think generally he's thinking in terms of not using his apostolic authority to say this is what you're going to have to do.

[ 4 : 20 ] Now, Paul had to do that several times. This is the Corinthians. I'm an apostle, and I'm telling you this is what's got to happen, and you need to get your act right. Well, here, Peter's not saying that. He's saying, I appeal to you not as an apostle, but rather as an elder, a fellow elder.

He's talking to the elders of the church. Now, there's a problem. What's the problem for us? It's not a problem for them. It's a problem for us. What's the problem?

Well, who's he addressing in the church? He's addressing this church. Who's he addressing? All of us. You. Me.

That's exactly right. All of us in general, but specifically, who are the elders of a Baptist church? The deacons and pastors. No. In function, yes.

The way we actually do it, I mean, you come to a deacons meeting, you'd never know that it wasn't the same thing, right? I mean, it's because that, but by quote, unquote, Baptist theology, the pastors are your elders.

[ 5 : 27 ] And I'm just going to, this is an aside, but that's why I firmly believe that there should be more than one pastor. Because you should have more than one elder.

It never says the elder of the church. That's what got the church in trouble about 300 or 400 A.D. is they started having a guy and everybody else was subordinate to him.

And then we ended up with this hierarchy of priesthood and all this stuff. And that's not the way the church was designed. It was designed to be run locally with a group of elders who were the mature Christians, men, as it turns out, in the congregation that oversaw, and we're going to see what they do, the congregation.

And then there were deacons. And what were deacons? Deacon actually means what? Does anyone know? What? You don't know. It means servant. Diakonos is someone who serves.

So the deacons were the doers. They went around to make sure everything happened, that people were taken care of, that the needs were met, that things were distributed, that the worship service were organized. I mean, they did the nug work, as I call it.

[ 6 : 39 ] And the elders were supposed to do the spiritual shepherding of the flock. And so when he's talking about it, he says, look, I urge the elders among you to care for God's flock, to shepherd it.

That's a work that's a little bit different than organize conferences and make sure that the teams are on track and da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da, like we do. We have teams. Now, you can generalize that and say what he's going to say, and what he's saying here, can be applied to all leaders in the church.

And in our church, we're sort of different in a way. We have pastors, we have deacons, but we also have what else? We have six of them.

Team leaders. And what do the team leaders do? They oversee the team that does certain functions. We have worship and prayer and fellowship and missions.

And so, you know, those team leaders are responsible to shepherd that team. They don't have to make all the decisions, but they have to shepherd. They take care, make sure that what they're doing or what they're responsible for happens and happens in a way that's beneficial to the church.

- [ 7 : 55 ] Now, it's interesting, too, he says, you've got to look at this elder, you've got to see what you're doing and why you're doing it. The motivation, Peter is really big on motivation. What motivates you to do what you're doing?
- And he says, don't be motivated by shameful profit. What does that mean? Yeah, you could be doing that, yeah.
- Also, just don't do this just for the money. Don't do this for the money. If you're doing it as a job, you're in the wrong place.
- It's not a job. It's a what? Bridge. Exactly. And it isn't something that you or I get to choose.
- Someone who comes to you and says, I'm going to go to seminary and become a pastor, you have to ask him a question. Why? By whose authority are you deciding you need to be a pastor?
- [ 9 : 00 ] And the answer always has to be what? God. And that's pretty hard because it used to be, and think about this, we're way off my topic, but that's okay.
- Think about this. Back in the day before we had a clergy class, you know, paid ministers, how did the church function?
- I mean, you can go back to Baptist. If you go to the early American frontier or you went to Europe where there were struggling Baptist churches by the way they were persecuted like you wouldn't believe.
- Why? Because they didn't follow the state doctrines. how did they organize? Well, they would be a group of believers and someone had to take responsibility for them, to watch over them, to make sure they were connected and to see what was going on, especially as they were facing hardships.
- And so, out of their midst, God would call someone to be their pastor, their shepherd. By the way that word is connected, pastor, really means what? Shepherd.
- [ 10 : 10 ] Why? You go to Spanish and you have, you know Spanish, pastor is a what? A shepherd. That's what he is.
- You go to, you go by, you know, tacos al pastor, what you're going to get is you're getting something that the shepherds would make. That's what it means. And so they, they would come up and their job was to shepherd to care for it.
- Now I'm going to give you an example. If you turn to John 21, John 21. Now this is at the very end of John's gospel and it's after the resurrection and before the ascension.
- And what has happened is, if you remember, Peter denied Christ three times the night of his trial. And he was not to be seen at the crucifixion.
- The only apostle we know of that was at the crucifixion was John. So where's Peter? Hiding. Why? Peter, one, is afraid for his own safety but two, he knows he's denied Christ three times when Christ said, you're going to deny me before the cock crows three times.
- [ 11 : 21 ] He said, oh, never, never, because remember Peter's the one that said, I'll die before I let them. And he cut the ear off of the priest's servant thinking he was doing right and Jesus said, enough of this message.
- Now Peter knows he has basically turned his back on his Savior, on one of his closest friends as well, on his Lord.
- And Jesus makes a very special effort to restore Peter to fellowship and to tell him that all is forgiven, that this was not something that he needed to let cover his life forever.
- And then John, starting in verse 15, let's read this together, 15 through 18. The context is they went fishing. Peter said, I had enough of this.

I can't just sit around. Let's go fishing because that's what he knew. Now, I know some guys in here and things aren't going well. What are they going to do? They're going to go fishing. I think best on a boat with a pole in my hand.

[ 12 : 26 ] And if nothing bites, that's the place. So he goes fishing and they see somebody on the shore. And John says, it's the Lord. It's Jesus. And Peter strips off his tunic and jumps in the water and swims the shore.

And they're sitting on the shore after Jesus has made them breakfast and this is what he says. Then when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these do?

Talking to the other disciples. He replied, yes, Lord, you know I love you. Jesus told him, feed my lambs. Jesus said a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

And he replied, yes, Lord, you know I love you. And Jesus told him, shepherd my sheep. Jesus said a third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me?

Peter was distressed that Jesus asked him a third time, do you love me? And said, Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you. And Jesus replied, feed my sheep.

[ 13 : 36 ] Now there's a lot going on in that passage. He asked him three times, probably because Peter did what? Three times? Denied. And so this was one, two, three, I'm restoring you.

He's also telling Peter, I want you to pick up the mantle and I want you to wear it because you're going to pastor, you're going to shepherd my sheep.

Now what was the qualification that Jesus implied for Peter to have in order to be able to do that? He had to love him. He asked him, of course you know I love you.

Then since you love me, do this. So when Peter writes in his letter, exercise over thought not merely as a duty but willing under God's direction, not for shameful pride but eagerly, do not lower it over those that are entrusted to you but be examples to the flock.

What is he saying? You better take care of them because you love Jesus. And these people aren't your people. That's the problem many pastors have.

[ 14 : 47 ] They think that this is their church. It's not their church. It's whose church? God's. God's. And the people in it are God's flock. You're only a steward of it.

And heaven help the person who thinks that they have authority over those people to tell them what they will and will not do. They cannot. That's not their authority. It's one of the reasons, have you ever heard us say you need to give 10% or more of your money to the church?

No. Why? That's not our responsibility. Who's that between? You and God. I'm not going to stand before God one day and the judgment and he's going to say, so did your congregation give?

I know. But he is going to ask you, what did you do with the blessings and the benefits and the money and the resources I gave you?

And you're going to say, Lord, I'm whatever. Like the talents, 10 talents, 5 talents, 1 talent. I don't want to be the one that said I buried it. Alright.

[ 15 : 57 ] So he's telling these guys, watch how you're serving. Make sure you're serving with a servant's heart. Make sure that what you're doing is for the best as your God's representative or his servant, literally, to serve these people.

And that's my theory of leadership. I used to, I believe this when I was an officer in the army, I also taught this to my cadets when I was a senior army officer. You lead best by serving your people.

If you take care of your people, they'll take care of the mission. Bosses know that in business. You take care of your employees, they'll take care of what you want done.

It's that simple. And they'll do it willingly. It'll even go beyond. I mean, I never had a soldier tell me, sir, I won't do that. Or sir, I have to go home at 4 o'clock.

Don't you understand? The work day's over. They go, what do you need me to do and when do you need it done? And it was my responsibility to make sure that they had what they needed to do the job and that I took care of them.

[ 17 : 05 ] That when I could let them go or when I could give them something, I did it. When something bad happened, I took the blame. When something good happened, they got the credit. That's what a good shepherd does.

That's what a good leader does. That's the way it's supposed to be. Alright.

Now, let's move on. I've talked enough on that. Let's look at verse 5. It says, in the same way, because he's transitioning now, in the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders.

And all of you, clothe yourself with humility toward one another because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. That last phrase, have you heard it before in this place?

Remember when we did James? James says exactly the same thing. In James 4, 6, it says, God opposes the proud but he gives grace to the humble. It must be important.

[ 18 : 13 ] Because both those letters, by the way, James and 1 Peter, are designed to tell us how we should react or act in our fellowship, in our community, in our family, here in the church.

How do brothers and sisters in Christ treat each other? And he says, not with pride but with humility. Why? Because God's going to oppose the proud. He's going to make sure that they are put in their place ultimately.

But he's going to raise up the humble. Now, humility and humbleness doesn't mean meekness necessarily. It means that you defer to other people. It means that you look to meet their needs rather than seek to meet your own needs.

How many people have you ever heard in a church, where are you going to church? Well, we were going so and so but they didn't meet our needs. They went there for the wrong reason.

They went there for the wrong reason. God put you in a congregation so that you can meet other people's needs. Not that your needs wouldn't be met.

[ 19 : 21 ] You understand that? He gifted you and he provided you with resources and said, go serve. By the way, I'm going to put you in this family, in this community of faith.

And I want you to do it there. You go, wow. That means you've got to know the people in your fellowship because you can't meet a need you don't know of.

And it also means if you have a need, you have to be willing to tell somebody because people aren't real good. I tell my wife all the time, I'm not real good at mind reading.

If you want me to do something, you've got to tell me. Don't assume I know because I'm a man. I don't know anything unless you tell me.

We were talking about Abraham and something this morning the same thing. He did whatever she said. Right or wrong. He did it. Most men are like that. Now the other part is that he says clothe yourselves with humility.

[ 20 : 26 ] Paul in his letters talks a lot about putting off like putting off the clothing of the old nature and putting on the clothing of the new nature. You put aside the old man and you put on the new man.

He uses that clothing thing as a metaphor I guess. Peter's doing the same thing. He's saying look you've got to put on the clothing of humility. Now I bet when you got up this morning I don't know what you wear to bed but when you got up this morning you didn't stay in those clothes or lack of clothes when you came to church this morning.

Everyone looks pretty decent in here. What did you do? He said I've got to go to church. So I'm going to wear now this is my new shirt.

This is a brand new shirt my grandchildren picked it out for me. Yeah? But their mother was a little worried I wouldn't wear it. But here it is.

So I knew I was going to wear that shirt today. So I clothed myself to be presentable to come to the church to be amongst you. And Peter's saying the same thing with humility.

[ 21 : 38 ] When you get up put on humility as an attitude. Put on humility as the way you're going to interact and treat one another when you gather together.

When you see each other. Now it doesn't just it applies particularly in the church but guess what? It also applies to that annoying clerk in the store that's just not quite fast enough.

You got one of those lines in Walmart they hired the slowest people to be cheddars. You notice that? You notice that? I think it goes across and it goes cheek!

Cheek! You go I'll be here until I'm dead. They need to have the same grace shown them as you would show anyone else in the church.

Why? Whose image are they made in? God's. How dare me and I'm mad about this Teresa I'll tell you that I have to really work on this how dare me say something negative or rude to one of God's image bearers?

[ 23 : 00 ] How dare me? You know and I love this church we've had people come in that looked a little rough have you noticed that we have we had one guy really nice guy once you got to know him but when you looked at him he was wearing a tank top and whatever and tattoos all over himself he just looked like he was not the kind of guy you wanted to be your best friend but we loved him anyway why?

because no matter how it was disguised he was still what? God's image bearer do respect and kindness and love and what's going to change a person?

Is it going to be your rudeness or your respect your kindness and your love? so Peter says put on humility like when you get ready to go just put it on like you would put on a shirt or a dress or a pair of shoes just wear it wherever you go and know that if you don't you're making yourself an enemy of God in a sense not an enemy that he's going to do bad but he's going to oppose you he's not going to bless you by the way it's sort of the idea of blessing and cursing I had Abraham God said whoever blesses you I will bless and whoever curses you I will curse and we think big deal right?

what God was saying is anyone that treats you well nice etc I'm going to treat them well but anyone you know the curse part is is where we go yeah this means you had to really do something mean to him and that's not it the blessing was you know one side but the curse was anyone that says anything negative about you anyone who stands in your way anyone that tries to oppose you anyone that puts their agenda above yours and then right after he says that you run into the battle of the five kings and the king of Sodom comes up and he really just treats Abraham who just won this victory and gave him back everybody that he lost treats him sort of rudely like who do you think you are I'm the king and God curses him his city is destroying ultimately but Melchizedek who came with offerings to Abraham

God blessed because he honored Abraham that works with us too those that we bless are blessed and we're blessed those that we curse we don't treat appropriately it comes back on us we have to answer for it let's find out where we are on this do you know what the antithesis of pride is it's humility now you're either going to on a continuum you're going to you have humility or humbleness on this end and you have pride on this end and where are we somewhere somewhere in the middle probably right now there is an appropriate pride you get a raise you should be proud that's not sinful you where's our young ladies they do really well at softball there should be some pride in accomplishment but where you get in trouble is when you start thinking yourself better than other people not just accomplished you did something that was successful or that you were able to manage something that was hard and you have pride in that sense of comfort when you start saying I'm better than you therefore I should be privileged more than you your pride now has got you into trouble humbleness says I have pride in myself and my accomplishments but I don't let that rule my life

[ 27 : 21 ] I understand those are gifts to me but I want to treat you like I would like to be treated myself exactly exactly bring lift people up instead of trying to put them down guess what pride creates it creates division if there is a division in the body of Christ ultimately somewhere in there the root of it is pride I didn't get my way and I should because don't you know who I am my ideas are better than theirs and I should be people should be listening to me because don't you know I'm smarter I had a boss like that he thought he was a genius and I remember he would never make a decision and one of the things we had to do was award citations we actually hired went out and he found a lieutenant and that was his whole job was to read the citations because he learned real quick that I would read them if they made sense and there were no spelling areas it was good for me it was never good enough for him so that this West

Pointer his whole job was to read these citations and get them perfect so that the colonel would sign them the colonel never signed them but that was beside the point and one day he came in and we were working late because I couldn't leave until he left because I was his adjutant I was the guy that sort of ran his office for him and I'm sitting there waiting for him to go home and he comes out and he asked me a question and I gave him the answer and he left and within a minute he came back and he says John I want you to know I'm not upset with you you're doing the best you can and I said thank you that guy was a jerk and he got his in the end all those awards he didn't sign when he was out gone my ex all would sign them all as many as he could when he left command the general found out all these awards all of a sudden hundreds of them went up to the division headquarters to be signed by the general and he goes where did these all come from because his policy was no soldier leaves the 82nd without an award and the answer was well

Colonel so-and-so wouldn't sign them well the Colonel had just gotten himself a legion of merit which is a very high award and the general turned to his adjutant and said revoke it revoke it he didn't take care of his soldiers he was only looking after himself that's not a leader we don't want to be there when Christ says revoke that's not revoke alright if pride causes division guess what builds up the body humility he unites us because it shows that we love one another and love overcomes a multitude of sin to quote scripture and God reminds us that it's not one another that we're actually being humbled to it's actually God we're saying we're responding to God's grace in these people and in our situation we're under his hand and if we will submit ourselves to being humble to one another loving one another caring for one another shepherding one another guess what

God will do ultimately he's going to raise us up and he's going to bestow on us his love and care and glory now the other thing Peter says is if you look at the verse he says talks about the devil and right before he says that he says if you here's how you humble yourself by casting your cares on him because he loves you or cares for you are you and that word casting is the same as a net throwing a net out or a fishing line throwing it out meaning you don't want the bait on the end I feed fish I don't fish cast your cares on him what are you saying I can't do it myself I need you now God's probably going to use the people around you to answer that need but if you hang on to yourself all you're going to do is worry yourself into an early grave become isolated from the people who love you and impotent in that you will never accomplish anything because you're going to be so anxious about doing anything it only gets worse cast your cares on him submit be humble admit it that's the reality admit

I can't do this on my own and you say it's interesting that right after he talks about the devil think about that what can you do on your own most of us can make breakfast on our own most of us can do laundry on and most of us can drive without having an accident on our own right but by God's grace those things don't kill anybody but think about it where do you have where do you struggle I know where I struggle where do you struggle in your relationship with God it's in the form of big T word temptation and the big S word sin we're all caught up in that that we are constantly tempted Peter says here's how you show humility admit you can't do it yourself and give God all that stuff then he turns around and says by the way the devil who is a lion is roaring trying to look to who he's going to devour guess what the connection there the very things that you can't do overcome temptation and avoid sin you have to give that whole problem to God and say

[ 33 : 50 ] I can't do it on my own I try and I fail all the time and God says I know and I've given you two resources one I've given you the spirit in you to help you to encourage you to strengthen you and two when you don't make it I give you grace and forgive the sin now here's the other thing about this roaring lion that lion doesn't just roar sometimes we actually suffer the claws and the teeth when we encounter sin I'm thinking of Job Job was an upright man honest righteous godly did everything God wanted and did it to the best of his ability and counted on God to accept it and to love him and to forgive him when he failed what happened to him well it wasn't God that did anything to him it was

Satan and what did he want to do destroy him now does that mean that Job just sort of had temptations and displeased him all the time no he suffered physically from it he he he He's lost his family except one nagging wife.

He's lost all his property. He's lost his health. He's covered with boils. So what did he do? His wife said, curse God and die.

That sounds like a pretty good solution, does it? Just get it over with. But he didn't do that. And he never, ever, ever cursed God or said God was responsible for what happened to Him.

But rather he said, why? And from like 40 chapters, he poured that out. And his friends tried to tell him why and they were all wrong.

[ 35 : 52 ] In the end, God shows them and says, you don't need to know why. You need to know who. And that's us. Satan is going to try to destroy the church.

Satan is going to try to sideline you. Not maybe personally, but he, I mean, the demons will. Temptation and sin. He's going to try to divide. He's going to try to bring pride in.

He's going to try all these things. Why? Because he wants to destroy God's work. Why? Because he doesn't want to lose. He knows he's lost, but the longer he can put it off, the better for him.

So, when you suffer, and that's what Peter's been talking about, when you suffer, don't be surprised. But cast it on God.



Say, Lord, I can't handle this. He can. He can. And he also says, resist him, so do your best.

[ 36 : 57 ] Strong in your faith. You know what faith is? This is something I've really come to understand. Faith is trust.

Who do you trust? And if you're not trusting God, you're trusting fool's gold. Strong in the faith.

Strong in trust. No matter what the circumstances look like, you know that God's got it. That he's there. You may not hear him. You may not see him.

You may not see anything but the tragedy or the mess that's in front of you. God's still got it. You can still trust him.

Because what's the worst thing that can happen? It happens to be the very best thing that can happen. You can lose your life. But did you lose your life? No. You just left this one in your now where you will never have to be worried about it again.

[ 38 : 00 ] And he says, realize you can be strong and you can resist the devil because you know your brothers and sisters elsewhere are going through at least as bad if not worse.

A week ago, I talked about it. There was 200 Christians in the Congo and they were all killed. Mother, father, children.

In one night. And you know what the question was? Are you a Christian? And if they said yes, they were killed. You remember the school shooter not long ago, many years ago?

He was going through the school with his gun and pointing. What did he ask? What was the question he asked? Are you a Christian? And if you said yes, he shot you. Who inspired these people?

Satan, why? Why does he do that? Because he wants to destroy God's people. He wants to thwart God's plan and purpose. And we need to know that we're part of a bigger picture that's standing firm, claiming this world for God.

[ 39 : 07 ] We're his ambassadors. We're also his soldiers. I don't even know where I'm at. Think about this. The picture that Paul gives when he puts on the full armor of God and then he tells you that and he says, stand firm.

You know what he's talking about? Those are military terms, by the way. You know what the armor is. But the stand firm is a military term. It's the Roman army. Do you know how it fought? They fought in big square units, row after row after row after row, soldiers.

And they all had big shields and short swords. Now, to me, I'd like to have a wrong sword. But they didn't give him one. You know why?

Because they wanted the enemy to bang up against the shield so they could stab him. The shields fit together. And most of the shields were high enough that they could cover them from here to there.

And as long as you were standing firm next to the guy, locked in, shields against each other, the enemy couldn't get there. You put some, the guys in the next row put them above them so he could get the arrows and things they threw.

[ 40 : 20 ] Couldn't get through. It made a, sort of a, a fortress there made of men and their shields. And then when the enemy hit the front line, of course they would be killed.

If someone in the front line fell out, the next guy stepped forward to fill the gap. As long as the line stood firm, it could not be defeated.

It's when somebody said, aha, this is going bad and they left the rank. Now there's a hole. What happens? Someone gets in and they make the hole bigger and bigger and it's much easier to kill from the side than it is from the front when you're holding a shield.

We're to do the same thing. We are to stand side by side, shield's lot, defending one another. Another picture, and I know this is getting long, is javelina.

Now you don't know what a javelina is, but when I live in Arizona, you did not go out in the desert without being careful because you got out in some places there are these wild pigs called javelina.

[ 41 : 26 ] And they're just like the feral pigs in the south, but they're worse in some way. But when they saw a threat, they would form a circle with all the adult males and females looking out and all the young and weak on the inside.

How many people have the smarts to go and say, oh, I'm just pigs in me. Try to enter that circle. You'd get tore up. We are to be like javelina, circling the wagons, protecting the weak and the young.

face out to face our enemy. That's what Peter is telling us. Now, the last of the passage concludes with a promise of restoration and hope that our sufferings are not in vain.

God's sake is not the end of the story. Rather, our God, who is the God of all grace, will restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish us forever.

He will fulfill His purpose. He will bring His kingdom to be fully met and fulfilled because all power belongs to Him. And it's His faithfulness, His loyal love, and not our ability strength that allows us to endure.

[ 42 : 50 ] And you know when that kingdom's coming? You know, the kingdom is here, but it is not yet. We're part of the kingdom, but we haven't seen it all yet.

And one day, Jesus, as the Christ, will sit on the throne of His father David, His father, our God, sit on His throne and rule the nations.

And we'll be there ruling with Him. So let us, as a community of faith, a family of faith, commit ourselves to Christ and to one another, to care for one another, to clothe ourselves in humility, to trust in God's strength and provision, to stand firm in the faith, trusting Him in every situation, and looking forward to the glory that's coming that waits for us.

Let's pray. Lord, I know I rambled on, and I just hope that you can make some sense in people's hearts of what I said, and somehow, Lord, that your purpose would be fulfilled.

I thank you for what Peter wrote. I thank you for the encouragement and the admonition that He gave us in His letter. Help us to live it, Lord, to take it to heart and understand it.

[ 44 : 03 ] It's your word to us for us to act on and to know that you are above all things a God of power and glory and might, and yet you care for us and love us in a way that we cannot even come close to uncomprehending.

Thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.