

1 Peter 5:1-14
Feilding Baptist
26.7.26

[Call to Worship](#)

Welcome to worship with Feilding Baptist Church!

Philippians 2:6-11 talks about Jesus;
Imitating Christ's humility

...have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6 who, being in very nature[a] God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
7 rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature[b] of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death -
even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Father, this is a polar opposite to what the world teaches us, and what we sometimes clamour for, status, recognition, being king. Your model is so different, serving, humbling ourselves, becoming obedient to death seems ridiculous. Yet we know what this brought Jesus, and we know that because of Jesus we too can share in His victory. So we give thanks for the life and love of Jesus. And thank you for the light that you have brought into the world, for us now, that we can share with you in time to come.

Holy Spirit, thank you for being with us this week. Please encourage us now as we worship, please warm our hearts, please bless us. Amen.

[Message - Living Faith 3](#)

In the sufferings the trials, we are still to embrace the humility that Jesus showed.

So the final chapter of 1 Peter, his last words, and the final of eight messages. Let's reflect briefly on what has gone before. Remember Martin Luther said that this letter was a paragon of excellence, a letter that contained all that a Christian needed to know. We've had titles of Living Faith, Living Grace, Living Legacy. It is surprising that we didn't have Living Hope.

Note the greeting in chapter one. This does far more than just cover the usual formalities, the standard 'grace and peace be with you'. Here the greeting, the grace and peace is not just in abundance, as if a dump truck had brought it, but multiplied! May we know God's grace and peace more and more. What a start!

Ruth and Gerry and Sal covered the start of chapter two, the Living Stones, reminding us to crave pure spiritual milk. We're to be about Jesus, Jesus, Jesus! And while we're doing that, sometimes as foreigners and strangers in our own towns and workplaces, we're not to be obnoxious. We are not to be as the misbehaving bird called Tui. We are to excel in behaviour and righteousness, as the light filled people of God. We are to do good, be loving, compassionate and humble (3:8). And we are to respect others, especially those above our social status.

And yes, this is distinctly different to how you might want to be, or how you used to be, or how society is. And the people around you might mock and abuse you. But keep the course, be faithful, repay evil with

blessing (3:9). Use the gifts you have to serve others. In fact, be faithful stewards of the multifaceted grace of God (4:10 NASB).

Through us, the legacy of Jesus lives on. 'We the living are part of a long story.' 'Those who have gone before us, are woven into us.' The Holy Spirit certainly weaves into us, the character of Jesus.

So how will Peter end? What will his last words be? Let's read;

1 Peter 5 New International Version - UK
To the elders and the flock

1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because,

'God opposes the proud

but shows favour to the humble.'[a]

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Final greetings

12 With the help of Silas,[b] whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. 14 Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Footnotes

1 Peter 5:5 Prov. 3:34

1 Peter 5:12 Greek Silvanus, a variant of Silas

Imagine an Air New Zealand staff meeting. All 12 000 staff. Pilots to engineers, call centre staff to baggage handlers. And the CEO gets up to speak, and after all the usual pleasantries, a few facts and figures, a bit of vision, then, in front of everyone else, tells the cabin crew staff how they are to do their job. Well, if you were one of them, how would you feel? As if you weren't doing a good job in the first place!

This is how these verses look, with the elders, the heads of households, singled out (v1) in front of everyone else. Is it any wonder we struggle to get elders?! Perhaps this isn't because they have done anything wrong, but to make sure that they know, and everyone else knows, that they are not to take the place of Jesus. They are not to get too big for their boots.

They are to shepherd the flock. How are they to shepherd? Willingly watch over the flock, be eager to serve, and be as role models. Very Jesus like. Very like Jesus who is our Good Shepherd.

But hang on, isn't this what we would expect of our elders anyway? This role is not supposed to be a chore, or an opportunity for dishonest gain, or misuse of power. The elders are to be good shepherds.

Shepherds that lead the sheep, feed the sheep, lead them to fresh pasture and water, encouraging the sheep.

Why? So that when the Chief Shepherd appears, you might receive the crown of glory.

What sort of crown of glory is this? There is some interest in whether this was a crown or a wreath? This is completely irrelevant. The word before, ok, after in the NIV, is that this crown will never fade, this is an unfading crown of glory.

The Greek word is amaranth, which is a red flower, and it is a flower that doesn't fade. This crown of glory isn't short term, but will last forever. Which is in contrast to human glory, like our flowers in the foyer, human glory is always fleeting, our blossom withers and falls (Jobes, 305).

And then, as the rest of the staff sit smugly, half listening, verse five should bring them back to full attention. IN THE SAME WAY you who are younger, 1, 2, 3, willingly watch over each other, eagerly serve, be role models, AND submit yourselves. Oh, maybe it's better to be an elder after all?! And then, just in case someone thought they had got away without being addressed, verse five again, ALL OF YOU. The CEO goes from addressing a small group, to a larger group, to everyone.

And then what comes next, reads as the bulls eye that the arrows of chapters one, two, three, four have been shot towards. What a clever use of // polyptoton. This is magnificent! Of course you might know it as figura etymologica?! As everyone knows, this is where a writer repeats a word to make a point more powerful.

So, look at the bulls eye we have in verses five and six. Humility (in Greek) firstly as a noun, the next time as an adjective, and finally as a verb. It's like Peter is naming it, then describing it, and then saying, now you know what this is, now you know how it should look, go and do it! Humility is to be a real and active part of our lives.

Ah, but what does this humility mean? And what did it mean back then? Does anyone know what a jackdaw is? Does anyone know how it flies. It's very different to an eagle. The eagle soars. The jackdaw hugs the ground, humble like a fighter jet.

Does anyone know what the issue is with land in South Dunedin? 1300 homes threatened by flooding, and sea level rise. Because it's lower. In early Greek, this land would have been known as humble. As opposed to mountainous places.

Back then humility was even used of provinces and countries that were weak. It was used of those who had been defeated in battles. Before the New Testament self humbling was not viewed positively (4:449 NIDNTTE). Those who humble themselves before others revealed their inferiority and fear! To be directed to be humble was bizarre.

So what changed?

Philippians 2
Christ Jesus:

6 who, being in very nature[a] God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
7 rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature[b] of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death -
even death on a cross!

Humility in the Greek world had a human centred approach. Lowliness was looked on as shameful, something to be avoided. It could and had to be overcome. But in the New Testament, centred on Jesus, the humility word group is used to describe our relationship with God. And it impacts how we are to treat each other.

Does this mean that we are to keep trying to make ourselves lower? I saw some squashed worms on the road yesterday. Should we as followers of Jesus be trying to get lower, so that we are even more humble than a worm? Some would try. Some should try. We are to be humble before God, and humble with each other.

Ah, but if we're in a leadership role, make sure that we lead humbly, with compassion, love, serving others. We are to 'Serve to Lead' (on the wall of a UK army training base).

Before these words about Jesus in Philippians, Paul writes;

Philippians 2:1-5

Imitating Christ's humility

1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

How is this going to look?

How then will we live?

Let's take a moment to pause and reflect.

Father, thank you for Peter's letter. Thank you for the guidance for how we are to live for you, with others. Thank you for how humility embraces so many other aspects of the character of Jesus. Holy Spirit, please help us to be good models, and good witnesses for Jesus. Amen.

Benediction

(inspired by 1 Peter 4:8-10)

Go now into the world,
inspired by the extravagant love of God.
Live generously, with open hands,
loving one another as if your lives depended on it.
Be good stewards of the gifts you have received,
so that God may be glorified in all that you say and do.

And may the abundant love of God surround you,
may the extravagant grace of Jesus Christ sustain you,
and may the constant presence of the Holy Spirit
inspire and encourage you in every good deed and word. Amen.

from With Open Hands, a worship service written for the Canadian Foodgrains