

1Peter 11-07-15a

This is Friday, the 15th of July, 2011. We continue our study in the book of 1 Peter, resuming in chapter 5, verse 5. We'll pause at the outset and go to the Lord in prayer. Father, we find ourselves once again with the opportunity for fellowship and nourishment from your word, and we're grateful for it.

We thank you for the fellowship of believers who share an enthusiasm for your plan and purpose for your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for the blessings that you distribute in our midst and the grace that flows through the gifts that are exercised and the benefits that we gain from our contact with one another. We pray that as we study this passage, we will learn more about how we can bless and be a blessing in that context.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will impress these truths on our hearts, and we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. In 1 Peter, chapter 5, we have a summary statement to elders, presbuteroi, and we tend to think, well, these are the graybeards.

But we have seen over the last few weeks that this is really anyone in a position to be a bit further along than someone else. We have young people who teach our younger people, and to the younger people, the older younger people are elders. All of us have the opportunity in some context or another to serve as an example, to be helpful or beneficial to others.

So it's a great thing to see the opportunity that is expressed here. You don't have to say, well, that's for grandpa, that's for the old geezers in your midst. This is all of us.

But it refers not so much to chronological age as it does to function. You can function as someone who can lead, who can help, who can be an example, who has experience, who has a little bit further along. And this is the exhortation.

The elders who are among you, the ones who are a bit further along among you, I exhort who am a fellow further along guy and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker of the glory that will be revealed. And time and again, you see Peter referring back to this. This is the purpose.

This is the point. We are not a social club. We are not a lonely hearts parking place.

We're not anything other than people who are here to reflect the glory of God, to manifest the grace of God, to be examples of what God can do in taking lost, hopeless, fallen people and recovering us from darkness, bringing us into light, taking that which is weak and confounding the wise. God has chosen the foolish things. God has chosen those that are seemingly insignificant to demonstrate his power.

Anybody could take something powerful and do something with it and say, here's my accomplishment. But God can take weak, cracked pots, fragile vessels and do great things with

us. And Peter, of all of the apostles, we know something of his great failures and he failed more than once.

And scripture records it and bless Peter's heart for not being ashamed of his record. And God has used him as an example for us and an encouragement for us. And he says, look, I'm a fellow.

But he doesn't say I'm a I'm a big failure. Here I am, Peter, you remember me, I'm the guy that denied the Lord of the night he was arrested. Why doesn't Peter refer to that? He says, I am a fellow elder.

I've got experience. I have something I can share with you based on that experience. I am a witness of the sufferings of Christ.

And this is sort of dangerous ground, if you think about it, because, oh, sufferings of Christ, that would be summed up in the night he was crucified. Wouldn't Peter maybe want to kind of avoid any references to that particular? He's not worried about it. Why? We are not what we were.

We are what we are in Christ. We are not our past. We're not our failures.

We're not our errors. We are what God has done with us. And Peter is writing inspired scripture.

He is a vehicle for the transmission of divine truth and has been for the last two thousand years because he didn't get bogged down in remonstrance or self abnegation or any other multisyllable word based on his failures. We are what we are in Christ. So he's not afraid to bring up the sufferings of Christ and say, I witness them and I'm also a partaker.

And it's an encouragement. Even if we have messed up, even if we've had to recover from something, we can be partakers of the glory that we revealed. And he says to the presbytery and he is primarily looking at those who, you know, there are different kinds of congregations in this scattering.

Some of them are just fellowships where they're they're getting together because they're all believers. But maybe there isn't anyone who can particularly teach. And it may be primarily fellowship and encouragement and mutual support.

In others, it's a more developed church. And there's somebody there who is actually qualified to shepherd and to teach. Peter's talking to all of these.

He doesn't know what's going on. He hasn't been to all of these churches. So he says, look, if there are elders among you who are able to shepherd.

Well, you need to do that. But in whatever capacity we find ourselves able to be of benefit to others who aren't as far along, we should do that serving. By the way, I had an interesting concept suggested to me.

You know how we talk about politicians and other people who are in government? What do we call them? We say they are public what? Servants. It hadn't really crossed my mind until I read it in a book. That this is entirely a Christian concept.

Nobody in the ancient world looked at rulership or governors or anybody else as public servants or public service. It is entirely derived from our Christian heritage and even rank unbelievers talk about, well, you know, our public servants. But servant leadership is entirely derived from Christian principles.

No Roman procurator, no Roman governor, no provincial leaders in any nation in any time in the past ever thought of themselves as servants. The public serves. The regime, you serve us, even in your totalitarian governments, you look around the world today, the government in China doesn't consider themselves to be public servants.

Governments in your Arabic countries, your ruling families and so on, they don't consider themselves to be public servants. It's anathema, it's completely apart and distant. It's only and inherently Christian.

To exercise authority and look at yourself as a servant. And this is Christ's example, this is the one of many uniquenesses in the Christian faith and in the Christian value system, is that even when you have authority, you exercise it as a servant, not as an overlord. And that's the principle that Peter is distilling for us here.

Not as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. And this is the gold, silver and precious stones.

This is the inheritance. This is the opportunity and potential to continue to serve God and serve others in the ages that are to come. I don't think this is a necessarily a specific crown, one among several of various orders, as we've seen.

And so then this brings us to chapter five, verse five. Let's read this. Likewise, you younger people submit yourselves to your elders.

Yes, of course, parents, we know we want to put this on the refrigerator. We want to put it on the kid's bathroom mirror. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another.

And we just want the A, we want to say Peter 5 5 A and give that to our kids. All of you be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility for God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. 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.

This is, of course, in our memory verse collection. Let's take a look at this first five. And every

time I promise myself that I'm going to speed up and sail through to the end of the chapter, I hit a passage like this.

And every word is just a treasury. And I was going to, you know, kind of give verse five a light touch. And when I got to looking at the words, I thought, wow, look at that.

Homoyas, look at this. Neoterioi, look at this. Hupotasso, every one of them is a sermon.

So, in fact, one of the reasons. Well, suffice it to say, we're going to look at the we're going to look at the words. And so let's begin at the beginning here in verse five.

He says, likewise, and this is the word in Greek that that refers us back to the preceding context. What have we just seen? This is homoyas, you know, something that is homogenous. It's the same as something else, something that is the same.

That's what this prefix means. And so it says homoyas, likewise. Well, like what? Like what we just talked about with the Presbyteroi.

So the submission here, which we'll look at, but this whatever it is that's coming up here, when you're going to submit yourself to your elders, it's just the same as the elders serving as examples, the same driving principle, the same motivation. What is it that's the same? Well, if you look in the preceding verses here, not by compulsion, you should do this thing, not because somebody's beating on your head, not because somebody is putting in strictures and enforcement and motivating you with a stick. Right.

In the same way, the elders are not serving as examples and and. Beneficent watchers over things because somebody is forcing them at gunpoint, they're doing it willingly. They're doing it for God.

They're doing it for the cause of Christ. They're doing it because they recognize that this is what God has done for us. Well, in the same way, if we're going to be submissive.

Not by compulsion, but willingly. Not for gain. I'm going to I'm going to worm my way into this person's good graces.

I'll I'll serve this person so that they'll favor me later. I'll be an apple polisher. I'll be a sycophant.

I'll be somebody who will, as we used to say at Navy, smack up to someone so that they'll be nice to me later. Not for gain, but eagerly because we recognize the benefit that is involved. Basically, we're doing this with an eye on the interests of others.

We're not doing this for our own benefit. We're doing it because this serves the cause of Christ. It fulfills the will of God.

It is pleasing to our Heavenly Father that we do this. And it changes the equation. Think about it.

Sometimes we chafe. Sometimes the weight of those who have the rule over us rubs a little bit, makes a bit of a blister. It's difficult to to bear.

We think, why couldn't God have given the authority to somebody a little bit smarter, a little bit more gracious, a little bit more pleasant? This person has authority and they're unpleasant. And the exercise of their authority is unpleasant. Why couldn't they have been kinder and gentler and more accommodating and explanatory and flexible? And I just I really find this hard to take.

But and I'm you know, I don't know if you well, I do know that that you've had this experience. There isn't anybody in the sound of my voice that hasn't labored under authority that we wished was in the hands of somebody that was kinder and gentler. But think about this.

When Peter says we're going to undertake to function under this authority or under this example or under whatever it is, for different reasons, we're going to do it eagerly and it isn't going to require any compulsion. Why would we do that? Because we're not looking at what it does to us. Why do we brook, why do we chafe under authority? We don't like what it's doing to us.

Think about it this way. If your child was riding their bicycle, got a couple of blocks away, fell down and skinned their knee and you heard them across the neighborhood crying and you ran down there and you found them and you needed to get them back home and you picked them up and you're carrying them back to the house so that you can remediate the injuries and so on. If this starts to hurt your shoulders or rub a blister on your neck, do you care? You don't.

It doesn't matter what it takes. Why? Because you are completely devoted to something besides your own interest. It may put you out.

You might have been in the middle of anything from a ballgame to something important. You might have left the water running and it's wrecking the geraniums and going down the street. But it's your child.

I mean, come on, I don't mind. I don't care about those things. They shrink to insignificance because my desire, my eager desire, my ready desire is to do whatever I can to benefit my child in this time of need.

Well, this is what Peter is talking about. He says, look, this submission that he's going to discuss, don't look at it in terms of what is this doing to me? Look at it in the context of the plan of God. Look at it in terms of the greater fabric of the body of Christ.

And if I can be of benefit by serving, by subordinating, that's greater than myself. I'm looking out for interests other than my own. And this is, again, something that distinguishes us as Christians, as believers.

What other philosophy of life, if you want to call it that, what other outlook on life, what other

attitude toward people and circumstances would motivate to be selfless, to be less interested in our well-being than in the well-being of others? It's the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. He's the ultimate expression of that. So similarly, in the same way, and wouldn't it be a great world if all of us could achieve this, if those who have leadership could do it carefully and lovingly and look with eyes on Christ, and those of us under that authority submit to it in the same way.

Nobody is out for their own gain. Nobody is out to lord it over or to get some kind of self-interested benefit. Nobody is trying to get a gain from it eagerly, willingly, without being compelled.

It comes from the heart. When the top and the bottom are working together in that way, when the teacher and the student are working in that way toward a common goal that everyone recognizes is greater than themselves, it's divine. It partakes of Christ.

It partakes of eternal life. It's a supernatural thing. And this is what Peter is describing.

It's all in that word *homoios*. *Homoios* is the very same motivation to be submissive, as it is to be exercising leadership. *Homoios*.

And he says, *homoios neodoroi*. He's changing audiences. He's been talking to the *presbuteroi*, now he's talking to the *neodoroi*.

And it translates it younger people, which is grammatically correct, but I think really misses Peter's meaning here. *Neodoroi* comes from *neos* in Greek, which means new, but not new in the sense of it just got here from nothing. And I did a long word study on this, which I won't burden you with, but here's the result of it.

It's used in secular Greek literature for something that is new in the sense that it is coming up to supersede or replace something that is old. They used it for the new year, just like we do. Well, what do you mean a new year? Well, this is the year that is replacing the year that we just had.

And they used it for a new crop. There's a field where crops are grown. We had a crop and now we've got a new crop.

It's the same kind of grain. It's the same produce, but this is the next one. It's the one that is coming into focus and attention and prominence.

It was used of adult men when they were in the military because they're the recruits. They're the next generation. They're the ones who are coming up to take the place of the ones who are scrolling off.

So there is this sort of cyclical idea, a replacement idea. You've always got to have a thing. You need a crop, you need a year, you need men in the military.

But there is this exchange. There are those who have have done their work and are moving to a different role or capacity. And there are those who are coming up.

That's what naos and neoterioi means. So it doesn't so much mean, well, you're the young pups. You're the young people.

You're the wet behind the ears. It means you are the ones who are soon going to be the presbuterioi. You are going to be the ones who are making decisions and looking to the generation that is following you.

It is a sort of a baton passing operation. Baton is being passed to you, and very soon you will have run your leg of the race and you'll be handing it off to the next runner. So it almost means the next ones.

It's the next year, the next crop, the next group of recruits, the next set of upcoming leaders, neoterioi. In the same way, you who are coming into being, into existence, you next ones. Then you have this very charged word, submit.

Submit has picked up baggage that makes you really want to try to find some synonym anymore. No woman wants to hear, I don't care who you are, no woman wants to hear, submit to your husband. It's just, I wouldn't want to hear it either.

I don't want anybody telling me to submit. And so I have found many great, acceptable, synonymous English words that we can use instead. And really, submit doesn't quite catch the meaning.

And I did another long word study on this. And it's used extensively in scripture. What's particularly interesting is to look at hupotasso, the Greek word here.

You remember, to stand under. Hupotasso is like where you get stasis and hupo, you stand under. And we say, well, it's a military word, means to take orders from.

Yeah, it's really not it. It means recognize the authority of. Recognize the authority of.

I can look at a stop sign. Well, would you say I'm submitting to the stop sign, or am I recognizing the authority of the stop sign? It's a little bit more accurate to say I recognize there's, you know, there's traffic standards that we have. And when I see this sign, I'm not so much submitting myself to the sign as I am.

And I'm not even really obeying the sign, but I'm recognizing its authority. I recognize its needfulness. I agree that if this sign says stop, I should stop.

And everybody else recognizes it, too. And it works great. You can have stop signs in a neighborhood and people stop and nobody runs into each other.

And there's mutual benefit. And there's not the idea of some sort of degradation or denigration or inferiority. I don't feel inferior to the stop sign.

I recognize its authority. I recognize its beneficial presence. I recognize its place in the great scheme of things and recognize what a benefit it is if I stop when it says stop.

So this is the idea of Hupotasso. Recognize the authority of show due regard for. Show due regard.

And this even in your other New Testament scriptures that say, you know, submit yourself to every ruler. Well, I look at the powers that be in our great land here in the executive branch and elsewhere, and I don't necessarily feel like submitting. I'm not going to grovel in front of some elected leader.

But I do show proper regard. There may be some rascally officer that walks by. I'm still going to pop my salute.

Doesn't matter who he is or what a ne'er do well he is. If he outranks me, I'm going to salute. I will show due regard.

I will subordinate myself. I will recognize the authority that is present there. So these are probably a little bit better translations.

And I'm talking primarily here about the imperative. When we are told to Hupotasso ourselves, this is what we're talking about. Interestingly, one of the most common uses of this word, just as a verb in Greek, was it meant to append or to attach.

We would say attach, you know, with an e-mail. I'm, you know, here's my request and I'm attaching a copy of my receipt. Here's my contract.

And I've got appended to this is the documentation, Appendix A, Appendix B. Well, in the ancient Greek world, they would write something up. And for support, they would say I am Hupotassoing the following documents. It is dependent upon, this attachment doesn't really stand alone.

It is dependent on the main document. It supports the main document. Here's my support.

And so be a supporter of is another valid way to understand this word. When people heard Hupotasso in the Greek world, this was one of the first things they thought of. Just like when we say append or attach in the sense of a document that that conveys a meaning.

Well, if you're going to append yourself, if you're going to put yourself in a place of support to the main document, that's Hupotasso. And it doesn't mean that you're any less valuable or any less important, but there is a relationship between the two documents. This one supports this one.

This one amplifies and gives meaning to this one. It helps it, makes it go better. You put in a request and they say, well, I need a copy of your birth certificate.

Well, you're going to append a copy of that thing. And which is more important, my birth certificate or the request? Well, my birth certificate. But in this particular context, the certificate supports my request.

It's appended. It is Hupotasso. So I hope that helps to catch the meaning here.

We don't have to immediately, you know, get a get a charged sort of effect from this word. We look at it in the in the context that Peter gives to it here. And so whether you are a Presbuteros or whether you are a Neoterios, we have this outlook, we have this perspective.

And it says submit Hupotasso yourselves to the Presbuteroi, support them. There's a sense in which you could say, be dependent upon them, you know, submit yourselves under the mighty hand of God. Well, what do I do? Just bow further, kneel longer.

How do I submit? I depend upon God. I subordinate myself to God. I recognize God's authority.

I do my best to fulfill his plan and purpose. I want to be a positive asset to God, be an asset to God. So it's a good thing.

It's a good thing to do. You got Greek officers giving orders to the soldiers, if the soldiers obey, they're an asset. They're the mission is being accomplished.

This is a good thing. It's no denigration to the troops, but it's a functional thing. Now we get to a real interesting thing because this seems sort of strange.

He has just talked about the Presbuteroi shepherding and serving as examples, and he's told the Neoterioi to allow those shepherds to do their job and to support them and recognize their authority and chip in on the effort. Now he says, yes, all of you be submissive to one another. So when he says all of you and he's stepping back and talking to the Presbuteroi and the Neoterioi, well, isn't this just going to be confusing because if the shepherds start submitting to the sheep, what kind of a thing is that? He tells the wives to submit to the husbands and he says husbands, submit to the wives.

Well, this is just, oh no, after you, oh no, after you, oh no, after you, oh no, after you. I mean, it just seems like it's a very strange circular argument. Well, this is fairly easy to resolve given our great resources and access to the Greek text here.

And so we'll pick up here in verse five at all of you be submissive to one another when we come back from the break.