

1Peter 11-07-22b

Let's resume our study now. We're in 1 Peter 5 and we're looking now at verse 7. We've seen that God will exalt us and the time is a time of his choosing. And he will do so if we humble ourselves.

So we wanna know, well, how do I do this? Now, here's the thing. If we are typical people, typical Americans, if you're in America, typical wherever we live, the immersion gets a hold of us. We're immersed.

We're in our situation. We're in our circumstance. And I've been thinking a lot.

I'm kind of doing some preparation work on a study we're gonna do here shortly and thinking about the difference between the realm of the material and the realm of the immaterial, the realm of the world and the realm of faith. And what do you do in the material world? This is the realm of science, right? This is the realm of let's try it and see if it works. We're gonna do an experiment.

We're gonna put some cheese in a hopper. We're gonna put the rat in the maze. And if the rat pushes the button and the cheese falls, we'll see if he learned something.

And if this works right, we can draw a conclusion. We're going to drop something off the leaning tower and see if light ones and heavy ones hit the ground at the same time. It's all in the realm of the material.

Science is the art of figuring out how things typically work in the material world, right? That's what science is. It should be repeatable. If I drop a wooden ball and a bowling ball and they hit at the same time here in America, the same should be true in Italy.

The same should be true pretty much anywhere. Disallowing atmospheric resistance and so on. Things ought to fall the same.

That's science. It deals in the material. We as believers are fully capable and fully qualified to do anything that's doable in this physical material realm.

We've got all the tools. We can pick stuff up. We can feel it.

We can taste it. We can hear it. We can see it, right? But unlike unbelievers, we also have access to the immaterial realm.

Secular men try to access the immaterial realm through philosophy or through religions of various stripes and mythologies and so on. Because this is what functions where you can't prove anything. If you say, well, God created the universe.

You can't put that in a test tube. You can't weigh it. You can't measure it.

You can't experiment for it. You can't get a bunch of universes and say, now which ones of these

were created by God and which ones weren't? Let's falsify the hypothesis. It's not the same as physics.

It's not the same as chemistry. It's not the same as biology or archeology or any material science. If you say the purpose of life is to reflect the glory of God, there is no science that can enter into that.

There's no experiment you can run to see if that really is the purpose of life or not, right? It's a different realm. It's a different thing. And there is a common confusion and we are gonna go into some length in exploring this in some upcoming studies, looking at it from a biblical perspective.

But it's a big mistake for secular people, for your atheists, your Richard Dawkinses and your Christopher Hitchenses and your Sam HARRISES and your Bertrand Russells and your other famous militant atheists to strut and fret their hour on the stage with their tale told by an idiot, sound and fury signifying nothing, saying, oh, you poor benighted Christians believing in this God. There's no science to support your belief. Why would there be? It's outside that realm.

If God were provable, there wouldn't be the need for faith, right? So it's a silly misunderstanding to say, well, there must not be a God because I find no empirical proof for his existence. Well, of course you don't because God created the universe in which the rules of empiricism and science and nature function. He is not subject to it.

Why would he be? He's outside of it. So it's pretty silly. This is like saying, Matthew and I got together once a long time ago when I got my first computer.

It was a TI-99 plugged into a television set, had 16 whopping K of RAM. And it was a Titan, it was a powerhouse. And I got some stuff for it and Matthew was taking some programming classes.

So we got together and we wrote our own video game. It was called Bloody Awful Space Battles. And we used the programming language and the stuff that was available in the TI assembler to create what they called sprites, which were moving objects that the computer would keep track of.

And if you had a ship here and a ship here, and we did all of the programming to figure out, well, all right, so I'm gonna, this guy over here is gonna fire. And so this object, which is a sprite, is gonna be changing coordinates as it moves across the screen. When its coordinates get within a certain range of the coordinates of this ship over here, we say you hit the ship and we'll generate an explosion.

I mean, we did the whole thing down to the nitty gritty, Bloody Awful Space Battles. And the whole thing could be saved on a 360K floppy. I mean, it's hard to believe, but back then you had to write really tight code because you didn't have much RAM, you didn't have much storage.

Well, you wrote this thing. All right, so somebody is digging around and they find this floppy and they get this TI program and they look at it and they say, ah, here's a reality, here are ships and here are things that are fired back and forth and here's the controls and here's the, you could look all through that program and you're never gonna find any proof of the existence of Matthew Hall or Sam Hall. You can look at it in vain.

There is no evidence that we exist. There's no clue as to our nature or our anything other than this, obviously this program is the product of some kind of intelligence. The bits didn't just fall randomly onto the floppy and create this program that actually functions and runs on the right hardware.

But you could not prove anything about Matthew or anything about me. You could infer that we are good or bad programmers, maybe by analyzing the code, but you would never know who wrote it. You wouldn't know that it, anything other than some intelligent agent.

So my point here is there is an existence of programmers outside the computer that is unprovable if you live inside the computer. You don't have access to the realm of biological life forms living in a three-dimensional uniform. You're stuck in Silicon world.

You're the product of code that runs when the machine is booted up and has the operating system loaded and is capable of storing and running stuff in RAM. But any character that is inside that realm is limited to the rules and the observations and the physics of that little universe and has no access to the universe that is outside. And this is sort of a crude analogy to us.

We are in the physical universe. We do not have access to the vast realms that God and the angels inhabit. They're outside.

They're not subject to any of our rules in this universe. Cause and effect, speed of light, molecules, chemistry, valences, protons, quarks, none of that applies. They're outside.

The rules of our bloody awful space battle game have no limitation on me. I can't only throw something in a linear direction and hope that it gets within a certain number of pixels of my target. It's foolish, it's silly to think that any of that would in any way limit or apply to me out here in my quote-unquote real world.

Well, the same is true. I say that to say this. When we look at scripture and its exhortations to humility, to God orientation in our circumstances, this is an opportunity for us to move outside our limited realm.

The physics of human life, the physics and chemistry of human interactions and human problems and human solutions are trapped in the game, trapped in the material universe. And if you limit yourself to that, you're subject to it. It dominates, it applies.

If we're gonna try to solve our problems the way anybody else in the world does within the limits of the mundane, well, the outcome is gonna be limited and it is gonna be relatively meaningless. If on the other hand, we recognize that we're not limited to that. And again, you'll forgive me, I use this illustration with some reservation and hesitation, but I'm gonna use it anyway.

If you've seen the movie Tron, either the first one or the sequel, there is a guy from outside the game, a programmer who gets sucked into the game and becomes in it, but he's got knowledge and he's got a frame of reference from outside. And he can use that knowledge to do things that the people that have been generated inside and have lived all their time inside can't do and can't know. And there is again, a rough analogy.

The point being when God says to us through the apostle Peter, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. God has chosen to train us in this limited environment, but he has given us information from outside the game, outside the program, outside the universe and we should use it. Why settle for only the tools and only the resources that unbelievers have? And we so often do this.

We so often forget, we get caught up. We forget that, wait a minute, I have an existence. I have a heavenly father outside of all of this above and beyond it, who's got power infinitely, wisdom infinitely above and beyond these limited human things.

So if I am working through an issue, if I am suffering through something that is of long duration, if I am having difficulty of a human or of a circumstantial relational employment related, school related, whatever it might be, if I'm having difficulty, why restrict myself only to the physics? Why not avail myself of the truth of metaphysics that is above and beyond, that partakes of that which is outside? How much more powerful is that? Well, this is basically our challenge as believers. This is what we're called to. And it's one thing to read and it says, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Well, okay, I'm going to try to be humble this week, but we tend to sink right back into this same sort of limited human thinking. Well, okay, I'll try not to act arrogant. I'll try not to get uppity.

I'll try not to be strutting and have my nose in the air. We're trying to accomplish this command really still inside the limitations of human life. What God is calling us to is to start thinking literally outside the box, outside the universe.

This is why we're here, because we will soon, very soon, exist outside the box. And we need to develop this thinking. It's another computer analogy, and you've got a computer guy for a pastor, so you're stuck with it.

You think about flight simulators. Pilots go into a simulator and learn reflexes, learn responses, learn what to pay attention to, what instruments to read, what priorities to set if they're taking off, if they're landing, if they're flying, if they're carrying cargo, if they suddenly hit a wind shear or find

themselves too low or too high or coming up on a mountain or whatever else it might be. The simulator can present them with real world problems in a simulated way.

And the goal of it is to hone their skills, their thinking, their reflexes as a pilot in a safe environment that doesn't risk life, land and property and million dollar aircraft and so on. And once they have learned in the classroom and from textbooks and from watching films and then spending time in the simulator, hopefully they can then go to an aircraft, a real aircraft, and they're gonna be able to function much better than they could without all of that preparation. This life is essentially, we are possessed of an eternal soul that partakes of these outside realms that are in fact beyond the universe.

We are not just a happy coincidence of neurons that produce electrical patterns that constitute sentience and constitute conscience and constitute thought. Our thoughts exist, our souls exist, outside the material universe. This is why you can't get human thoughts to run on a chimp brain.

This is why they'll never get human thinking to function on a computer. They're never gonna get a computer to become Mr. Data. It's never gonna somehow become aware and become Hal or any of the rest of this.

It isn't gonna happen, why? None of these physical constructs can ever access what is outside the universe. Your soul and my soul exists. The Bible tells us it is an eternal thing.

It is, we have eternal life. Our identity, our thoughts, our memories, everything that makes us who we are transcends. This universe is gonna be rolled up like a scroll.

Matter and energy will go away and we will still exist. How is that possible? Because we are made of stuff that isn't a part of this universe. It's a fact, it's a biblical fact.

You and I, our essence is made of stuff that does not partake of this physical universe. You can throw me at a thousand miles an hour against a cliffside and spatter me to atoms. You have not destroyed my soul.

People that suffer brain damage, people that have a stroke and you say, oh, but look, when their brain goes away, they're no longer themselves. Well, of course not because the brain, this incredibly sophisticated machinery is an interface. It is a conduit that connects to what is outside the universe, outside the material, outside the physical and the chemical and the biological.

And in the same way that if your vents are plugged up, air doesn't flow through, if your brain is damaged, there are parts of your soul that just can't function anymore here. And you can lose memory, you can lose logic, you can lose a lot of things, you can lose your personality. Look at Alzheimer's, it Swiss cheeses your brain and less and less of your soul is able to access and get through to and be a part of this universe.

People that get Alzheimer's haven't lost their souls, haven't lost their memories, haven't lost what

it is that makes them who they are, except in that brief time on this earth when that is all being filtered through their increasingly damaged brain. And sure, you can cut off access to those things, but everything is preserved because it is outside. Well, it is helpful for us from time to time to remember and to review and to emphasize, we are not of this world.

Life does not consist in what we accomplish in this universe. It's okay if you crash the simulator, don't lose your cool if the instructor in the back with the control console throws an unexpected flock of geese in the path of your jet engines. I was flying the simulator once because my roommate's a pilot and he got me past the limitations.

I got in there and was able to fly it. And I was gonna land my simulated CH-46 on the deck of an aircraft carrier. And I was coming in and I was doing everything right and was reasonably proud of myself.

And all of a sudden out of nowhere appears this stack of packing crates, right where I was gonna land. There's room to one side to land, but this is what they do. This like, well, maybe you didn't see it.

Maybe there was a wisp of smoke. Maybe there was a smudge on your plexiglass or something. And all of a sudden you become aware that there's something there.

Can you react? Can you adjust? Can you shift over? Well, I just chopped it all to splinters and crashed and burned and sunk the aircraft carrier and red buzzers are going off and tilt completely. Because I didn't have any actual pilot skills. I was just sort of aping what I'd seen my roommate do.

And I wasn't really a pilot. So of course I crashed and burned gloriously and ignominiously, but only in the simulator. Walked out, felt fine, wasn't bleeding, didn't die.

Well, we have to kind of keep a perspective. And this is what Peter is getting at. He says, look, and over and over we've seen this.

Don't be overly invested. Don't get so wrapped up in this. This is momentary light affliction.

These relationships of authority and submission, these ideas of humbling ourselves, keep your eyes on God. And here's the punchline, so to speak, when you get to verse six. If you read this in Greek, it says, *Taipeino feite un*, *un* means therefore, *Taipeino feite*.

This is the middle voice, humble yourself, basically, therefore. Under the *kraton kairatou*, *kratos*, this is power. This is thumping power.

This is get it done power. And this is the powerful hand of God. And it's a reminder because what are we actually humbling ourselves under here? It's these authorities.

Well, but what if they're mean? What if they're unfair? What if they're cruel? What if they're heartless? What if they're, you know, don't give me my due? What if it's very uncomfortable? What if they're making things unpleasant? We look at it as something other than what a mundane human being would look at it as. If you've got an unkind, unfair boss or unkind, unfair professor, the normal human being says, well, I've got to do something. I've got to go over their head.

I've got to go up the chain. I've got to file a complaint. I've got to do something.

Peter says, we look beyond the immediate and recognize the mighty hand of God. The mighty hand of God can curse the house of the oppressor. The mighty hand of God can bless the house of the faithful and the humble.

The mighty hand of God holds us inviolable, unassailable, immutable. Just remember the mighty hand of God. This isn't going to be physics and chemistry and biology.

This is the programmer, if you will, that has infinitely more power than anything inside the program. He can change the program at will. This is the source of miracles.

God sets up rules and they operate without his active involvement. He said, okay, here's the physics of the wind. Here's the physics of evaporation.

Here's the physics of climate on planet earth. Here's the magnetic field. Here's convection.

Here's all of these different things. And he turns it loose. I was looking out my window the other day watching the wind blow and watching these leaves vibrate.

God doesn't have to sit in heaven and command those leaves to vibrate. He commanded the physics that bring about everything in this universe. But anytime he pleases, anytime he chooses, he can do the same thing a programmer does.

He can go in and say, you know what? I'm going to turn off that little subroutine right there and the wind's not going to blow or the rain's not going to fall or that storm is not going to continue on the Sea of Galilee. Peace, be still. That subroutine has been terminated.

We've killed that process. Canceled that service. He can do it anytime he wants.

And it's effortless. It's a small thing for God to do whatever he wants, whenever he wants it, in his time. And if he does not, if he allows us to continue to labor under some kind of suffering or some kind of oppression, it's because it is a part of his good and perfect will and purpose.

It accomplishes an objective. It has rationale behind it that is probably often beyond our comprehension, but God knows what it is and we trust him. And here's the continuation.

Taipeino fete un hupa tein kration. I'd have Paul Yost read this. He does a beautiful job of reading

Greek.

I was playing one of his audio files the other day where he effortlessly and smoothly reads these Greek things. He's probably sitting there going, oh, Sam, stop. Hupa tein kraton, kei ratu theu, hina humas hupsose.

In order that, hina, you recognize that. Hina, in order that. Hamas, us, or you all.

And actually there's texts that read it both ways, but this is you all. Humas, hupsose. This is raise you up.

You know, hupa means over and above. Hyper means too active. You're hyperactive.

You're hypersensitive. You're too sensitive. Well, this means something is elevated.

It's raised up. And this is sort of the verb form that gave rise to the preposition. Hupsese en kairo, in time.

In order that, he may raise you up. And this is the subjunctive. It's potential.

If you humble yourself, then this potential becomes fulfilled. Then verse seven says, pasantein marimnon humon. And this is all of your cares.

That's easier to say in English than it is in Greek. Pasantein marimnon. Marimnao means to worry, to fret, to stew over a thing.

And all of your cares. Epi ripsantes, epi auton. You're throwing them upon him.

And really throwing is the idea. Loading up. This is like throwing stuff in the back of a pickup.

When you go to the woods and getting firewood, you got the trailer there, pick up the logs, you just throw them in. You're not careful. You're not looking at each one and examining it.

We got a big load of stuff here. We need to get rid of it. Throw it in.

Just don't spend any time obsessing on it, thinking about it. Pick the stuff up and throw it in. This is the junk sale.

This is clean out the trash. Pick it up, throw it in. It's almost the idea of carelessly load, carelessly throw.

But the relationship between verse six and verse seven is like this. And again, the Net Bible does a great job. Whoever did this passage in the Net, I have my hats off to them.

All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another because God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. And God will exalt you in due time if you humble yourselves under

his mighty hand by casting your cares. This is a construction that indicates how you do a thing.

We humble ourselves by casting our cares. And what it tells you is if you hold onto these cares and make much of them, that in itself is arrogance. My problem is so important.

I need to obsess about it. I need to think about it. I need to work on it.

I need to try to find a solution for it. The humble, the way to humble ourselves is to take these things and throw them at God. Throw them in the trailer.

Throw them in God's bin. It is the means of humbling ourselves. Not casting our cares on him is not humbling ourselves.

They are cause and effect. They are coordinate. This is how you do it.

And it's clear in Greek. And again, the Net translation, God will exalt you in due time if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand by casting all your cares on him because he cares for you. And we tend to think, well, I care for you, dear.

You know, that this is an expression of love. This is more like a caretaker. Why are you trying to do God's job? Why are you trying to garden God's garden? Why are you trying to tend God's produce? Casting your cares upon him because he is the one who takes care of those cares.

That's his job. Don't arrogantly arrogate to yourself God's job. It's God's job to handle the oppressor.

It's God's job to take the pressure off when it needs taking off. This is God's function. It's the same sort of arrogance that elbows the Holy Spirit out of the way to try to accomplish conviction in the hearts of sinners.

Let me make sure you understand what a rascal you are so that you can come to Christ. That's the Holy Spirit's job. And we don't arrogate that job to ourselves in evangelism.

In the same way, appropriating to ourselves the solutions to our problems and spending a lot of time agonizing over them, we're elbowing God out of the way. It is God who cares for us. That's his job.

He's our Heavenly Father. He is the one whose mighty hand is taking care of us and is organizing all the details of our life. So if you try to crawl out from under his mighty hand and try to do his mighty hand's job, what do you think's gonna happen? He cannot exalt us in due time because we've not learned to think properly.

We've not learned to function in that realm outside the mundane and to recognize who God is and what his plan and purpose is. So this is a perspective thing. It's almost a dimensional thing.

We've got to think beyond three dimensions. We've got to think beyond this material universe. God's mighty hand is doing everything necessary to take care of us.

And if we recognize that, if we submit ourselves to it, we'll let him handle the cares because that's his job and that enables him to take that mighty hand and lift us up in his time. And his time is gonna be time outside of time. His time is gonna be the eternal future.

So then verse eight says, be sober and alert. We already saw this word sober back up in chapter one. This is nepho, nepho, N-E-P-H-O.

It means be self-controlled. We saw this in 113. Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, be vigilant.

Rest your hope fully on the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Again, Peter's wrapping up now. He's going back to what he started the letter with.

Rest hope fully on the grace that is brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Not just in his coming at the rapture, but as he is revealed in scripture, his grace is brought to us. That's where you should rest your hope.

That's where our confidence should be. That's where our focus should be. Remember the invisible realm.

Remember the realm outside this realm. It's our gift, it's our heritage, it's our inheritance. That's where the glory is.

Be well balanced, be self-controlled. Gregoresate, gregoreo, that's the name Gregory comes from. Be watchful.

What is watchful? Not just paranoid, but watchful for those things of God that are coming. We look ahead to the return of the Lord Jesus. We look ahead to the millennial kingdom.

We look ahead to the time where we will live transcendentally outside this universe. And one day this universe itself will be discarded and we will be completely and entirely invested in the place where God dwells, the place that the Lord Jesus is even now preparing for us. I go to prepare a place for you.

It's not in this universe, it's not made of molecules. It doesn't have light-based energy or electromagnetism or gravity or any of the rest of that stuff. It's completely outside and beyond.

I go to prepare a place for you. Gregoreo, be watchful, be prepared, get ready. Those wise virgins that had their lamps trimmed and had the oil ready so that when the wedding party took place, the bridegroom came, they could enter into that new and different phase.

Be self-controlled and it takes self-control to not fall into the trap of getting invested in the things of this world. Be watchful. Your enemy, the devil, is on the prowl like a roaring lion.

You go back to Psalm 22, verse 13, where some of these messianic foreshadowings, they gape at me with their mouths like a raging and roaring lion. Your enemy, the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. Notice, he can't just devour anybody he wants.

Some of us are devourable and others are not. Some of us are edible and some of us aren't. Some of us have got that porcupine skin and some of us don't.

And why does he have to prowl? Why is he wandering around? Who's not prepared? Who's vulnerable? Who has their guard down? Who's not Gregoreo? Who is not Natho? Who's not being self-controlled? Who is allowing themselves, making themselves susceptible to intervention in the human realm because they're living too much in the human world? That's who he's going to swallow. And the word literally means to swallow. It's interesting too, that in this whole letter, this is the only place Peter mentions the devil.

How does the devil become present? How does he become active in our lives? When we get involved and invested in circumstances. He can't oppress us in any way other than circumstantially. And he is roaming around looking for somebody that has, you know, the earth is his realm.

The dimensional universe is the devil's realm. He's been kicked out of heaven. He doesn't have access to God's dimensions anymore.

He's trapped down here. He's been cast out, he and the demons. So where can he exercise his power? Only in the material universe, only on the material earth, only in material circumstances.

So if we play only in his realm and make ourselves susceptible to these three-dimensional physics, chemistry, biology forces, we're on his turf. We've gone into his neighborhood. As long as we maintain our connection to the divine and the eternal, he can't touch us.

He can't devour us. It's when we abandon and discard our focus on those things that we put ourselves under his power. He's wandering around trying to find somebody that has done this, and it's not that hard to find.

Be sober, be alert. Your enemy, the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. Resist him.

How? By being steadfast in faith. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen. Keep your connection to the unseen and the eternal healthy.

Eyes on Christ, eyes on the prize, eyes on the glory, eyes on the narrow road and the straight gate, eyes on who we are beyond this world. He can't touch us. Well, this is where we'll pause for

tonight.

We'll figure out what this is, the reference to brothers and sisters elsewhere in the world next time, but it is a great opportunity and a great challenge for us to train ourselves to consistently remember that this is just the trainer, this is just the simulation, and not to let it throw us, not to let the controller in the back that can create artificial obstacles for us, get us worried, get us upset, throw us off balance, throw us off our training, throw us off our skills, throw us out of our confidence in Christ. And that's the only thing he can do. He's only got virtual power.

He's only got limited material power. Why let ourselves be tripped up by it when God is on our side and his mighty hand is fully able to take care of all of our cares? It's a constant choice. It's a daily choice.

It's an hourly choice. And God has put us here to learn to make it so that when we are fully existing in those eternal realms, we won't have to crawl. We won't have to be babies.

We can stand on our feet and we can walk. We can walk with Christ in a white robe. We can sit with him on his throne.

We can rule and reign with him. We can enter into functional service for him. We can reflect his glory because we're not straggling, blind, deaf puppies that just showed up in the eternal realm with no skills, no experience, no wisdom of any kind.

It's our opportunity to learn it now. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the powerful way that these truths are expressed, the clarity with which the apostle Peter has set the choices before us. Pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will impress these things in our hearts and enable us through your word to remember and apply these things on a daily and hourly minute-by-minute basis. We know that this will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus and we pray it in his name, amen.