

<b>Book</b>	1-Peter
<b>Study</b>	Study 15
<b>Topic</b>	Shepherding the Flock – Christian Leadership
<b>Reference</b>	1 Peter 5
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There are basically three sections in our today's passage, which are easy to discern.

### Spiritual leadership

#### Humility and its basis

#### Suffering and spiritual warfare

### A. SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP (1-4)

*1 Peter 5:1-2(ESV) So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight,*

So this is Peter expressing his leadership over them with some terms. Now Peter is not necessarily just an elder, he is also an apostle. He never used the term but he uses a term lower down in order to identify with the leaders there. Then if you look in this particular verse. It has got elders, which is a term usually used by Jewish people who speaks Greek in those congregations. Then he is also a shepherd over the people and the last one is exercising oversight, which is the Greek word 'episkopos', which is mainly Greek speaking congregations and they have episkopos over them. So if you look in the various parts of the New Testament, you can see the various terms are being used

*Titus 1:5-7 (ESV) his is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach*

So, the word is elder, 'preporos' and 'episkopos', which is overseer. So you can the terms are used interchangeably. So, we make a big difference. We will never call the elder equal to a bishop. Bishop is like the guy, head of the whole church, but if you look in the New Testament literature the terms are interchangeable. The other one is verse 17 of chapter 5

*1 Timothy 5:17 (ESV) Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.*

Here again in 1 Timothy chapter 3, talking about overseers

*1 Timothy 3:1-2 (ESV) The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. 2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*

So this word overseer is episkopos, from which you get the word, bishop. In chapter Ephesians 4,

*Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,*

The word 'shepherd' is 'poimainoo', which is basically pastors. So therefore you can see so many different denomination, they all focus on the particular title, but actually they all mean the same thing. Basically, it is a leader. So whether it is elder, shepherd or bishop, they all revolve on the same thing, different denominations. You have got the Episcopalian Polity, they call it bishop. Catholics, Anglican, Methodist, if you got congregational like Baptist you are either a pastor or elder, the rest are elders. So it really doesn't matter, they are basically Christian leaders.

*1 Peter 5:1 (ESV) So I exhort the elders among you,*

The New Testament always refer to elders, it is always in the plural. If you look in Acts

*Acts 15:22-23 (ESV) 22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them ... "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, ...*

There is always a plurality of leadership, which is safe in the church. So the reason why we are plurality is because you want differences of opinion, you want descent, you don't want to equate descent and differences as disloyalty or disrespect. So in church you need to accept that there should be differences of opinion. The differences of opinion are healthy and when you have differences of opinion, it gives you an opportunity to give in to each other's opinion and that actually is a character training trait. So therefore there always is a plurality of leaders, we don't have one person determining what happens and you need to learn to disagree agreeably rather than have mindless uniformity. So it is okay in the church to disagree, but as long as the majority decides to do it this way, then the minority are the ones with their reservations will support whoever has decided, unless it is a matter of scripture. If it is a matter of scripture then it is completely different.

Real unity requires something from everyone.

*Philippians 2:1-2 (ESV) So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.*

You can't have that unless somebody gives up something. So everybody in a church will have to give up something in order to come to a common direction. So if you have people in the church believing, I am totally convicted must go like that. Another bunch says, I am totally convicted it is going to like that. It is going to be very difficult. Real unity involves everyone giving up something.

*1 Peter 5:1-3 (ESV) So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed:*

So he is talking about his qualifications of his authority. Qualifications, he is a spectator witness to the power of God, which is reflected in two things. Suffering and anticipated glory. The power is experienced in suffering. He has suffered, in fact Peter was hung upside down. And also as a witness to anticipated glory which he can see in the life of Jesus. So the witness is dependence on God. Eldership

or leadership in church is actually upside-down leadership. What is down is up and what is up is down. It is contrasting to the leadership in the world.

Since 2001, they have got this movement called the apostolic movement with the modern day apostles. You can see in their web site, international coalition of apostolic leaders. Their idea of leadership is:

- Apostles are Ambassadors, Generals-Governors, and Patriarchs.
- He carries in his person the full authority of the one who sent him. Rather it is “**the right to power**” or authority
- In the NT this person is a strategos, warrior-strategist, a general or governor in his assigned sphere.

This is human ideas of leadership, imported into the church and this is not what Peter is saying. Peter is saying, a fellow sufferer.

1 Peter 5:2 ***shepherd the flock of God*** that is among you, ***exercising oversight***

So here we have the picture of a shepherd. If you look in the Old Testament, Ezekiel talks about God being their shepherd

*Ezekiel 34:14-16 (ESV) I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. 15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. 16 I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.*

So this is a picture in Ezekiel of God being the Good Shepherd and later on

*Ezekiel 34:23-24 (ESV) And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24 And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.*

So David will be the shepherd. Now in Jeremiah

*Jeremiah 23:4-5 (ESV) I will set **shepherds** over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the Lord. 5 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.*

And then when Jesus comes, he says

*John 10:11-14 (ESV) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,*

So here he takes on the motif of God the Shepherd, David under shepherd and then Jesus Christ. So that's why after Peter had failed in his leadership, Jesus tells him

*John 21:15 (ESV) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs."*

So the thing passes down from Jesus the shepherd down to the under shepherd and the job of the leaders are to feed the sheep. It is to provide spiritual nourishment. That's the number one, whether you are an elder, you are a bishop, whatever it is, the number one task in church is basically the word of God, that has got to be protected. So in shepherding, the picture of a shepherd, there are many issues here.

Feeding	That means you provide nourishment, growth and strength	Word ministry, you preach and teach and disciple
Restoring	Sick and injured sheep	Spiritually down, discouraged, so you encourage them
Protection	You defend against the schemes of the devil	You rebuke, you warn, you warn against false doctrine
Leading	You lead by providing examples	You model the Christian life and motives
Missions	You reach out to the lost	Jesus said John 10:16 (ESV) And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

In real life, most churches will have various leaders and each leader will probably be a specialist in some part of being a shepherd. Unless you belong to a small church, you have got one shepherd, who does everything, but in a large church you have got different people who have different gifts and they all provide you with their gifts, leadership in certain areas which other leaders cannot provide. So this is a picture of shepherding.

The motivations of leaders. How the leaders be motivated?

- Well they are not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you;
- not for shameful gain, but eagerly;
- not domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock.

So the first thing is not under compulsion, which means you desire it.

*1 Timothy 3:1 (ESV) The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.*

There must be a desire there.

Hebrews 13:17 (ESV) Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this **with joy** and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

So if you have a leader who is groaning and finds it such a terrible burden to come and teach the Word of God to you or to lead you then that person shouldn't be in leadership position at all.

Not under compulsion – wrong motives.

- You do it because you desire the praise and approval of others, avoid shame of others
- Opportunity to become famous and well-known and acknowledged in public
- Pleasure by parents, educators, mega-church leaders
- Believes that a life of ministry merits favour with God
- Guilt because a truly dedicated life is a fulltime pastor

These are all wrong motivations of doing it. So the end result if you do that then you:

- Will not go the extra mile
- Work will be a burden
- Laziness
- Incompetence...does not put in study
- Poor witness to church

**Not for shameful gain but eagerly.**

The shepherd model in Ezekiel talks about the usual shepherd. So usual shepherds are not good.

*(Ezekiel 34:2-6 (ESV) Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? 3 You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. 4 The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; 6 they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.*

This is a picture of human shepherds unfortunately. For example, Simon at Samaria who was a magician. He saw Philip come and do miracles,

*Acts 8:13;18-23 (ESV) 13 Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed. Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, 19 saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! 21 You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. 22 Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."*

So here is an example of a leader who basically wants the power, which is not unusual. In the Catholic church, after a while they wanted the money, so basically if you want to spend less time in purgatory you give money and you buy indulgences. If you look in Singapore, some churches have fallen disrepute because the pastor takes the money which is from the church in order to finance his wife's dancing career

and he gone to prison because of that. This is just the example of someone working for personal gain, and this is so common.

There is a story of Darcy and Larry Fardette. They were earnest Christians, was drug addicts, ex-alcoholic and they are disabled with spinal injury, with a sick daughter and they live in a very simple house with Philippians chapter 4 motto on their house saying, 'trust the Lord with all your heart and God will provide'. The worse thing for them is that they watch TV, and they keep watching TV and guys like Dr. Todd Coontz will come up. Todd Coontz will say,

*"I understand the laws that govern insurance, stocks and bonds and all that is involved with Wall Street,". "God has called me... as a financial deliverer."*

So not only he is an evangelist, he is also a financial deliverer and so therefore you try to sow money into his ministry. He says,

*"God gave me the single greatest miracle of my lifetime in one day, and the numbers two, seven and three were involved,"*

273 is actually the number of his condominium, very expensive condominium. So people like Larry watch his show. What they do is that they write a cheque for 273 dollars to him. They only got 500 US dollars in his bank account. On that particular day he lost two cars, they were basically in repair and his wife was going to be retrenched and he still by faith wrote a check for 273 dollars out. On Todd Coontz's website they have a lot of different financial seeds. A lot of churches in Malaysia are also doing that. Sometimes a person gets something after putting some money for God and actually some of these little things reinforce their beliefs that this is going to work and there are very-very faithful people.

In fact, in over their lifetime they actually donated 20,000 dollars until one day their daughter was so sick that she was dying and they already sold everything and they were homeless and then took and they wrote in to all the organizations they have been giving money; Todd Coontz and all that sort of people. Then they said to them, 'you always call us your partners, you call us your family. Now my family is sick, we are homeless, my daughter is dying. Can you give us something back.' Do you know what they wrote back to him, 'no, if we give you back then we have to give to everybody also, so therefore we cannot give you back'. So again they were basically thrown out on the streets, which is actually very sad. When you see the church make use of the Word of God to do that. So this is not uncommon.

**not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.**

If you look at your leaders, you are supposed to look at their imitate their way of life and basically it is not leading by authority and ordering people around,

*Matthew 20:25-28 (ESV) But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 26 It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, 28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

The concept of authority is not international coalition of apostles ordering people around, it was actually showing them how you live. The word in Hebrews is called,

*Heb 13:17 **Obey** your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account.*

The word 'obey' in Greek is called 'peithoo', which means be persuaded by or be convinced of. So which means your leaders cannot order you. What they can do is they can put forward the best argument they can and you disagree and you put your best argument you can too and you can say who persuade who. So you cannot say pastor is the king, if you disagree with any policy in the church bring it up, have a discussion and may the best solution prevail. So that's how things are done in a church when people are supposed to be persuaded by. In terms of obedience, because they keep watch over your souls, so unless you are willing to be persuaded by your leaders then the word of God cannot enter your soul and transform your life. So that's the whole problem.

So the authority the leaders have, the greater the authority is the greater their proximity to the Word of God. It means that the closer he is to the Word of God, the further he is away from the way of God, the less authority he has. So the authority is always the authority of the Word of God.

### **Biblical Paradigm of Servant Leadership**

If you have got command leadership or servant leadership. Command leadership is behavioural change due to coercion or power. It is shorter process, more effective but is due to coercion of power. It relies on personal strength, reward and punishment. Servant leadership is change of heart, longer process. It relies on weakness and expectation of God to act. Let me put this in practical terms. For example, in this church there a lot of people coming to church worship late, how do you solve the problem. You can have command leadership or you can have servant leadership. Now this is not written on the stone, you can debate it but I am just bringing it out there. How do we get people to really respect God and come on time? You can do two things. You can use power in coercion, you close the door and precisely quarter to 9 or you shame them. You close the door and put a big sign there, you are too late, you disrespect God. I mean you can do that. After a while, the people might no more come to the church. But that is effective, because people next time will come, but that is command leadership. I think a lot of churches or organizations do that but I disagree with that because that is not how you are supposed to run Christian leadership.

If you do it the other way, teaching, prayer, leaders come on time, that is servant leadership. The other one depends on personal strength. You scold them, you take their car sticker or for example you bribe them, you give free food to people coming on time, so that everybody come on time. Now those are coercive kind of leadership which is actually not biblical. Here it depends on weakness. It explain why we are worshipping, why is it important to come, inspire change and then you pray for people to come for repentance and the Holy Spirit to touch their hearts. In the end, a lot of them don't come but sometimes the Holy Spirit takes time to work in people's heart. So what you are doing as a leader, you are depending on weakness. You are depending on God to change their hearts. You can't change their hearts, you can shame them to get quick results but that's not servant leadership.

If you look at the fellowship

*Acts 2:44-47 (ESV) And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47*

*praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

A vibrant fellowship is the one that shares, that basically shares their joint resources. If you were in the New Testament church, everybody bring everything together, put in the common pool and is distributed. We don't do that here, we don't even charge you money for food there, the reason why we don't do it, is we are trying to follow biblical principle where people come and share. For example, you complain about some people take advantage, they never put money inside. I don't really care, you know why, whose church is this, mine or God. You don't put money you are cheating God not me and God will hold you accountable. Because we have such great belief that God is going to act and one day God will act in your life. You can cheat me many times, but you can't cheat God. So being Christian leader sometimes you have to be stupid, that is called servant leadership.

### **Marks of a Poor Leader**

- You conflate God's plan with your plan. Your plan must be God's plan.
- Use superior knowledge to snow the opposition, use the bible out of context
- Tell them the Lord told me.
- You pull rank, you criticize people from the pulpit, never do that.
- Loyalty is prized over diversity
- Critics are isolated
- Surrounded with 'yes' man
- Refuse to believe anything else is wrong
- Refuse accountability
- Dominate the whole meeting
- Plan the whole program and just tell people to execute

These are examples of leaders who basically can't lead, because they can't lead by the strength of their ideas. So they don't want to have discussion, they don't want to have any debate. They don't welcome any debate, you debate with them they get very defensive. You should be able to have a healthy attitude of debating and getting the best ideas out, and not be ashamed.

*2 Timothy 2:24-26 (ESV) And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*

So even when you deal with people who are enemies of the gospel we have to deal with them gently, because you believe that God will grant them repentance and not you. Dawson Trotman of *Campus Crusade for Christ*, actually died one day in a boating accident where a young 4-year-old girl was thrown into the water together with him and it was icy cold water and he dove inside and he held her up for quite a while until the boat came around and actually saved her. By the time they saved her, he slipped in the water and he died. The News Week article came up with a title was, Dawson Trotman always holding someone up. I think that is a very good description of what Christian should be. We always should be holding somebody up.



Chuck Swindoll says and this is the reality of life and he is a Christian leader and has written so many books and he has said,

*That's ministry in the raw. Imperfect shepherds leading imperfect sheep in the service of a perfect God who has a perfect plan.*

He is absolutely right. There is no leader in this whole church that is perfect, we are all struggling with our imperfections. So we are imperfect leaders leading imperfect people according to God's perfect plan, so what we need to do is to humble and wait for how he transforms us. So this is servant leadership. Attitude must be gentle and humble. Resource is quality of own lives and gentle instruction in the truth. Expect God to change hearts, you cannot change hearts on your own. You cannot legislate change. And the motivation is that the shepherd will come one day and you will get the unfading glory.

*When spiritual leaders have done their job the people around them have encountered God and obeyed Him*  
**Richard Sibbes**

## **B. HUMILITY AND ITS BASIS (5-7)**

*5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with **humility** toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the **humble**." 6 **Humble** yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*

Here you have a contradiction. You have got two presidents. One of them is totally no humility, but very powerful and successful. The other one is full of humility but very weak and ineffectual and that is a problem. The question is, is humility a vice or is it a virtue. Now, if you be honest, most of it believe it is in front I will tell you a virtue but at the back I think it is a vice. C.S. Lewis says,

*"Pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense"*

Pride is evil. Trump is not the cause but the symptom of what has gone wrong in the society. You cannot everything wrong in America because they have a bad president. The president is a result of the people. If you have got Godly people and righteous people and ethical people, America always prides itself being the city of lights, city on the hill, all the democratic principles and things that we should admire. If that's the case how do they produce a Donald Trump. What a culture has to say about humility is a barometer of the extent to which Christianity exerts pressure on that culture's atmosphere

When you have a president who thinks pride is the most important thing that means humility is downgraded, that means this is a barometer of how Christian values have affected the society. The society is in trouble. In the end it is the same thing with Roman society. The Greco Roman society was divided into two classes of people, one is called the **Humiliores** and the other one is called **Honestiores**. The **Honestiores** are the politicians, the kings, the noble man, the rich people, the business people. The **Humiliores** is the peasants, the farmers, the craftsman, the locksmith, the tailors, the carpenters.

**Humiliores** come from the root word 'humus', which means ground or soil. They are all on the bottom. They are like the caste system and then if you had the same person doing the same crime. A **Humiliores** will be executed. The **Honestiores** will be exiled. Same law but applied differently to different people. So when you actually talk about humility to the Greco-Roman fellow, the fellow think you are stupid

because nobody wants to be the Humiliores, everybody wants to be upper class. So if you talk about humility, it is not a virtue there. David Hume the philosopher writes,

*"humility is not a good thing because it neither advance a man's fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of society; neither qualify him for the entertainment of company, nor increase his power of self-enjoyment."*

He says, humility is useless because it doesn't help you advance in life. All the weak fellows we step on them, only the people who market themselves and talk a lot they get ahead in life. In public, you say you are very humble but in real life that is not what you believe. David Hume is actually right. He says,

*"All those great actions and sentiments, which have become the admiration of mankind, are founded on nothing but pride and self-esteem,"*

He is saying that that everybody who ever achieved anything good in society, all the kings and the scholars and all that, they do it because of pride and self-esteem. So who wants to be humble. Augustine on the other hand, a Christian bishop of Hippo says,

*"If you were to ask me, however often you might repeat the question, what are the instructions of the Christian religion, I would be disposed to answer always and only, 'Humility'."*

On the other side, on Christian side, humility is the number one virtue. So there is a tension between David Hume who thinks pride is important or Donald Trump who says pride is important and on the other hand the virtues of a Christian bishop who says, humility is important.

What do we do in contemporary society without weaknesses? In those days the picture of Christian humility is the monk. Monk has so low level of concern about the worth of skills, achievement, status, so therefore he just sell everything and go around like a beggar. That means basically I don't want anything, I am so unconcerned with the things of the world, humility is like being a monk. Is that what we should be.

The other one is the proper limitations owning

*The humble person owns her limitations: when appropriate, she takes them seriously, is disturbed by having them, does everything possible to be rid of them, regrets yet accepts them, and does her best to control and minimise their negative effects.*

That means you actually recognize all your shortcomings are actually negative things, but you try to overcome them. Is this a picture of humility? Because at least you are humble enough to recognize you got fault, but you are always working to overcome the fault. The other guy doesn't care about anything. Now is Christian humility either one of these two things. It is not. If you look at the beatitudes, Jesus talk about sermon at mount

*"Neediness, weakness and meekness are not obstacles to flourishing but rather avenues to flourishing "*

*"Jesus says that if you want to be blessed, you'll sooner or later have to learn to rest in your neediness, weakness and meekness because you are actually depending on God. It is an issue of when you are humble, it is in relationship to God expecting God to act, expecting God to lift you up. You don't enjoy your weakness, weakness living in a hut, in total poverty, nothing to eat, oh wonderful, the more pain the better, that is not what it is about. It is about being open to the action of God. Humility is actually based on the trinitarian nature of God.*

In the Trinity, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, it is a relationship and there is interdependence and there is a mutuality that you can see. Unless, there is humility you cannot have a mutuality, you cannot have interdependence, you cannot actually have a relationship. So our Christian humility is actually based on the trinitarian structure of our God.

If you look at the cross, it is actually paradoxical. When Jesus is lifted up, Jesus said,

*John 3:14-15 (ESV) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be **lifted up**, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.*

Lifted up means exalted. So the humility has two sides of the coin. One humiliation and the other one is exaltation. It is because of humiliation, he actually achieved glory. Glory is achieved through humiliation, that's the opposite, because of God.

*"Weakness is that which makes it possible to enter into a trusting relationship with God"  
Humility is chief among those virtues, drawing us into a future of ever-greater rest in the love of God*

So without humility we cannot be in a position of openness to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. And since supernatural virtues are bestowed by the Holy Spirit, without humility we cannot live lives of Christian holiness.

The thing that stops us having the power of God and the holiness of God and the transformation is our own pride, because we believe that we could live lives under our own. And when we talk about weakness, we are talking about a desire to let me go and allow the Holy Spirit to come in, allow the word of God to come in and then to govern your life. That's what humility is. So you are supposed to be subject to your elders. So here you have got three areas where he has asked us to have humility. Regard to leaders, fellow believers and circumstances.

So we are supposed to subject to follow and submit, which means obey, which will be persuaded by fellow believers. You are supposed to have humility towards, humility is reckon to be like apron. You basically tie it on when you deal with other people. So remember when someone knocks on your door in your house you don't rush out to your bathroom, you put on your nicest apron named humility. It is cardinal virtue, servant attitude towards others. God opposes the proud and give grace to the humble.

So here we have a typical church, we got pride, we got criticism, we got selfishness, we got being oversensitive, all of us are affected like that but if humility comes in, you are looking out for each other and forgetting yourself, that is called humility.

*True humility, as opposed to a contrived, self-degrading humiliation, flows from recognizing one's complete dependence on God and is expressed by the acceptance of one's role and position in God's economy. With such humility one is freed from attempts to gain more power or prestige. Instead, humility expresses itself in the willingness to serve others even beyond one's self-interest.*

(Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)

So I am not asking you to have total self-unconcern but I am asking you to look into the interest of others, same thing like Jesus Christ, coming into the world to give up the pleasures of heaven and glory of heaven in order to serve us, that is what humility is about. So how can we be humble

1. Complete dependence on God
2. We are sinners who received grace the same as others we deal with
3. So, filled with the love of God that we are freed from attempts to gain more power or prestige.
4. We each have a role in Gods economy
5. Serving others is serving Christ. That's the biggest thing. So you can look at the other person, he may be of any nationality and he may even spit back in your face but the point is serving him is serving Christ. You think Jesus liked it when he was serving us when we spat at him, we looked at him and we looked away. While we were yet sinners he died for us. That is our paradigm. That's why we can be humble

6 ***Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God*** so that at the proper time he may exalt you,

So basically the last one is humble yourself to leaders, fellow believers and then God in circumstances, why because you got suffering because of adverse circumstances. In the adverse circumstances when you are suffering either you are financial loss or you are sick and the first thing you ask is yourself is why me, I don't deserve this, it is not fair, I am a good man, I gave so much tithing to the church, why doesn't God intervene. In our circumstances like that we tend to blame God and so therefore Isaiah says,

*Isaiah 66:2 (ESV) All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is ***humble*** and ***contrite in spirit*** and ***trembles at my word***.*

So despite the stuff that happens to you, you are still humble and waiting for God to intervene in your life. So humble yourself, submit to His control of events, cast your anxieties on Him because He will life you up at the proper time and He cares for you. These are the two things. That means even in your greatest struggles He cares for you.

### C. SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN SUFFERING (8-11)

*1 Peter 5:8-11 (ESV) Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

So here you actually have suffering, which they are going through. You have suffering via anxiety, both can be testing and temptation. The Greek word for temptation and testing are the same, it is called perismos. If it is by God it is testing, if it is by Satan it is in order to kill you off, so that's called temptation. So basically God will restore, confirm and establish you. The devil is seeking you to destroy your faith. So our response is to be sober-minded and be watchful and to resist him.

A Singaporean actor, called Pang went inside a tank and they went to New Zealand to do some exercises and basically there is a gun in the tank that goes up and down, but the trouble is if it is coming down and you are standing in the wrong spot you are in a big trouble. So basically in the gun, gun commander, ME technician and at the back loading the bullets would be Pang. Now you are not supposed to be standing in the wrong spot. Pang was supposed to be standing behind the gun commander and when the gun was being lowered from the up position. So when the gun commander said, be careful I am lowering the gun, get in position, which means you got to guard behind the fellow. The commander

asked, everybody okay. Pang replied, I am okay. Then they started lowering the gun and the lever started to go up and it crushed Pang's chest against the slew ring and he was doing that and he was screaming and the two fellows who are the technician and the gun commander there is a red button which you can just press to stop the gun. Instead of pressing it, they all panicked and the other gun try to lift this 2-ton gun, trying to push it away. Pang was so severely injured and he basically died. They did an inquire and in the inquiry they said they forgot all the basic precautions and that is like spiritual warfare. At the end of the inquiry, the Singapore Army said,

*In the wake of Pang's death, the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) will also implement new safety measures, including a "think-check-do" drill before any maintenance tasks and a mandatory annual safety awareness test for all servicemen.*

Which means be sober-minded, which means alert to the situation, do not be carried away by the world. Everybody is assailed by so many things that happen in the world. When all the bad news that you read about in the world, it gets you very frightened. Events will fill you with fear and anxiety but the bible is telling you to be alert to the situation, not to be carried away by the world. Thessalonian says,

*Thessalonians 5:4-8 (ESV) But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation*

Paul is saying that look around, think, this is what the devil is doing and is trying to take your faith away and put you in a trial, so that you will loose your faith. So you are aware of the danger, you are watchful which means you check, you look out and lastly we are supposed to resist him, firm in our faith. That is spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare is not like what Kenneth Hagen tells. He told a story one day

*A hairy demon came to interrupt. He could not hear what Jesus was talking but Jesus did not do anything. In desperation, he commanded the demon to stop in the name of Jesus and the demon went away. Then Jesus said to him, "If you hadn't done something about that, I couldn't have."*

You are having conversation with Jesus then the devil come and intervene and Jesus couldn't do anything and then in the end Kenneth Hagen says, be gone the devil and then Jesus tells him, if you didn't do that, I cannot do that. So we have this doctrine of believer's authority. Isn't that stupid. And actually people believe such things. It is not anywhere in the Bible. There is a difference between casting out demon when you are demon possessed. We all believe in casting out demons but if you are looking everywhere for the demon you are wrong. This is how Satan works,

*Mark 8:31-33 (ESV) And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."*

I mean Peter loves Jesus. Jesus immediately diagnosed him as Satan make him say that. You see how subtle Satan is. Satan is actually behind everything. So don't tell me if that's the case and you are casting out all the demons. No, Satan influences your thought processes. That doesn't mean you are possessed by the devil.

*Acts 5:3 (ESV) But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?"*

Which means you come to church and Peter Ng ask you, hey you gave your tithing and you say, yes I gave. Tithing means 10% but you only give 1%. So that is lying to the Holy Spirit. So you should drop dead. How did you manage to lie to the Holy Spirit? Lying is basically just lying. So basically Satan influences us. That means he is in every part of our life. It doesn't mean we are possessed. So how should we conduct spiritual warfare.

Some people believe that we should be delivered from anger. You must have spirit of anger, spirit of jealousy. I had a couple who fight with each other and the wife is convinced, all the bad habits he has must be delivered. So bring him to the pastor for deliverance ministry because she cannot get along with him. Then every husband and wife need deliverance. People say strongholds in your life, lust, jealousy, you must tear down the strongholds, you must have curses and soul ties, inner healing. All this you need to command the devil to get out. I mean that is not true. The devil uses these things, all we have to do is to think, check and do, resist, firm in your faith, exercising your trust in the word of God.