Be Humble, Stand Firm

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[0:00] I'm thankful for our worship band and all the effort that goes into preparing and practicing in order to lead in worship. And as I mentioned earlier, this is the last Elevate. Seniors, this is your last time in here on a Wednesday night.

Next week we'll be out in the parking lot, but this is our last regular Elevate. And it's our last Elevate in general for the school year, our last Elevate for the seniors, and also our last week in 1 Peter. So a lot of sadness and sorrow mingled with the joy tonight of being together. But it's been a few weeks since we've been in 1 Peter, so I want to give just a brief recap in three words and then a brief summary of the passage right before chapter 5 begins.
Peter has been writing to these Christians who are suffering. They're suffering for their faith, and so if you could summarize 1 Peter in three words, one of them would be suffering.
Peter is constantly bringing up the suffering that they will endure, that they have endured, that they are currently enduring, all the trials they will go through as Christians in this life.
[1:32] But he also constantly points them to the suffering of Christ. He constantly reminds them of how Christ suffered for them. That serves as an example for us of how to endure suffering, and his suffering also accomplished our salvation.

And so suffering is the first word. The second word is obedience. From the beginning, Peter's been talking about obedience. That's Peter's favorite word to use to describe believers is those who obey the word.
And obedience doesn't make you a believer. Obedience doesn't earn your salvation, but obedience shows your salvation. Obedience shows that you've been changed from the inside.
And so his favorite way to describe unbelievers is calling them those who disobey or disobedient ones. And so obedience and disobedience are signs of what's going on in the heart in the book of 1 Peter.
So suffering, obedience, the third word to summarize the book of 1 Peter would be glory. Glory. Glory. He's constantly reminding them that Christ, through his suffering, through his obedience, is now in glory.
[2:45] And he's bringing glory back with him to us. So that if we suffer and remain obedient in our suffering, we will also be glorified with Jesus. We will experience glory with him too.

And we'll see all of those themes kind of coming back together in chapter 5. He summarizes this whole book in chapter 5. You'll see a lot of those themes and a lot of those through lines being tied together into a bow in chapter 5.
And most recently, which was three weeks ago, we looked at the end of chapter 4. And he talked again about suffering and said, don't be surprised by it. Don't be shocked as though something strange were happening to you.
This is what it means to be a Christian. This is what it means to follow Christ. You will suffer. Don't be shocked by it. Expect it. But also remember that glory is coming.
If this is how God begins to treat his people now, to purify us, one day we will be glorified with him as well. Now we come to chapter 5 and we'll cover this text in four points tonight.
[3:47] The first one being pastor well. Pastor well. And you may think that's completely irrelevant to me. I'm not a pastor. I'm a youth student.

Maybe you'll never be a pastor. But why is this in here? It's helpful for you to know what pastors should be doing. Peter's writing to the pastors of these churches here in the first part of chapter 5 so that they can be encouraged and they can know what to do.
And you also need to know what pastors are supposed to be doing. Because you'll know if you go off on your own to look for a church someday once you move out, you need to know how to identify

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faithful pastors.
You need to know what a pastor is supposed to be doing. And so this is incredibly helpful, incredibly relevant for you. It keeps you safe. It keeps you from being spiritually abused by people who shouldn't be in charge of a church.
And it also helps you understand how God has structured his church. So pastor well. We'll see this in verses 1 through 5. He says in verse 1, 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's going to be revealed.
[4:59] Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight. So he says, he begins here, I exhort the elders among you. Now Peter has just finished talking about suffering.

He's just finished talking about judgment beginning with the household of God. Why does he shift now to talk about pastors? Why does he address them specifically? If you read through letters like 1 Peter that are meant for multiple congregations, rarely are the pastors addressed.
Maybe in the greeting, maybe in the closing, but in the letter itself, they're not usually addressed specifically. So why does he call them out here? Why does he speak to them? As the church suffers, pastors are most likely going to be the ones who suffer first.
As persecution comes to an area or comes to a church, pastors are typically going to be the first ones targeted. And it makes sense. Satan and the world both think, if we can just take out the leaders, the church will disappear, which is not true.
The Lord will continue to preserve his church without pastors or with pastors. But pastors are typically the first ones who are targeted with this kind of suffering. Their suffering, this judgment begins with the household of God and pastors are the leaders of that household.
[6:13] And so they can expect to suffer first. But as we look at this, what are elders? What do those do? Well, the New Testament uses three words to describe pastors. It calls them elders.

It calls them pastors or shepherds. And it calls them overseers. All three of these words are synonymous, describing the same type of people, just from a different angle, looking at what their responsibility is.
So elder, pastor, overseer, all the same office, all the same job description. So if you look on our church website, we don't have elders. We call them pastors.
And so that's why that language is there. Elder, pastor, or overseer, all the same. And in the New Testament, that word is almost always plural when it's talking to churches.
Churches should have multiple pastors, multiple elders, multiple overseers. That's how God has designed the church. But they'll likely be the first ones to suffer. And so Peter's encouraging them.
[7:11] He's exhorting them to be faithful in light of the suffering they will endure. In Russia, before communism fell, faithful churches would meet outside.

They would have to find places to meet. The government couldn't find them because the government wanted to say, hey, this is what you can preach. This is what you can't preach. And so the faithful churches said, we're going to preach the Bible, and we're going to have to do it secretly. But KGB officers and spies would find where these churches were meeting. They would go up to little kids and say, who are your pastors? Can you point them out to me? And those are the people they'd go arrest.
And so pastors, historically, are the first ones to suffer once persecution hits. And so as the church suffers, they're going to need godly leaders to do their job. And so Peter is calling these pastors to stand up and be men and be faithful even to the bitter end.
And notice how Peter identifies himself. He calls himself a fellow elder, a witness, and a partaker. He says, I'm a fellow elder.
[8:14] I'm a shepherd with you guys. I'm a pastor alongside you guys. I'm a witness of the sufferings of Christ. This is why Jesus sent him. He said in Acts 1-8, you guys will be my witnesses to the ends of the earth.

Peter is fulfilling his responsibility of testifying to what Christ has done. And he also calls himself a partaker in the glory that's going to be revealed.
When Christ comes back, he will glorify his people. And Peter says, I'm one of those who's going to be glorified with Christ. That's how you can know me. I'm going to participate with you guys and with Christ in this glory that's coming to us.
Now it's interesting that Peter doesn't call himself an apostle here. That's how he started the letter. He very easily could have flexed on him and been like, I'm an apostle. Just do what I say.

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But he identifies himself in this humble way. He's a good example of what he's about to tell them to do. He's about to tell them, don't domineer over the people. Don't abuse them. Don't be rough with them.
[9:19] And so he himself is being a good example of his kind of humble leadership. He says, you want to know how to know me? I testify to the sufferings of Christ. I shepherd the sheep with you.

And I'm going to participate with Christ in glory when he comes. So he doesn't call himself an apostle, but he sets a good example of humble leadership. What is it he tells these pastors to do? He says, shepherd the flock of God that is among you.
Now this word pastor is the same word as shepherd, depending on the context. If it's talking about a field or a flock, this word gets translated as shepherd. If it's talking about a church, it's translated as pastor.
So the same word, same concept. And when you think about like literal shepherds, those who tend sheep or other livestock, what do they do? Two things. They feed and they protect.
They feed and they protect. And that's the same thing that pastors do in the church. Shepherds of actual animals, they will feed them. They will lead them to where the food is.
[10:18] And they will protect them from any outside threats like wolves or other animals or thieves. And they'll also protect them from bad food, from poisonous plants that they might encounter. So they will feed and they will protect.

And so this is why the New Testament uses this metaphor to describe pastors, because that's what pastors do for churches as well. So this feeding that pastors do, this protecting that pastors do, are done by the word and according to the word of God.
It's by the Bible and in accordance with the Bible. And so the primary way I feed you as a pastor is through teaching you the word, through trying to explain the word to you.
That's how you're going to be fed spiritually. That's how we are all fed is through intake of the word. So we feed the word and we protect you from false teaching and false teachers, from bad food, from things that could lead you astray.
And so when a pastor faithfully preaches the word, he's not only telling you what the Bible says, hopefully you can learn how to study the Bible from that preaching.
[11:35] Hopefully you can understand how the Bible works from that. And so that will feed you in the moment. That will also protect you down the road when you encounter someone who's teaching something false. So there are false teachers today who will say God's will for you, is that you won't suffer in this life.

If you've read the Bible for five seconds or first Peter for two verses, you know that's false teaching. And so this, this feeding is nourishing for you. It's also protecting you from false teaching, whether you encounter it in the walls of our church.
And hopefully we drive that out or outside as you move on or live in the world. So feed and protect is the pastor's job. So, and then he says the way pastors do this is by exercising oversight, exercising oversight.
So pastors in churches are responsible for the big picture, and they're also responsible for helping individuals fulfill their role within that big picture. So you can think about in a war, soldiers need to be in the right position.
That's what we'd call strategy. There needs to be a good big picture strategy. But not only do soldiers need to be in the right place, they also need to know how to fire their weapons. They need to know what the overall task is so that they can do their part in that task.
[12:57] And so you've got big picture strategy. You've got details of training. And so the role of a pastor is to set the tone for the big picture of the church, what our church is about, and also to help train you on how to obey Jesus.

So set you up in a good position to obey Jesus by knowing the truth and also know how to practically obey him and do ministry itself. Now, Peter's focus here is more on who pastors should be as people, more than on what they should do.
And that's the emphasis of the New Testament. It's always who pastors are that's more important than what they're able to do. It's always godliness over giftedness all the time.
A godly pastor will be more glorifying to Christ than someone who's ungodly, but is more gifted. So godliness is the priority. And he gives us kind of three contrasting statements.

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And you can see these because he says not, but three different times. 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.
[14:17] So not under compulsion, but willingly. So pastors should not be mercenaries. Mercenaries. We shouldn't be people who are like, I'm just doing this to get a paycheck. Like, I'm just here to, this is my job, these are my responsibilities.

I don't like them, but here I am to do them. We're not people who are being forced to do chores that we don't like. There are certainly parts of the job that aren't fun. There are certainly parts of the job that I don't look forward to, but are entailed in it.
Confrontation or difficult conversations are never easy, but on the whole, pastors should be there because they love the people, not being compelled or forced to do this.
He says, as God would have you. This should come across in how a pastor treats someone, and how he talks to them, and how he talks about them. It should all be marked by love.
Not for shameful gain, but eagerly. False teachers are always about the money. Just give me my money. I fell for that last summer. But that's what false teachers are always after.
[15:16] They're always after a paycheck. They're always after making more money, and so they're sellouts. They'll say whatever you want to hear as long as you pay them. They'll tell you exactly what you want to hear.

They'll tell you what you think feels good, what you think feels right, as long as you keep paying them. And Peter says, do not do this for shameful gain, but do this eagerly.
And the third thing he says, do not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. Elders, pastors are not overlords. They're examples for people to follow and see what Christlikeness looks like.
And here's the motivation he gives these pastors. Verse four. When the chief shepherd appears, when the chief pastor appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
He's saying, if you serve well, pastors, if you stay faithful, you will be rewarded for your labor. When Christ appears, the shepherd we all answered to, you will be rewarded for your work.
[16:29] And he says in verse five, a first part of first verse five, likewise, you who are younger be subject to the elders. So he's no longer talking to the pastors here, but he uses the word likewise.

And the way Peter uses that word is he's talking to a new group of people, but it's still related to what he just said. So in chapter three, verse one, he says, likewise, wives in verse seven, likewise, husbands.
He's transitioning to a new group, but very much in the vein of what he just said. So he says, likewise, you who are younger. So now he's talking to the youth ministry of Asia minor. Be subject to the elders.
He's talking to the younger people in these churches. And generally speaking, younger people are more likely to behave rebelliously. Not you guys, other people.
More likely to behave rebelliously. And it was likely a problem in these churches. Cause that's why Peter is bringing it up. Says, make sure you're submissive toward those in spiritual leadership over you.
[17:33] Certainly not doing anything that's unbiblical. If that's asked of you by a pastor, but as long as they're living faithfully, as long as they're encouraging you from the word, be submissive toward their leadership.

Be subject to the elders. Now I'd mentioned that pastors are an authority in the church, but who has the final authority in the church?
Ultimately it's Jesus. He's the chief shepherd. He's the ultimate pastor. It's his church. Everyone is submissive to him. And while pastors do have authority in the church, while they do lead in the church, the final human authority in the church is the church itself.
That's why we vote on the budget. That's why we vote on big purchases. That's why we vote on new pastors, because the church itself as a whole is the final human authority in the church.
So, pastor well. Secondly, be humble. Be humble. We see this in verses 5 and 7. It says, clothe yourselves, all of you.
[18:40] So no longer talking just to the pastors or just to the young people. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. And in ancient Rome, humility was not a virtue.

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It was a sign of weakness. It was a sign of cowardice. Humility, they thought, was only fitting for slaves. Slaves are humble, and they've got a lot to be humble about. We are better than them, so we shouldn't be humble, is what Romans thought.
And very similar to today, particularly among men, we tend to think naturally that humility is a sign of weakness. If you're trying to be an alpha, you're probably not going to give advice on being humble.
The Bible's take on true masculinity is humility. And so he says, all of you, humble yourselves. Clothe yourself with humility toward one another.
And it's very likely that Peter has in mind Jesus' example. In John 13, at the Last Supper, Jesus dresses himself for service, to wash the disciples' feet.
[19:50] And the word that's used to describe how Christ dressed himself is the same word here. Peter saw Jesus dress himself with humility and wash the disciples' feet.

And he calls us as the church to all be humble toward each other in the same way. And here's the motivation. Because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.
It's a quote from Proverbs 3. Do you want to be God's enemy? Then be proud. Do you want God to hate you? Then just go around and think you're better than everyone else.
If you want to receive grace from the Lord, Peter says, humble yourself. Verse 6, humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God.
And here's the motivation. So that at the proper time, he may exalt you. So two motivations for humility. God opposes the proud and God will exalt the humble.
[20:54] God hates the proud. He's an enemy of them. But he exalts and gives grace to the humble. Now it's interesting because the Bible does not shy away from letting rewards motivate your obedience.

So I've talked to a lot of people who say, I really need to be faithful because I want a reward in heaven. But that's not a spiritual way to think. So I've got to stop thinking about the reward that waits on the other side of death.
Actually, the Bible holds out rewards in heaven as motivation for your obedience. It's not unspiritual to be motivated by the glory that awaits us. And even here, Peter is saying, humble yourself so that God will exalt you.
So that you will experience glory with him. He will share in his glory with you and reward you for your faithfulness. So last Sunday night, we had Kinder Praise lead an evening service.
If you were there, you saw it. It was adorable. My daughter Amelia was up there. And Kinder Praise is something that has terrified her for a little while. But we made her do it. Push her out of her comfort zone.
[22:01] It's good for her. But we've had to talk her into it. It used to be a fight. She's gotten a lot better. And Sunday afternoon, she had like a moment of hesitation. She was like, I don't want to go up on stage.

And I told her, if you go up there and sing and do the motions, I will buy you ice cream. And she was all in. Like never, not another peep about it. She sold it.
And it was great. And sold in like a good way. I think you guys mean that in a bad way. But she went all out and did a great job. Bought her ice cream afterward. She will sing for ice cream.
And so will I in most cases. Yeah, I was joking. So it's okay to be motivated by reward.
Some of you might think that's bad parenting. I think it's just biblical because that's what the Lord does to us. But, and if you think about it, why do you work? For those of you who have jobs, why do you work?
[22:58] I mean, ultimately to get paid. Like that's not an unspiritual thing to say. It's like, I got to have money so I can get a car or put gas in my car or eat food and stay alive. Like, and that helps you be a good employee.

You're like, if I get fired, that means I'm not getting paid. So I got to just do what I'm told and be happy about it. And so being motivated by reward is a biblical thing. That's okay. Now we shouldn't focus on the reward and not think about Christ.
But the reward is there to motivate us to do what the Bible says. Now Peter gives us one example of what humility looks like. What does it look like to humble yourself before the Lord?
Does it mean we've got to like lay down for worship or like do something weird when we pray? What does it look like? He gives us one example, verse 7, casting all your anxieties on him because he

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cares for you.
Giving everything we're anxious about to the Lord. This word casting is a strong word. Throwing, getting rid of, just throwing away your anxieties onto the Lord.
[24:05] Giving him everything, throwing everything to him. He can handle it, giving it all up to him. When I was in elementary school, I'd come home on Friday afternoons and get off the bus.

If you're homeschooled, the bus is like the big thing that kids sit on and ride home. Those for you, Johnny. And so I'd get off the bus, walk through the door, and I would just throw my backpack. Like I would just get rid of it. I would not think about it again until like Sunday night and be like, oh shoot, I was supposed to do this or that. I was zipping it up, throwing it away, not thinking about anything inside of it until Sunday night when I realized I didn't do homework all weekend.
But this is the same kind of word that we're called to do with our anxieties. Throw them onto the Lord. Don't think about them again. Don't dwell on them. Give them up to God.
Because he cares for you. Giving our anxieties to the Lord wouldn't do anything if he wasn't powerful and if he didn't care.
[25:09] But he does both. He's powerful and he cares for you. Peter calls us to humility by giving our anxieties to God.

Now it's interesting because a sign of humility is throwing your anxiety onto the Lord. So what would pride be?
Pride would be hanging onto your anxiety. Pride would be continuing to be anxious. Anxiety is a fruit of pride.
Pride. The anxious person always thinks of themself and doesn't trust God with their troubles. And anxiety is a very humble looking form of pride because it's, it presents itself in kind of weakness and struggling.
But it is pride because at the end of the day, it's trusting yourself to solve all problems. The anxious person is trusting themselves as God.
[26:17] Now if you struggle with anxiety, that doesn't mean you're not a Christian. What it does mean is that humility looks like trusting God to solve your problems better than you can.

Trusting God with your struggles better than you could handle them. Throwing your anxieties onto him and not hanging onto them yourself. Casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you.
Thirdly, stand firm. Stand firm. See this in verses 8 through 11. The Christian life is a war.
Do you have that mindset? Is that how we think about following Christ? Do we think about it in terms of warfare? Prayer. Peter says in verse 8, be sober minded. Be watchful.
Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. Resist him. Firm in your faith. Knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.
[27:23] Why does he call us to watchfulness? Why does he call us to sobriety? Because we have a very real enemy. Who's prowling around seeking to devour Christians.

Seeking to devour people who claim to follow Christ. And if you don't recognize you're in this battle, you're prone to discouragement. You're prone to losing sight of your goal.
Adam did this in the garden. He did not recognize the war that was going on. And he was kicked out of the garden because he fell to Satan's temptations.
The devil roars in order to scare Christians into disobedience. And ultimately, what he would want is for people to walk away from Christ altogether.
Satan puts pressure on the church. Satan causes the church to suffer. Satan prowls around seeking people to devour. And look at what Peter calls him, your adversary.
[28:28] This is so personal. Satan's opposed to you personally. He's opposed to God for sure, but he hates you. He's against you. And when it comes to thinking about Satan, there are two errors we can make.

One is ignoring him. One is deifying him. It's possible for us to just ignore him in terms of thinking like he's not that real.
He's not that powerful. He's not that threatening to the church. He's not that tempting. He's not that deceptive. That thought is failing to be watchful, failing to be sober-minded.
It's a failure to recognize the enemy we're up against. The other error would be deifying him, thinking that he is all-powerful, thinking that he's responsible for everything, so you stub your toe

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and you think Satan caused you to do that.
Anything bad that happens to you, you blame on Satan. We don't want to deify him either. He's just a creature. He is a roaring lion, but he's on God's leash.
[29:43] And it calls him a roaring lion. And when we think of lions, we would think like, okay, the zoo or shows about nature where I see a lion eat a gazelle or something cool like that.

When these people think about lions, there's one place to see lions in Rome that are roaring in the Colosseum, where they devour people, where they eat slaves, where they eat Christians who are being persecuted.
And so Peter is using this gory and gruesome image to describe Satan, the enemy behind the human enemies that we might face.
And a contrast between God who cares for us and tenderly shepherds us. It's a great contrast between how Satan treats us.
God tenderly cares for his flock. Satan tries to eat them. God seeks to feed his flock through pastors. Satan tries to destroy the flock through false teachers.
[30:51] God cares deeply for you. There are things he'll bring you through that are painful. There are things he says to you that may seem harsh and you'll need to repent in order to be faithful to his word, but he cares deeply for you.

And this world, which is run by Satan and motivated by Satan will claim to have your best interest in mind. But the way ends in death.
Peter says, resist him. This isn't passive. You can't just play dead and hope this lion will leave you alone. But how would you answer the question?
How do you resist the devil? How do you fight against Satan? What kinds of things would you say?
Peter doesn't call us to anything heroic here. He says, firm in your faith.
God calls us to just keep having faith. We're not called to go cast out all the demons in the world. We're not called to confront Satan head on.
[31:52] He's stronger than us as individuals anyway. The way we resist darkness, the way we resist Satan and his schemes is through faithfulness.

Keeping our faith in God. And he says, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.
This suffering they're experiencing is painful, but it's not unique. It's difficult, but it's not unheard of. This is how the world treats Christians. This is what it means to be a Christian is you will suffer for your faith in Christ.
And so Peter says, don't have a victim mentality about this. This is hard, but all your brothers and sisters in the world are feeling this same pressure from Satan. They're feeling this same temptation. They're feeling this same kind of persecution all throughout the world. Peter calls us to remember the sufferings of other believers, even as we endure our own.
[32:55] So one practical way you can do this is read a good Christian biography. Read a story about a missionary. Watch a movie about a missionary or watch a movie about a church that was faithful.

So a couple of those that are really good. One is called Tortured for Christ. It's a movie. I'm sure you can find it in various places, but Tortured for Christ. It's a story of how one pastor stayed faithful even under the Nazi regime and stayed faithful to the gospel.
And he was ultimately tortured for that. Another one here in America is called Essential Church. It's about one church's fight to be faithful, even when the government was trying to shut them down, attack them.
So those are a couple of things that as we read about the sufferings of other people, as we read about the difficulties of other people, it encourages us and inspires us to be faithful ourselves. And verse 10, after you have suffered a little while, you're going to suffer, but it's going to be a little while.
And this life doesn't seem short. This life and its sufferings seem like they make time stand still when you're suffering. It seems like this day is never going to end when something goes wrongly.
[34:10] But compared to eternity, life is really short. And sufferings are very short in comparison to the length of eternity. Seniors, this is your last elevate.

I think you'd say it went by more quickly than you would have expected. Life is brief. Your trials, even though they're painful, even though they're difficult, when you look back on them, will seem

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brief, especially when it comes to eternity.
And so this life is brief. This life itself slips through our fingers. Seniors are leaving. We're sad about that. We'll miss you. There's a new group of sixth graders coming up in the fall who will not know who you are.
And I don't say that to be mean. I'm just saying this life is so brief. It transitions so quickly. And so when we get to eternity, we'll look back and any suffering we had to endure for Christ will say, that was worth it.
That was so short compared to how long I'll be with my Lord now for all eternity. This is after you've suffered a little while.
[35:20] The God of all grace, who's called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

God himself will greet us at the door. Remember, we need to humbly and strongly stand firm in the gospel while we wait for glory.
This is the path that Jesus walked. This is the path that he went down, suffering and patiently enduring in order to receive glory. This is the path we must walk.
We must follow in his steps. Suffering leads to glory. He says he will restore.
That's a medical term to reset broken bones. Confirm. He'll encourage us. This world will beat us down, but God himself will speak kindly to us.
[36:18] He'll strengthen us. This is where we get our word steroids from. We are going to look so good when we're strengthened. We'll be established. It means to lay a foundation.

He will build us up. This world will beat us down. This suffering will be difficult, but he himself will build us back up. He'll build us up in himself.
This suffering we endure in this life prepares us for the next life as Christians. Our enemy tries to attack us and destroy us. Our Savior, through those attacks, sanctifies us and makes us more like his son.
And Peter says, verse 11, to him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. God alone has all the power. And when he fully demonstrates that power, it will be for his glory.
No enemies will be left standing. It will be for our enjoyment, for our good. Rome thought they had the power. The enemies of the church think they have power.
[37:23] Satan thinks he has power. God alone has true dominion forever and ever. And no one can take it from him. He knows what he's doing.

He is powerful enough to accomplish what he's doing. And he will have that power for all eternity. Amen. And fourthly, there's a final charge.
He says in verse 12, by Silvanus, that's the same name as Silas in the book of Acts, who was a missionary partner of Paul. It's by Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I've written briefly to you.
So it's likely that Peter was speaking to Silas and Silas was writing these things down for him. And what is it that he's written? What does he accomplish by writing?
Exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it. This is a summary of the entire letter. He's been exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God.
[38:23] Stand in it. Stay firm in it. Do not retreat from this grace. Do not turn back from this truth.
He says in verse 13, she who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings.

And so does Mark, my son. What is he talking about here? Peter's speaking about the church he's writing from.
He says, I'm writing to you churches from she who is at Babylon. Babylon in the Bible is a symbol for evil, a symbol for all wicked nations, all wicked governments, because Babylon itself was an incredibly wicked nation.
And so Peter is saying, I'm writing from Babylon. And this church here greets you. Now, why wouldn't he just say, I'm writing from Rome, from this church in Rome? Well, again, persecution is breaking out.
He doesn't want to give away any identifying markers of where his church is meeting. And so he says, she who's at Babylon sends you greetings. He mentions Mark.
[39:32] This is the author of the gospel of Mark, who was a disciple of Peter. He calls him my son. Mark was a disciple of Peter. Verse 14, greet one another with the kiss of love.

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And this may be the most fascinating thing in first Peter to you so far. Like you haven't paid attention to anything. And you just perked up when I said the kiss of love. You're like, what is that? Tell me more about it. What is it? Huh? This was a standard greeting in the ancient culture.
And even in some cultures today, kissing is still a formal greeting. Not in ours, though. We just shake hands or give a side hug. If Peter was writing to Mustang, Oklahoma, he'd say, dap them up.
But lastly, he says, peace to all of you who are in Christ. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.
In Christ is the only way we can have peace with God or with each other. In Christ and through what he's done. Will you be faithful to the end?
[40:35] Will you stand firm in this faith? I hope you will. I hope you'll stay faithful to the end. As you follow Jesus, remember that your only hope, my only hope, is in not your works, not your righteousness, but what Christ did.

He was obedient for us. He died for us so that one day we might be with him in glory. He took away your sin and he promises to keep you if you are in Christ.
So as you suffer, rejoice in the glory that you will enjoy forever with Christ. Father, we thank you for the book of 1 Peter. It's called to suffering.
It's encouragement in suffering to be obedient and it's hope of glory that it holds out to us. I pray that we'd be faithful as a church. I pray that as these seniors go out from the student ministry to whatever's next for them, that you would bless them and keep them in this true grace of yours. That you would remind them what your gospel is. Help them to stand firm in it and not depart from it. I pray for all the students here as we go to summer break that you would help it be a time of growth for them.
[41:50] Through things and events we do as a church and just personally as they have more time away from school, they would use that time to serve you and to get to know you better through your word. In the name of Christ we pray.

Amen.

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