

The Book of First Peter

"The Coat of Humility"

1 Peter 5:5

Introduction

1. To be proud of one's humility is a paradox indeed. Humility is a grace for which there is no room for personal gain.

2. From the "good works" of the elders (pastors) which Peter outlined in 5:1-4, he takes up the matter of "good works" for those who make up the local assembly.

3. As the leadership is to minister among the membership with lowliness of spirit, so the membership has similar obligations. Let us consider the call to humility in four ways:

1. Humbleness in relation to the leadership. v. 5

Two clarifying statements are made:

- a. Who is involved--the younger and elder.
The reference here is not to a class as opposed to elders, but the general membership of the church. The elders are both the leadership and the age group.
- b. What is involved--submission. Here is a military term which calls for orderly arrangement! All cannot be chiefs nor Indians--some must be in one category and others in another.

2. Humbleness in relation to one another. v. 5

The appeal here is to the interpersonal relationships thruout the entire church. All ages, sexes, and classes fall under these two injunctions.

- a. Orderly arrangement. Altho the verb is not repeated, it is certainly implied as being the same one as v. 5.
- b. Submission to service. The verb employed here is the one which means to knot like the knot of a belt. It speaks of firmness and reminds one of John 13 where the apron of the slave was worn by our Lord. Humility is to be "put on" in order to serve one another!

3. Humbleness in relation to the Bible. v. 5.

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a. God's position: He sets Himself as a warrior against the proud.

b. God's provision: He gives ability to those who follow His ways and thots.

The quotation in this verse comes from Prov. 3:34 and avers a strong reason for following the imperatives of Peter!

4. Humbleness in relation to God. v. 6.

Three worthy items are given here:

a. The call--humble yourselves. The aorist tense notes the fact that there is to be no delay in this afflictive discipline. What a discipline it is to humble one's self!

b. The condition--under the mighty hand of God. Here is the true perspective for all order in the assembly and in relations one to another. By true humility, one is really submitting to God! It is HIS activity to which we are called to submit!

c. The cause--final exaltation. At His own wisely appointed time, the uplift will come. We can all afford to take our place where He puts us! Later on another one will be given in agreement with his choice for us.

Conclusion:

One of the most difficult coats to wear is the coat of humility. The size of the coat is usually very small and most folks are too large! May the Lord help us to come down to size and wear the proper clothing.

NOTES