

Parting Instructions to Exiles (5:6–10)

What's up church fam. Hope you are doing well today. My name is Marcus and I'm one of the pastors here at City Church. If you have your bible with you go ahead and turn with me to 1 Peter 5:6–10. So we are closing out our 1 Peter series today. It has definitely been a journey but I'm glad we were able to finish through this book of the Bible. If this is your first time joining us, I'd like to say welcome, and also if you get a chance, go ahead and bookmark this series to go through in the future. To give you an overview though, we said that the big idea of this book is being an exile and living as a distinct influential presence. Now what Peter is going to do today is give us some points on what it will take to last as an exile here. Because we don't want this to be all talk, we want to actually be about it for the long haul. And so Peter is going to help give us a little encouragement. So if you're in the room and need some encouragement today I pray this helps.

Starting in verse 6, it goes like this:

[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.

So Peter kicks off by telling us that we need to do as the great prophet Kendrick Lamar once told us, to be humble and sit down. And that we need to do so under the mighty hand of God. So that at the proper time he may exalt us. Now Peter doesn't even finish his sentence before telling us exactly a way to show this humility. He says the way you test your humility is by casting **ALL** of your anxieties on the Lord. Somebody in the household say **ALL** for me. Now as a reminder, the anxieties the people that Peter is talking to experienced were things like being excluded, maligned, persecuted and even being killed for their faith. So they were experiencing some serious anxiety. And so if God can say that they can cast that level of anxiety on him, surely you and I can cast ours on him as well. So what better test? What better test is there than giving the thing we most worry about most. The thing that keeps us up at night. The thing that we frantic back and forth on in our minds. What better way than to give all that to

someone else so they can worry about it. That someone, Peter says to give it to, is God. And he not only is saying give it to God, no, no, no, he's saying to cast it on God. Somebody say **CAST** for me. Peter says to cast all of your anxieties on the Lord. Now when Peter talks about casting our anxieties on the Lord, what he is meaning here is to throw our anxieties away from us. So much like casting a net. Remember Peter was a fisherman so this is a word picture from his own life. He describes this idea of casting our net. So how do we do this? How do we cast our anxieties? Well, pastor and theologian, Charles Spurgeon had a timely word of wisdom on this by saying:

“This work of casting can be so difficult that we need to use two hands to do it: the hand of prayer and the hand of faith. “Prayer tells God what the care is, and asks God to help, while faith believes that God can and will do it. Prayer spreads the letter of trouble and grief before the Lord, and opens all its budget, and then faith cries, ‘I believe that God cares, and cares for me; I believe that he will bring me out of my distress, and make it promote his own glory.’

Now some of you might be like, well I understand the hand of prayer joint, but what is this hand of faith stuff you talking about? Like maybe you pray your anxieties, probably even constantly and consistently, but you might not exhibit the faith that God actually **can and will** handle it. For one reason or another. Now on the flip, some of you have the hand of faith but not the hand of prayer. You are the first person to encourage and say “God cares for you.” You know the truths to speak when it comes to how God can handle your anxiety but you never actually participate in the process of praying through that anxiety and giving it over to God. And here's the thing, you need both. You need to spend regular time praying through your anxieties fam, **AND** functionally you need to also believe that God can handle them.

So Peter says this is what humility looks like in practice. That we would cast our cares and worries on the Lord. No matter how big or how small. And then he tells us why we should give our anxieties to God. Because he cares for you. God cares for you. The God of the universe who has mighty hands, who has all power, who is all knowing, who is all seeing, is the same God who cares about you. In the video game world, that's known as a cheat code. A cheat code for my non-video game playing brothers and sisters is a literal code that you put in a

game that allows you to access things you wouldn't have normally been able to access. That could be a power, a hidden level, a swanky outfit, etc. So God is a literal cheat code when it comes to anxiety. In [Psalm 46:1](#) it says that:

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in time of trouble.

So the Psalmist here says, God is the place where we can hide, where we can find shelter and safety. And also where we can find strength. But not only that, not only that, he is also always ready to help you when you are in trouble. When anxiety looms, God is there to help. The King James version says it like this: *"he's a very present help in the time of trouble."* (I think this is the first time we used King Jimmy) How do we know God is a present help in the time of trouble you may ask? Because God is not only present in times of trouble but God was also there in the times of calm. Can I tell you, God doesn't just show up when trouble arises. God was there when everything was going good. God was there when your health was good. God was there when all was going well. God was there when your finances were doing well. God was there when there were no enemies surrounding you. God was there before COVID-19. God was there family. And now that things have taken a turn do you know who's still there? God. God is still present. He's still there. And he's ready to help you. Yes, you. And all you and I need to do is cast our anxieties on him.

He wants to know everything you are anxious about. Everything that worries you. And true humility is shown by our ability to cast ALL our anxieties on the Lord and not try and take it back. But that's easier said than done right. See, when anxiety strikes us we typically try and fix it ourselves. See, pride says, I can do it God. Pride says, I can handle it God. Let me figure this out. Pride says, only I can handle this hardship, only I can handle this pain, only I can fix my job situation, only I can fix my marriage, only I, only I. Only I can control what's happening to me. But humility says, while I may want to fix whatever situation I'm in; while I feel like I need to fix it, you know what I'm not going to do? What I'm going to do is actually rest on the creator who said I should cast **ALL** my anxieties on him. What I'm going to do is pray to my God, to my refuge and my strength, for help. Put another way, pride, whether we believe it or not, says I am mightier than God. And Peter is saying no fam, you are not, you need to be under the might hand of God.

Now with that being said, I want us to take some time to get practical on this.

First, what are the most consistent anxieties in your life currently? What anxieties are you wrestling with now? What keeps you up at night? What is the thing that has you feeling out of control? So go ahead and pause and take some time to answer that now. What are the most consistent anxieties in your life right now?

Second, what is your plan to “cast” those onto God, because he cares for you?

And with this one I want you to get real practical with this. If you need to set an alarm to go off so you can remember to cast your anxiety you’re feeling, do that. If you want people in your LifeGroup to pray for you, head over to groupme and ask that now. Maybe you’re not in a LifeGroup and need someone to pray for you. Text them now. Call them now. So again, press pause and take some time to answer this question, what is your plan to “cast” those anxieties onto God, because he cares for you?

So next Peter is going to talk about what seems like a totally different subject. But I don’t think it actually is—more on that in a few...verse 8:

[8] 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.

So Peter tells us to be watchful because the devil, our adversary, is seeking someone to devour. And that someone is you. Make no mistake about it, the devil is real. And I know we all “know that” right, but the way Peter is depicting him probably seems more real than we actually acknowledge in our everyday life. See, in order to be an exile in the here and now, in order to carry out all the things we talked about in weeks past, we will need to do as verse 9 tells us to do, to resist the devil firm in our faith. And as a community we must also resist the devil’s accusations and lies. If we are unified as a family, we can help fight spiritual warfare easier. As we say around here, it’s easier to do life together than by ourselves. And that same tone holds true when it comes to fighting the devil.

Now can I tell you a secret fam, if you don't already know, the devil is out to get you and yours. And he's not out to get you by just sex, drugs, and rock and roll as you may have heard. He's a little more crafty than that fam. All you have to do is ask Adam and Eve in Genesis 3.

The Bible consistently says that the devil is not an idiot. He prowls like a lion. Waiting to devour you. If you ever see a lion on the Planet Earth docs, you'll notice that they are very patient and wait for their kill and when they strike they don't often miss. So Peter says, hey I need you to be serious about this. You will need to resist the devil and his schemes. Because his schemes are centered on tearing you away from the very faith you and I claim to have in Jesus. It's centered on you not being an exile and not being an example of Christ. His goal is to chip away, erode away, little by little the very faith we say we have in Jesus.

C.S. Lewis wrote a book called *The Screwtape Letters* that sort of hits on this idea of Satan and his cronies being crafty. Now if you've never read satire before the idea is that there are nuggets of underlying truth weaved throughout the stories and I believe they are relevant to what we are talking about here. So here are a few:

“Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one--the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts

“It is funny how mortals always picture us as putting things into their minds: in reality our best work is done by keeping things out.” So just in case you missed it, he's saying that many believe that the devil puts images and other things in our minds to tempt us to go in the wrong direction. And to a degree that is true. But ultimately the goal is not for you to sin in the obvious ways, the goal is to slowly drive a wedge between you and the thing that will help keep you from temptation. Reading the word, prayer, silence and solitude. Which sets us up beautifully for this last quote...

He calls the devil's realm a “Kingdom of Noise” and claims, “We will make the whole universe a noise in the end.” So what he's saying is that one of the ways Satan works is just by surrounding us with constant noise all the time so that we never stop long enough to do the things I mentioned, we never stop long enough

to read the Word. We never stop long enough to pray. We never stop long enough to pause and reflect and ask hard questions of ourselves.

One of the devil's favorite methods is to distract you. Some would say that that is his primary method. And make no mistake about it sin is creeping at the door fam. And if we are not aware of our patterns and aware of our various temptations we will not resist the devil. He will just keep exploiting that joint. We will continue to fall in the devil's schemes. We will fall in the trap of distraction. So how do we not fall in this trap? Because I'm sure we are all tired of how sin can have such a grip on us right? Well luckily, Peter hit us with the answer at the top, he says being on guard will require us to be sober-minded and watchful. Now here's the thing, when you are sober-minded and watchful, you are being very sensible. You don't lead with emotions. You have an acute perception of or responsiveness toward something and in this case we are talking about the schemes of the devil. Let me hit you with a few examples to flesh this out:

Let's imagine it's payday friday and you are really wanting to get that thing, you know that thing, that you've been wanting for a while. But you are also aware that this has been a season of discontentment for you. Being sober-minded means, I'm aware of what's happening inside of me and I'm going to fight against discontentment and not fall in the trap of distraction. So practically that looks like, not getting on Amazon or your choice of store and having a shopping spree. Because that's exactly what the devil wants for you. He wants you to find happiness in this and not in the Lord.

I'll give you another one that seems to be prevalent in this day in age: Someone on your social feed says something incredibly stupid. Seems to be the trend these days. Well being sober-minded means, not going down the rabbit hole that social media tends to create. It's about not taking the bait and instead actually praying for that person or people as well as yourself in those moments. And if you know them personally, it means talking to them face to face to get a better understanding of what they were saying and being able to calmly explain your side of things.

When you are being sober-minded and watchful you are again aware of your tendencies but you are also aware of your communities tendencies. When we say church is a family, we mean in this instance as well. As a family, we are called to fight this fight together. And what that looks like is being sober-minded and watchful and knowing our brothers and sisters' temptations and sins and being prayed up for them. Asking the Lord, to watch over them. It also looks like us checking in on them and asking hard questions to help them see where they might be off in hopes that they repent and turn towards Jesus. I'll say it this way, have you ever noticed the pattern of a lion on those Planet Earth docs I was talking about earlier? When there is a herd of, enter your choice of prey here, their goal is isolation. They not try'n to mess with everybody. Even when they travel in a pack, their goal is to figure out how to snag one. And if they can do that, they're good. What I'm trying to say is, if you are about to go outside and notice a lion prowling around, is it better to go outside by yourself or is it better to squad up so you know people got your back? So the question for us on this is are we actively praying on behalf of our brothers and sisters when it comes to the advances of the devil? Are we being sober-minded and watchful not just for us but for them as well. Because as Peter says, our brothers and sisters are experiencing these same kinds of sufferings because the devil is seeking whom he may devour.

Next, Peter is going to close us out with these next few verses, verse 10:

[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.

When it comes to suffering in this type of way. Where you are being bombarded by the devil's schemes to sin and not be in tune with the Lord, it can be easy to give up on hope. It can be easy to be like there's no way out. Because the devil doesn't take a day off fam. As the devil himself said to God, I'm walking to and fro. Which basically means, I don't rest. So when the hits keep coming, it makes sense for you to be tired. And Peter knows that, he gets that, so he says, after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace (AMEN?) is coming to end this. He will restore you to who you were meant to be in him.

Peter says this is not going to go on forever. Your story doesn't end here. God has the final say. When I see the political bickering and all the racial injustice that has been in the news this week. I'll be honest, it's really hard to believe that the God of all grace will restore things to as they should be. So hear me say, however you are suffering right now I'm not saying it will be easy to believe in this truth, but if anyone can speak to this truth it's Peter. He understands suffering and you know who else understands suffering? Jesus. Jesus entered the world of suffering to redeem mankind from our sinful tendencies and to snatch us out of the clutches of the devil. And it wasn't a walk in the park. Sure he was God in the flesh but make no mistake about it, his flesh felt all the suffering dealt his way. He humbled himself perfectly on our behalf so that as he became exalted to the right hand of the Father, we would also be exalted. It's through the resurrection that we can point towards this hope of suffering finally ending. It's this type of hope we need to encourage our brothers and sisters who are suffering to help them to see it. Not as a way to throw truth in their face but as a way to gently remind them that one day family, one day, this will all end. I can't wait for that day when we get to heaven and none of this will be a thing.

Let's pray

So that's it church fam, we are officially done with 1 Peter. As exiles, we are called to be image bearers of God to a watching world. And Peter sets us up to be able to succeed as exiles. My hope is that it's been good for you as much as it has been for me. As Peter says, *peace to all of you who are in Christ.*