

Title: The Mighty Hand of God

Text: 1 Peter 5: 1-11

Place: PA

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God hates pride.

Proverbs 6: 16: These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18: An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19: A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

All these other six things begin and are the fruits of pride. It is a disease detrimental to both believer and unbeliever, elder and younger. In the last sentence of 1 Peter 5: 5, we read, **God resisteth the proud,**

Pride is what makes every sinner resist God. It sounds like this:

Isaiah 14: 13: For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

And God resisteth the proud. This is a war you and I will not win. But notice the next phrase in verse 5...**and giveth grace to the humble.**

How can any proud-hearted child of Adam--we who are so full of pride in our sinful flesh--ever hope for grace if God only gives grace to the humble?

1. The grace of God precedes the grace of God. It is the free, unmerited favor of God by which God first breaks the proud heart, humbles and abases us and causes us to receive his grace. It is by the revelation of Christ in the new heart which God gives.

2. But how full of pride the believer yet is in our sinful flesh even after God has given us grace and humbled us. But notice the word here, **God resisteth the proud AND giveth grace to the humble.** James said it this way:

James 4: 5: Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? 6: But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

3. The same grace of God which first resists the proud and humbles us by the revelation of Christ Jesus in our hearts is the same grace of God which continues to resist our pride and give more grace to those he has humbled. What do we say to these things?

1 Peter 5: 6: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

I. TO YOU WHO DO NOT BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

I Peter 5: 6: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

A. You who do not yet believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, has God made you to see what you are?

Are there any here who has the sentence of death in themselves? Are there any here who is pressed beyond measure, above strength, so that you despair even of life? Such a sentence given by the Spirit of God in the heart of the sinner is that you not trust in yourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead! The Spirit of God says, **humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.**

B. What is it to humble yourself under the might hand of God?

1. True humility involves confessing who God is and what you are? *“The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast.”*

God is holy--you are sin. The problem you have is not someone else, it is not your environment, it is what you are in your very breast--your very nature--sin! God is infinitely holy--you are sin. Is there any here like this publican?

2. True humility involves begging God to be merciful to you! The publican said, *“God, be merciful to me a sinner!”*

You and I have no ground to stand upon in ourselves. We must come to God asking God, if he will, to be merciful to me the sinner! O, Lord, withhold from me what I deserve and give me free grace in your Son, Christ Jesus.

3. True humility is to believe on Christ Jesus, that Christ is the only way in which God will receive you.

Christ has made perfect, full, satisfaction to God for the sin of everyone for whom he died--do you believe on him! Do you come to God asking for God to accept you, only in the blood of Jesus Christ?

Confessing who God is--holy; confessing what you are--sin, no good thing in you, no ability in you, no strength in you, a sinner in need of mercy; and casting all your care on God through Christ Jesus the Son of God, trusting that in Christ alone God will exalt you in his time--this is the substance of true humility! The only way up for you, is down in the dust at the feet of Christ. **Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.**

II. TO YOU WHO BLEIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

I Peter 5: 6: Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Peter learned this when he was a lost sinner by God resisting him in his pride and giving Peter grace. Then as a believer, Peter learned this by God resisting him in his pride and giving him more grace. It was by grace upon grace--both taught of the Lord and made real through painful trial.

The night the Lord Jesus was betrayed: Luke 22: 21: But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. 23: And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. 24: And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

What were they desiring? They were striving among themselves, each one giving his reasons to the others why he should be accounted the greatest and why the others ought to submit to him. They were desiring to be lord's over God's heritage. Peter's exhortation to the elders is this:

I Peter 5: 2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3: Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock...5: Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Question: Thinking they had some sufficiency in themselves, striving about which should be accounted greatest, if left in this pride: would they have been able to feed the flock of God? There is no food for sheep from those filled with pride, who think there is some sufficiency in them that they ought to be accounted the greatest. Would they have been able to willingly take the oversight? Willingness comes by the constraint of the love of Christ in the heart, not pride. Would they have been able to do so of a ready mind or would it have been for filthy lucre's sake? Would they have been examples to the flock or would they be like those who exalt themselves and try to be lord's over God's heritage?

If left in this proud state, when confronted with brethren fallen into the same pride that they were now in, they would have ruled over their erring brethren in self-righteous pride--pride ruling pride is the substance of self-righteous religion. But listen to what the Lord says and the spirit in which he deals with them.

Listen to the Lord's word:

Luke 22: 25: And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. 26: But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. 27: For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

The word of the Lord to Peter and the other is this: **Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**

Luke 22: 28: Ye [not one of you over the other--all of you] are they which have continued with me in my temptations. [How had they continued with him? He chose them by grace, he called them by grace, he redeemed them by grace, and he kept them by grace. Where is boasting then? It is excluded.] **29: And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;** [Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, and stop trying to exalt yourselves.] **30: That ye [plural--all of you--indeed, all of God's saints] may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

1 Samuel 2:8: He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.

Revelation 3:21: To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

There are no second class citizens in the kingdom of God. There are no greater and lesser, but only perfect oneness in Christ Jesus the Lord. Verse 4 in our text, applies to each and every believer--whether an elder or a younger--**I Peter 5: 4: And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.**

Matthew records how Peter and the disciples were already being sifted. Notice what pride does--it denies Christ and the very word of God.

Matthew 26: 31: Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32: But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. [this was the word of God, written afore by the prophets, which shall and must be fulfilled and

Christ is saying it shall. But listen to Peter] **33: Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. 34: Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 35: Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.**

Peter exhorts us in verse 8: **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.**

By God's permission, Peter and the others were being sifted by the devil--without them even realizing it, with each thinking they were saying and doing that which was honorable.

O, what a word of caution--**Be sober, be vigilant**

Luke 22: 31: And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. We see God doing just that here. Where is our sufficiency?

Luke 22: 32: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. [Sheep food is given to God's messengers very often through painful experience] 33: And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34: And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. [and it came to pass just as the Lord said it would and when Peter denied the third time] 61: And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62: And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Yet, Christ went to the cross and bore even this very sin of his saints in his own body on the tree: He justified all for whom he died, He obtained eternal redemption for us. Ye who are called by his grace are given this sure word, "Ye are complete in him!"

And "he giveth more grace."

After enduring the cross, when he was risen from the dead, the Lord came to Peter and restored him and said now, "Feed my sheep."

Illustration: Many times I have stood with Peter, boasting of why I should be accounted the greatest. But by God resisting me in my pride and giving more grace, I went out and wept bitterly. But he that careth--he that careth continually for you--that Chief Shepherd, always comes to his sheep. And that still small voice speaks into the heart, saying, "This is the way walk ye in it"

Now what was this food for the sheep, what was this word of strength which the Lord taught Peter to teach you and I hear this day?

1 Peter 5: 6: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 8: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 10: But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. 11: To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.