

# PILGRIM HOME CHURCH

The smaller groups in our church community are inside our homes where we go deeper, build friendships, and walk out the Christian life with each other.

## HOME CHURCH GUIDE

- + “Breaking the Ice” question (group facilitator)
- + **CHECK-INS:** Introduce, check-in
- + **CARE:** Needs in the group
- + **COMPASSION:** What is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbours to join in?
- + **GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS** Church-wide, group-only
- + **DIG IN:** Discuss questions as a group
- + **END AND HOMEWORK:** Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (Wright, Lucado):

1. “Leadership... is a bit like friendship: it’s something that happens best when you’re not thinking about it, but instead about whatever it is you’re actually doing together.” This was one scholar’s take on it. What do you think leadership is?
2. Who are some good leaders you have worked with? What made those people good leaders?
3. Read 1 Peter 5:1-7. As an elder, Peter appeals to them and an apostle. Elder means ‘senior’ in terms of experience in the community, and also age. The two often but not always (see Timothy, for example), go together. What attitudes should be growing within a church elder?
4. What attitudes should be decreasing or not there at all?
5. What does it look like when leaders “lord it over” others? Why do you think leaders might operate this way (intentionally or maybe unintentionally)? Talk about the dangers of pride...
6. The image used here for leadership is “shepherding.” Shepherds think about how they can best look after the sheep. Many call this “servant leadership.” In mind are the needs and potential dangers of those they look after. What leadership/shepherding responsibilities do you have? Or what can you do now to prepare yourself to be the kind of leader Peter commends?
7. Verse 7 talks about anxiety, what cares do you need to regularly cast on the Lord? What does that mean in practice? Are you practicing this?
8. Read 8-14. CS Lewis talks about two extremes with the devil; to not believe at all, or fascination with the devil. They think of little else when it comes to problems, let alone real evil. He advises a path between these two extremes. How do your ideas of a person evil force, the devil, march or not with Peter’s picture (8-9)?
9. Most of 1 Peter speaks of persecution. It’s easy to demonize people who are attacking us. Peter wants us to look behind the person and realize they are captive to fallen powers, ideologies, etc., a real enemy, not the person in front of us. This is VERY hard to do on our strength. Our cultures do not teach us true spiritual warfare, valuing the other, and finding better approaches. What do you think about this?
10. Peter ends his letter with assurance of peace. What is the basis for this?
11. What areas of your life does the WHOLE letter seem to speak into?

**PRAYER HUDDLES** As you pray, consciously throw all your care upon him, because he cares for you (7). Consider any roles in which you exercise leadership, whether at work, church, family, community, and pray you will be a godly shepherd of people entrusted into your care. Pray for strength and patience to undergo suffering for Christ, whatever form it is taking in your life. Pray specifically for fellow Christians around the world who face suffering, knowing that Christ has triumphed over the ultimate enemies of death and the devil.

# DECEMBER 15 ADVENT 3 1 PETER 5

# STAND FIRM

1 Peter 5 (NET Bible)

## Leading and Living in God’s Flock

<sup>5</sup> So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you: <sup>2</sup> Give a shepherd’s care to God’s flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God’s direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly. <sup>3</sup> And do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but be examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away.

<sup>5</sup> In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. <sup>6</sup> And God will exalt you in due time, if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand <sup>7</sup> by casting all your cares on him because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup> Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering. <sup>10</sup> And, after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup> To him belongs the power forever. Amen.

## Final Greetings

<sup>12</sup> Through Silvanus, whom I know to be a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, in order to encourage you and testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. <sup>13</sup> The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, and so does Mark, my son. <sup>14</sup> Greet one another with a loving kiss. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

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## SETTING THE STAGE

## BIG IDEAS

## THROUGH THE PASSAGE

### IV. Consolation for the Suffering Flock 4:12-5:11

#### ~~A. TWO FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT SUFFERING FOR CHRIST 4:12-19~~

#### B. FINAL EXHORTATIONS TO THE COMMUNITY 5:1-11

##### 1. Christ Shepherds His Flock through the Elders 5:1-5

- a. Instructions to the Elders 5:1-4  
(πρεσβύτεροι) elders

Three instructions...

Jesus in Matt 20:25-27, Mark 10:42-45, Luke 22:25-27

- b. Instructions to “the Younger” 5:5  
5b is an exact quotation of Prov. 3:34 in the LXX

##### 2. Accepting Difficult Times, Standing Fast, and Trusting God 5:6-11

- a. Accepting Difficult Times as from God’s Hand 5:6-8a  
1-Be Humbled, 2- Be clear-minded, 3- Take your stand against the devil

*Anxiety about one’s life can choke out God’s word* -Mark 4:19

- b. Standing Fast against the Devil 5:8b-9  
Fierce animal imagery is also used in Daniel and Revelation to symbolize world systems and governments deformed by the powers of darkness and sin.

“When, two hundred years ago, many Western countries took a decisive move towards democracy, this was sometimes (not always) accompanied by a resolute dismissal of God, or public religion, from the civic and social stage. We were the masters now! But the danger with that, as has been apparent throughout the last two centuries, is that once you get rid of God you get rid, too, of the devil; and then you yourself, and your friends, or your party, or your country, take the role of God, while your enemies take the role of the devil. And that leads to disaster” (NT Wright, 96).

#### C. TRUSTING GOD TO PUT THINGS RIGHT 5:10-11

“At the time Peter wrote these words, to all human appearances it must have seemed that to Rome instead belonged the dominion forever. Roman rule had brought the pax Romana (Roman peace) that ended regional wars and unified the empire, generally improving life around the Mediterranean. But the price of that “peace” was the iron-fisted power of Roman might that tolerated not even the suspicion of a threat to its glory. The supernatural nature of the Christian church is perhaps best revealed by the historical fact that until the conversion of Constantine, all of the might of Rome stood against the infant church. Annihilating power stood ready to come against any whose allegiance to the kingdom of God and to his Christ took priority over the kingdom of Caesar” (Jobes, 317).

“The account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, in about AD 155 at Smyrna, says that he was martyred ‘when Statius was proconsul but when Jesus Christ was reigning forever’” (Martyrdom of Polycarp 21).

#### V. THE LETTER CLOSING: FINAL WORDS AND GREETINGS. 5:12-14

- A. Silvanus--Amanuensis, Courier, or Both 5:12a

B. She in Babylon Chosen with You 5:13

C. Stand Fast in the True Grace of God 5:12b