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Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5

Peter exhorted everyone to submit to each other. This is the heart of Christianity.

God designed a most attention grabbing uniform for every Christian. Clothe yourselves **ALL OF YOU** with humility. This is not American culture. Our culture values power and control over humility and service. Our culture is not unlike the Roman/Greek culture of the people to whom Peter wrote. It comes from the word “low”. That is why some translated opt for “lowly of heart”. It is the opposite of haughty or proud.

H. Cremer, “Humility” is the word is used in profane (common) Greek very often in a morally contemptible sense, namely, cringing, servile, common. . . Scripture raises the word to be the designation of the noblest and most necessary of all virtues, which stands in contrast with hubris (‘wanton violence arising from the pride of strength, insolence’) . . . It is the disposition of the man who takes a low estimate of self”

A. T. Robertson, “Humility was not a virtue among the ancients. Indeed, it was ranked with servility. Jesus has made a virtue of this vice”

Jesus modeled and mandated this specific character trait.

*“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and **humble** in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30*

The “humble in heart” uses the same Greek term as in our present passage. Humility does not mean we think low of ourselves but view ourselves in a way that corresponds to reality as God sees it. I don’t need to denigrate some talent or capacity or position I may possess. I need to fully understand that any talent or capacity has been granted by God and is fully at his disposal. I must never assert myself over or compare myself to others in order to feel good about myself or garner attention, power or fame. Lack of humility or the opposite pride, focuses on self-achievement and prominence and self-promotion. Pride generally discounts God from the equation. Whenever we focus on self rather than God, we elevate ourselves above Him. When that happens God must oppose us. The word translated “oppose or resist” is the opposite of “submit.” To submit is to humbly arrange under. To oppose is to arrange against.

God resists or opposes those who discount Him and refuse to submit to Him.

Our pride invites continuous (present tense verb) resistance from God.

On the other hand, humility brings us in contact with a continuous flow of grace from God. In this case, grace describes a divine enabling power to live life in a fallen world. Peter earlier called for us to fix our hope on the continual flow of God's grace to endure trials and persecution that comes from deeper relationship with Christ.

Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace being brought to you in the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:13

Proper humility toward one another begins with a proper humility toward God.

When we fully submit to God's authority we are more likely to submit to those He appoints over us.

4. Everyone humbly submit to God 5:6-7

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7

"Therefore" The therefore connects to statement directly before indicating the God resists the proud but grants grace to the humble. Because God "resists" the proud, make sure you humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. In this case, "humble" seems to be a synonym for "submit". Rather than resist His sovereign hand – submit to it. If we believe that God sometimes ordains the suffering that enters our life (according to God's will) we need to submit to His will and receive His grace. We need to come humbly before His throne of grace where we can receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb 4)

"Mighty Hand" points to God's all-powerful work in the unfolding salvation plan.

This indicates a firm commitment to His work in my life that may include suffering.

Rather than continually trying to make life work according to my agenda or striving, I submit my life into His most capable hand.

Stop striving, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah Psalm 46:10-11

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you" 5:6

The promise here is clear. Just as pride precedes some sort of fall, humility precedes divine exaltation.

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar. Psalm 138:6

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Luke 14:11

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite. Isaiah 57:15

Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. Isaiah 66:1-2

We humbly lower ourselves and He intentionally raises us up. When we try to raise ourselves, He will humble us. The secret to a victorious living lies in the continuous realization that "God is with us"; Emanuel.

Because He is always with us, we can cast any and every care or anxiety on His big shoulders. The word translated “care” or “anxiety” is a most relatable term. The word comes from a term meaning “to divide, or distract”. “a part separated from the whole; (figuratively) worry (anxiety) which divides and fractures a person into parts. Anxiety disunifies personality, robbing a person from God’s continuously granted peace (His gift of “wholeness”).

To understand it better we take some time to explore some other occurrences in the Bible.

And as for what (seed) fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. Luke 8:14

And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. 2 Cor 11:28

Matthew 6 is an antianxiety medication.

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Matthew 6:25
God cares about you more than any of His creation.

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ Matthew 6:31

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. Matthew 6:31-34

But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.” Luke 10:40-42

Seek first the kingdom – God will take care of the rest.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:5-7

What should we do with our divided and troubled heart and mind? Humble ourselves under God’s mighty hand. Cast that anxiety on Him. The word translated cast means to “throw, hurl, quickly fling, scatter. Get rid of it by putting it in God’s Mighty hands. That doesn’t mean we are completely absolved of any responsibility. Because we have deliberately and voluntarily place ourselves under God’s authority and sovereign power, we stand ready to do whatever He asks of us.

What is the motivation? **He cares for you!**

casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

Peter used a present tense verb here indicating that you continuously matter to Him. When the disciples were in the boat tossed by a raging storm they accused Jesus of not caring about them. Mark 4:38 Earlier, Martha accused Jesus about not caring about her stressful situation. Both lost sight of God’s love due to the present traumatic circumstance. Anxiety distracts and divides our heart and mind preventing us from realizing His love.

I am here today to declare on the authority of the word of God that you really do matter to God. God cared enough to send His only son to bear the penalty for our sin.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Galatians 4:4-7

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? Matthew 6:26-27

And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Matthew 6:28-30

Here are some elements involved in harnessing anxiety.

- **Embrace God's "mighty hand"**

Is He strong enough? Is He smart enough?

- **Understand and accept God's love for you**

Does He care enough? Does He care enough about me?

Now that I embrace the truth that He CAN and CARES...

- **Humbly submit to God's authority over your life**

I trust in Your love, wisdom and power and know that I will be exalted in Your timing.

- **Rest in His presence and draw near to Him**

James includes this element in His sequence. James addressed the tendency to stray from God and seek satisfaction outside of intimate relationship with God.

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4:4

Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Therefore submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. James 4:5-10

It is one thing to submit to God's authority, and we certainly should. It is another to embrace His loving presence.

God Can, God Cares, God encircles.

In order to master these elements may require us to actively resist the one causing or at least intensifying our anxiety. Peter addressed that element in the final section of his letter.

What divides you today? What worries you? What stirs anxiety in your heart?

It is time to fling those things into the mighty hand of God who cares about you.

He gave His son. He seeks those who will worship Him in Spirit and truth. He promises to grant grace to those who humble themselves. He promises not only to grant grace here and now but to exalt us.

Sample Casting Prayer

Father, I trust Your Almighty hand. I acknowledge that you alone possess the necessary wisdom to deal with the things that are causing my anxiety. You alone have the strength to bring about Your purposes. I affirm the fact that you really do care about me in spite of my circumstance and Your “apparent” silence. I embrace Your purposes for my life. I humbly abandon my own agenda to You. I confess my pride and submit to Your sovereign work in my life even if it includes suffering or pain. I purpose to wait for Your timing to be raised above this circumstance. I confess trying to make life work without You. Help me to realize how much my attempts to find meaning in life though worldly means hurts You like a cheating spouse. I resist any of Satan’s attempts to draw me away from You and choose this moment to draw near to You and expect You to draw near to me. Since You care so much for me I choose to turn my anxiety, cares and worries to Your capable hands realizing that you resist the proud by grant empowering grace to the humble.

I cast on You all my care about...