

1 Peter 5

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Tape #8228
By Chuck Smith

First Peter chapter five. Peter has been talking about suffering and how that Christ is really our example of suffering. And how that it is possible to suffer, though the suffering is not really deserved or something that is caused by you. Jesus surely, the classic example there. So in chapter five, he now addresses the elders, the word is presbuteros, the overseers. Those men who were in charge of the affairs of the church and it is interesting that this concept of elders is something that was throughout the Old Testament, each city had its elders. Those men who would sit in the gate and who would judge the affairs of the city.

You remember when Moses came to the place where taking the oversight of the people actually became too great a task. From morning till evening, Moses sat in judgment as a long line of people were waiting to interview him and to have him settle the disputes and the affairs. And so finally, the Lord said to Moses, Bring seventy men, elders of Israel, into the tent of congregation. I'll take the Spirit that I put on you, I'll put on them (Exodus 18:13-26).

So the idea of the elders, the overseers, the older men to govern and to guide the affairs was something that was predominant in the Old Testament and also in the New Testament. Everywhere Paul went, he established elders to oversee the churches and the various, in every city there were elders who were overseeing the church.

When we get to heaven, John wrote about it in Revelation chapter four, "Around the throne of God there are twenty-four lesser thrones, upon which sit the twenty-four elders" (Revelation 4:4). So we'll find out more about them when we get to heaven. We know that they sort of were giving John a guided tour or giving John explanations of the things that were going on in the heavenly scene. And so they are the overseers, those men who were in charge.

The elders which are among you I exhort, who also is an elder (5:1),

Notice he doesn't say Pope. He says I'm just an elder. He doesn't put himself on an elevated position above the others. I'm one of the overseers. And that's all the he, he doesn't try to exalt himself or whatever. But I'm just exhorting you because I also am an elder.

and I'm a witness of the sufferings of Christ (5:1),

Peter, when Jesus was arrested, followed afar off through the crowd to the court of Caiaphas. He saw Jesus as He was being buffeted, as He was being mocked, and he saw the suffering of the Lord. We are told that many of the disciples stood afar off when Jesus was crucified and no doubt Peter was one of those who was standing afar off watching the crucifixion of Jesus. So he says that he was a witness of the sufferings of Christ,

and he was also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed (5:1):

There on the Mount of Transfiguration when Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John, His raiment began to shine like the sun and Peter saw Him. It was Peter who said, Oh Lord, it's good for us to be here. Let's build three tabernacles, one for You, one for Elijah, one for Moses. And he saw the transfiguration of Jesus. He'll speak about that again in the second letter. But he was a witness of the glory, he's a partaker, he said, of the glory that shall be revealed. The glory in which they saw Jesus was His pre-incarnate glory and the glory that we shall see Him in when we get to heaven. Jesus prayed, "Glorify me

with the glory that I had with You before the world ever was” (John 17:5). And so we will see Him in His glory. Peter had a little foretaste there on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Now to the elders, what is his exhortation? Number one,

Feed the flock of God which is among you (5:2),

You remember in John chapter twenty-one that after His resurrection Jesus showed Himself unto His disciples there at the Sea of Galilee. Peter was there, they were waiting for Jesus. He had told them to go up to the Galilee, He would meet them there. One more time back around the Sea of Galilee where they spent most of their time together. And as they were waiting for Jesus and He didn’t show up when they were expecting Him, Peter said, I’m going fishing. You remember the others said, We’ll go with you. And they went out and they fished all night but caught nothing. In the morning, Jesus stood on the shore but they didn’t know or recognize that it was Jesus, but He called out to them across the water, Catch anything? They responded, No. He said, Cast your nets on the other side. That must have sort of hit a familiar note in their minds because He had told them that on an earlier occasion when He first called them to leave their nets and follow Him.

So they cast their nets on the other side, immediately they were filled with great fish insomuch that they had difficulty pulling the net into the little ship. And when they saw that they could not pull in the nets because of the multitude of fish, John said, Peter, it’s the Lord! And you remember Peter dove in, grabbed his fisher’s coat, threw it around him, dove in and swam ashore while the rest of the disciples came rowing in a little boat pulling the net with them.

They found that Jesus already had breakfast ready, fish there on the coals. And then He said to them, Come and eat. And turning to Peter, He said, Peter, do you love me more than these? Peter said, Yes, Lord, You know I love You. He said, Feed my sheep, my little lambs. The second time Jesus said, Peter, do you love me more than these? And he said, Yes Lord, I do. He said, Tend or shepherd over my sheep. Third time He said, Peter, do you love me more than these? And again Peter said, Lord, You know all things. And Peter was hurt that the third time Jesus would say, Do you love me? And he said, Lord, You know all things, You know I do love You. And He said, Feed my sheep (John 21:1-17).

Now Peter is passing on that same exhortation.

In John there’s a play on words that comes out in the Greek language, it doesn’t come out in the English. The two words for love are being employed here. One is the *Phileo*, which is a love that we experience on an emotional level. It’s the *phileo adelphos*, is the love of the brothers. Philadelphia, love of brothers--*phileo adelphos*. And it is sort of a brotherly love or a familial love. But there is another Greek word for love and that is the *agape*, and that is fervent love. Complete love. Jesus employed the word *agape* which is that fervent love. Peter, do you have a fervent love for me? Peter’s response is, Lord, You know that I am Your friend, basically, *phileo*, I have this friendly love for You. Jesus again said, Peter, do you *agape*? Do you love me with this fervent love? And again, Peter said, Lord, You know I’m Your friend. I have this affection. The third time, Jesus used Peter’s word, He came down to Peter’s level. And He said, Peter, do you have an affection for me? Are you really my friend? And that’s what crushed Peter. That he forced the Lord down to his level.

Unfortunately we oftentimes do that ourselves. The Lord wants to raise us to His level but many times we force Him to come down to our level. The question is, Do you love me supremely? Do you love me more than anything else? And it was, Lovest thou me more than these? Whatever the these might have been—the other disciples or the full net of fish. Do you love me supremely? And so often we’re saying, Lord, You know I’m with You, I’m on Your side. And sometimes we find it difficult to rise to the level that He’s

wanting to bring us to. That is, of complete love, total abandonment to Him. Peter couldn't rise to that at that time. But Jesus commissioned Peter and this to me is good.

You see, Peter had denied the Lord. He had failed, utterly failed the test. When it came down to the actual test, Peter failed. Just like Jesus knew he would. Jesus had predicted it. Peter argued with Jesus, denying that he would fail Him but Jesus assured him, You will! And thus though he had denied his Lord, even taking an oath that he didn't know Him, he lied under oath, Jesus was forgiving and willing to restore him. Peter, feed my sheep. Re-commissioned him.

Sometimes after our failures, we feel, I'm not deserving, I'm not worthy. Of course you're not. We never were. It's the grace of God that causes Him to use any of us. But so often we seek to disqualify ourselves because of our sense of failure. But Jesus is sort of re-commissioning him. You see, Jesus had said to him in the beginning that he should leave his nets and, "Follow me and, He said, I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). And now He is saying, Peter, I want you to feed My sheep. Tend, watch over My flock. And so Peter is passing on the same exhortation to the elders. "Feed the flock of God which is among you,"

taking the oversight (5:2)

That would be the tending, tending of the flock. The oversight of the flock.

It's not to be by constraint (5:2),

The Lord doesn't want anybody to serve Him out of a sense of obligation or pressure. Not by constraint. Alright, okay, I'll do it if You insist, kind of a thing. The Lord doesn't want that. The Bible tells us that the Lord loves a cheerful giver. And whatever you give to the Lord, of service, of energy or whatever, the Lord wants you to do it cheerfully. Your service to the Lord should always be cheerful service, never by constraint

but willingly (5:2);

Eager heart. Excited that I have the opportunity to feed the flock of God! To oversee them!

It should never be for filthy lucre (5:2),

That is, money should never be an issue.

I got a letter the other day. Somebody set me up, I don't know who it was, which of you I'm wondering. But there is this fellow, they call him Brother Ike. He's one of the first of the prosperity guys. Someone wrote him and told him that we would be interested in having him come and speak here at Calvary Chapel. So he wrote me a letter. Actually his secretary called me and he wrote me a letter saying how happy he would be to come and address my congregation. He would be very happy to come and fleece the flock. But he required a first class ticket on the airplane for himself and two coach class for his assistants, he wanted to be put up in a suite, \$10,000 honorarium and he would be glad to come, talk to you people. Which one of you did that? Shame on you.

But Peter said, "Not for filthy lucre." I have great difficulty on those who demand a high payment for their services to the Lord. This is one of the curses of the musicians, I feel. The music groups used to just come and love to just serve the Lord and play for the opportunity of just playing for God's people. But they've become very professional now and it costs three thousand, four thousand dollars a night to have some of these musicians, Gospel musicians perform. That's what it is, unfortunately, it's a performance. It's

no longer a ministry. And when you start demanding money to come, that's not a ministry any longer and Peter said we shouldn't do it for filthy lucre's sake. In other words, don't serve the Lord for filthy lucre's sake. Don't do it for money.

but of a ready mind (5:2);

An eager mind.

Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock (5:3).

Jesus, the night that He was betrayed, after the supper with His disciples He took a towel and girded Himself. He went around and He washed their feet taking really the position of a servant. And after He had washed their feet, He said, Do you see what I have done? And they said, Yes, Lord. He said, You call me Lord and that is correct, I am. But if I being your Lord wash your feet, so you ought to wash one another's feet (John 13:12-16). Not in a literal sense but in the sense of taking the place of servanthood. Jesus was taking the place of a servant. And this is what He had told His disciples, He said, Among the Gentiles those that rule, love to exercise lordship over the people. And if you go to city council meetings and all, you'll see exactly what He was talking about. But He said, It shall not be so among you. That shouldn't happen in the church. That happens in the world. In the world those that have the position of rule love to lord over people. It shall not be so, He said, among you. "Whoever would be chief among you, let him be the servant of all" (Mark 10:44). So no doubt, Peter is thinking of these words of Jesus and thinking of the example that Jesus set. "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being an example unto the flock."

Paul wrote to Timothy to be an example of the believer. And so as ministers, we're to set the example of serving you. Being a servant to you. We are not to try to lord over you because God happens to put us in the position of teaching the word. But it puts me in a position of being a servant, here to serve people in their needs.

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear (5:4),

I love that. When our Lord shall come,

we will receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (5:4).

In Psalm 22, you have the suffering Shepherd, the One who gave His life for the sheep. The psalm that speaks of the crucifixion of Jesus. In Psalm 23, you have the good Shepherd, and Jesus said, I am the good Shepherd. In Psalm 24, you have the coming King of glory. "When the chief Shepherd shall appear." So you have the returning King of glory. Who is the King of glory? The Lord mighty in battle. And so Psalm 22, 23 and 24 are really of Jesus as the Shepherd. The Shepherd who is willing to hazard and lay down His life for the sheep. The good Shepherd in 23 and coming chief Shepherd in 24. "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, you will receive the crown of glory."

Paul writing to Timothy spoke about the crown of righteousness. "Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, our righteous judge, shall give" (2 Timothy 4:8). Peter speaks here of a crown of glory and in Revelation chapter two as Jesus is addressing the church of Smyrna, He speaks of the crown of life. And so the various crowns: crown of glory, crown of life, crown of righteousness. "Crown of glory that fades not away." You see, in the Olympics, the winners were crowned with a laurel wreath. Just twigs with the leaves of a laurel tree that were sort of woven together to make a crown. So you train all year. You go through a strict regimen of discipline, getting your body prepared so that you run the race. And you come across the finish line and you come up to the judges and they take and put this laurel wreath on your

head. Oh yes, it was worth it. But that fades away. How quickly the leaves dry up. And the laurel wreath fades away, but the crown that we receive, the crown of glory doesn't fade away.

As the elders, they were to be examples in serving and in submitting.

But likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (5:5).

There is no place in the body of Christ for the exalting of any man. There is only One who is to be exalted in the church. And that's Jesus Christ. This business of exalting people is anti-scriptural. And so Peter is saying "we are to submit to each other. Be subject one to another and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud." One of the seven things that God hates.

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

There's an interesting passage in the Psalms that says that "promotion doesn't come from the east, or the west. But promotion comes from the Lord" (Psalm 75:6,7). It's interesting how that man seeks to promote himself. Even they hire promotional experts, public relations people to promote themselves or their ministries. But the Bible says, "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, He will exalt you in due time."

And then that beautiful verse,

Casting all of your cares upon him; for he cares for you (5:7).

Life is filled with care. About the only ones, I guess, that don't have too many cares are the little children who don't understand life yet. But from the moment that you really begin to be sort of socially conscious, the cares begin.

Now I have in my estimation some of the prettiest granddaughters in the world. But it's amazing how concerned they are with their looks. They have such care over how they look and it's sort of sad because they have such natural beauty. It's sort of sad to sort of mess it up. To mess with what God has done and try to improve. I found a long time ago, you really can't improve on what God did. In our lives, one of the problems of the Christian experience is we're always trying to improve on our righteousness. But God has accounted me righteous. My righteousness is something God has done, not me. It is the righteousness which is through faith in Jesus Christ. And it's complete, it's perfect.

And yet how many times we're messing around and trying to dress it up. Trying to improve on the righteousness wherein I stand in Jesus Christ. The cares, as we begin to be concerned of whether or not we're accepted. We're concerned at the pressures of wearing the right clothes, having the right tennis shoes. A while back, one of my grandsons was talking about he needed some tennis shoes. I said, Let's go to Target. He said, Grandpa! What's wrong with Target tennis shoes? I used to get my tennis shoes out of the Sears catalog. You stand on a piece of paper and trace your foot and then they had the old Cat's Paw half-soles. When you wore the hole through sole of the thing. Man, now, if you don't have the right jeans, if you don't have the right tennis shoes, you're just out, man. But what does it do? It puts kids under pressure. And already they begin to have care over things that are not really important. And then that just follows on through into adulthood.

But then there are cares that seem to be more legitimate. At least they're on things that are more important. The mother's care for the family to make sure that the meals are there, to make sure that the clothes are clean, to make sure that the kids are up and off to school on time and all of the cares that the

housewife and mother has to take care of. The cares that the father has of making sure the bills are paid and the cares of performance on the job. But the Lord says to “cast all of our cares upon Him.”

He said, “Don’t take anxious thought for tomorrow, what you’re going to eat, what you’re going to drink, what you’re going to wear. Don’t be worried, don’t be concerned about these things. For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of these things. And after all of these things do the heathen worry. But you, if you’ll just seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all of these things will be added to you” (Matthew 6:31-33).

So the cares, the normal cares. The pressures that people so often feel. Peter’s saying, Just cast your cares on Him. Those things that you’re worried about. Cast it on Him.

He had told us in the previous chapter, “If we suffer according to the will of God, then we need to commit the keeping of our souls unto Him as unto a faithful Creator” (1 Peter 4:19). If I am going through a suffering and I’m worried, I’m concerned, there’s heavy pressures on me, I’m to commit it to Him. He’s saying the same thing. Cast your care on Him. Commit yourself to God. Lord, my life is Yours. My life is in Your hands. And I commit this situation to You, Lord. I am trusting You to work out Your perfect will in this. I’m not going to worry about it. I’m not going to lose sleep over it. Lord, it’s in Your hands. And so I cast my cares upon Him knowing that He cares for me.

One of the greatest truths that the Bible teaches is God cares for you. He knows all about you. He even knows the number of the hairs on your head, Jesus said. I’ve helped Him out. It’s just He has to make a daily count with me. But your Father knows all about you. As David said, “Thou hast searched me, and known me. You know my downsittings, my uprisings, you understand my thoughts afar off. Such knowledge is too great for me; I cannot attain it” (Psalm 139:1,2,6). David is saying, God, you know me better than I know myself. And that’s true of each of you. God knows you better than you know yourself. And God knew the needs that you have today. He knew them before you were ever born. And God knows the needs that you’re going to have five years from now or six years from now. He knows exactly what you’ll be going through. And the beautiful thing is that He is preparing you now for what’s going to happen next year or next month or next week.

God said to the children of Israel after their forty years of wandering in the wilderness, He said, “I led you through the wilderness. I went before you and prepared the place for you to pitch your tent” (Exodus 23:20). I love that! What does it mean? It means you never arrive at any place in life but what God hasn’t preceded you to that place and prepared that place for you. So He went ahead of them. Prepared the places. They’ll be here in a month so let’s prepare this good place for them to pitch their tents. We’ll prepare this here for them to pitch their tents. And so God goes before us preparing the places where we’re going to pitch our tents. We don’t even know where it is but He does and He’s gone ahead to prepare it.

He cares for you. He loves you. He’s concerned with your welfare. And thus, you can trust Him. And you can cast your care on Him with confidence because He cares for you, He’s going to do what’s best. What He knows to be best.

Oftentimes at the moment I have the feeling, No, that isn’t the best! That’s not good! And that’s because I don’t have all the facts. I’m not playing with a full deck. But God knows all of the things and because He knows all of the facts, He does what is best in the long term. We foolishly would opt for short-term benefits though there may be long-term problems. But God looks at the long-term and He maybe will cut an area of the short-term that we feel, Oh, no, Lord, why did you do that? He’s looking at the long-term effects.

And so it is wise, it is important to cast your cares on Him, to commit your ways and the keeping of the issues unto Him as a faithful Creator who cares for you.

Then he exhorts them to,

Be sober, and to be vigilant (5:8);

Keep your mind sharp and clear. Don't allow your mind to be fuzzied. Be sober and be vigilant. Why?

because your adversary the devil (5:8),

Never, ever think that the devil is a friend. He is your adversary. He is opposed to you. And he is going about, Peter says,

as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (5:8):

To Eve he came as a subtle serpent deceiving. And Paul tells us that he can come as an angel of light. He can wear religious garb. He can use religious talk in order to deceive. Here Peter says he can also "come as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." So it's important that we keep our minds alert and sharp and we be vigilant because we have an adversary who is out to destroy us if he possibly could. And if not to destroy us, to make our life as miserable as possible. That's why it's good to know that we can cast all of our cares upon the Lord because He cares for us.

Whom [talking about the devil] resist [Peter says] steadfast in the faith (5:9),

James tells us to "resist the devil, and he will flee from us. Draw nigh to God, and He'll draw near to you" (James 4:7,8). You're not to cave in when Satan comes around. You're not to just say, Oh no, and just cave in. You're to stand up to him! You can't stand up against him in your own strength, you have to have the strength of the Lord. But thank God, "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). And so you're not to just cave in or give in to the devil but resist him. He may come as a roaring lion, don't go cowering off some place when he roars. Stand up and resist him! You don't have to cave in to the temptations! You don't have to give in, but you can resist. There is that scripture where the apostle was sort of chiding the people. He said, You have not yet resisted unto blood and striving against sin. Show me your scars. And the problem with so many is that they don't put up resistance. When the temptation comes, they just sort of yield rather than standing and resisting the devil. "Resist steadfast in the faith,"

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world (5:9).

All of the brethren, all of us are facing the same kinds of temptations. We all of us have a problem with the world and with the flesh and with the devil! No one is immune from temptation! Many times people are tempted in different areas.

It is sort of disgusting to me that there are people who want special exemptions for their case, especially the homosexual community. They want a special kind of indulgence or dispensation to be given to them because I'm attracted to men, I'm not attracted to women. Does that mean that because a man is attracted to raping women that we ought to give him special dispensation because he's just not satisfied with a normal relationship. He wants to forcibly rape a woman. So surely he ought to form some kind of a lobbying group and get laws that will protect him.

I heard a tape of Ted Bundy, one that he made with a girl before he murdered her. And in this tape Ted Bundy is talking to her and she said, Why are we going out here? He said, I want to get you far enough away from people so that when I rape you and murder you, no one will hear you scream. She said, What are you talking about? He said, I intend to murder and rape you. And she said, Oh God, you can't be serious. He said, Of course I'm serious. She said, That isn't right. He said, What's wrong with it? He said, That's the

way I am. That's where I get my thrills. He said, I think you're the eighty-ninth person. And she tried to talk him out of it and finally the tape ends with her screaming and he evidently turns the tape off. But he said, Why shouldn't I be able to do what thrills me? He said, Actually, you're making a wonderful sacrifice because you're going to bring great thrill to me as I rape you and kill you. And he said, I learned in Harvard that if it's right in your own eyes, then it's right. And this kind of logic, that this was the way I was created, this is something that is genetic or whatever. It doesn't wash! And people are trying to get excuses because I have these feelings or whatever.

God's word doesn't change! What God says is sin, is sin! What God says is wrong, is wrong! And this business of relativism is the thing that he was making his whole argument on relativism and saying that what he was doing was right.

So all of us experience temptation. Satan comes to all of us in one form or another. Now I have a friend that used to be a hairdresser. And he said, If you see a man who is a hairdresser you know one of two things: he either loves men or he loves women. He said I love women. So he was a hairdresser. But you have a problem one way or another. We all have problems. And Satan is going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Studying you. Scrutinizing you to determine where to attack. He doesn't attack us all in the same way. But all who will live godly in Christ Jesus are going to have problems. Problems with our flesh one way or another. So we must all resist the temptations. "Resist the devil, stedfast in the faith."

But the God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory (5:10)

Your destiny. "The God of all grace who's called you to eternal glory,"

by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you complete, established, strengthened, and settled in your faith (5:10).

This is what suffering does and this is the purpose for suffering. It does develop maturity. It develops character. It causes you to become established. You are strengthened through the testings. A little tree that is never subjected to the wind, the roots won't go deep. It is the constant blowing of the wind that causes the roots to go down so that when the real storm comes, the tree stands. And so God puts us through these experiences of testing, trial, suffering, that our roots might go deep in Him. That I might be steadfast when the storm comes. Established, strengthened and settled. The issue is settled.

Daniel purposed in his heart that he wouldn't defile his body. You've got to settle issues before you face the temptation. In your heart you've got to determine, I'm going to live for Jesus Christ! I'm not going to defile my body. I'm going to keep my body pure for His sake and for His glory. You've got to settle that in your mind.

He closes with a benediction,

To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (5:11).

He has called you to His eternal glory. "To Him be glory and dominion, the reign, for ever and ever." The kingdom of the worlds will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Messiah and He shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.

By Silvanus (5:12)

The word Silvanus is also Silas, it's the same name. It was the Silas that was with Paul on the second missionary journey. Silas was sent by the church in Jerusalem in the fifteenth chapter of Acts to carry the

letter to the church in Antioch of the council of Jerusalem, the decision that was made concerning the Gentile believers and their relationship to the law. He stayed at Antioch and was a prophet. In the second missionary journey when Paul and Barnabas split over the desire of Barnabas to take his nephew Mark, and Barnabas took off with Mark, headed for Cyprus and Paul took Silas and they headed for Asia Minor. The same Silas that was imprisoned with Paul in Philippi when they were singing together at midnight in the stocks, in the inner prison and the earthquake released the gates and the stocks; and the Philippian jailer came in, ready to commit suicide, it was Silas that was with Paul there in Philippi.

Peter calls him,

a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein you stand (5:12).

That is, Silas wrote the letter. It was dictated by Peter and perhaps Peter dictated word for word but more apt that Peter gave Silas the thought and Silas put them down because the Greek here in First Peter is some of the most classic of the Greek in the New Testament. Now Peter was just a fisherman at the Sea of Galilee and he probably wasn't a Greek scholar of sorts. But the Greek language in First Peter is really very classic, outstanding and thus, Silas probably wrote the ideas and the thoughts of Peter here in this letter.

The church that is at Babylon (5:13),

There are those who take this as literal Babylon, that Peter was in Babylon. Other scholars believe that he was referring to Rome, which in the book of Revelation was also referred to as Babylon. It is my opinion that it was probably Rome. There is nothing that we know of that would indicate that Peter was ever in Babylon, the place there in Euphrates, but strong evidence that Peter was in Rome. And so it is generally accepted that he is referring to Babylon of Rome, the church that is in Babylon. Paul wrote to the church of Rome.

elected together with you (5:13),

We've all been elected by God and so it's wonderful to realize the universality of the church that there are believers all over the world who have the same faith, the same Lord, the same hope, the same destiny as we have. And when we get to heaven, it's going to be beautiful to see the saints of God from all over the world. Elected just as we have been elected to serve the Lord.

and also so doth Marcus my son (5:13).

He is probably referring to John Mark and as Paul called Timothy and Titus his sons, he's referring to a son in the faith. Early church fathers, Papius and Irenaeus, both make mention of the fact that Mark was a companion with Peter and that Mark's gospel was basically his writing down the things that he heard Peter say about Jesus. The things that Jesus said and the events of the life of Jesus. Mark was not an eyewitness. He was just a small boy. There is only one part of the book of Mark that they feel is sort of an eyewitness and that is when Jesus was arrested in the garden. Mark tells us that there was a young boy, about twelve years old, and the soldiers grabbed him and he wriggled free, left his coat in the soldier's hand and ran naked from the garden. They feel that that is the only part of the story that Mark actually was a participant in. But he traveled with Peter, heard Peter tell over and over again around the country of the things that Jesus said, the things that Jesus did, and finally wrote them down. So he is with Peter there in Rome in Babylon, and Peter joins him in the closing remarks.

Greet one another with a kiss of love (5:14).

This was a common practice in the early church. But there are some, you go to Greece and the brothers will come up and they'll kiss you on one cheek and on the other cheek and it's sort of a cultural thing. And it's sort of nice. In the early church, of course, they kissed everybody. But that didn't work out too well so that, that practice dropped off rather rapidly.

Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen (5:14).

Let me just say outside of Christ Jesus, there is no peace. The Bible says there is no rest, saith the Lord, for the wicked. But to those that are in Christ Jesus, what glorious peace we have! For Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27). And so may the peace of Christ, Paul said, that passes human understanding, keep your heart and your mind in the things of Christ. So peace to all.

Father, we thank You again for this epistle of Peter so filled with exhortation, practical advice, Godly wisdom. And now Lord, help us that we will be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves. Having looked into the mirror and seeing, Lord, the flaws where we fall short, may we not just walk away and forget what we saw. But Lord, those areas of imperfection, help us, Lord, to turn them over to You. That You might work Your work in us that we might become mature, established, strengthened in the things of the Lord. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.