

# Alert

Long Beach Alliance Church • July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.**

**~1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:6-7 (NASB)**

## 1) Suffering Begins With The Heads Of The Family

- A) As Peter begins to describe the “fiery ordeal” (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:12) coming against the followers of Christ in Asia Minor, you can feel him shift into a compassionate tone for his “beloved” friends in the church (4:12).
- B) Peter encourages followers of Christ to expect suffering, noting that judgment from God begins with the church family (4:17), and is an indicator of the “end of all things” (4:7) which will bring God’s revealed glory (5:1).
- C) Following this, Peter singles out the elders of the local church as targets for persecution (5:1) who ought to both expect Christlike suffering, and stand strong and true to their calling as leading examples in the church (5:1-3).
- D) As elders faithfully undershepherd as agents of the Chief Shepherd (5:4), they can anticipate partaking in Christ’s unfading glory, pictured like an athletic crown, a reward given to athletes for exceptional performance.

## 2) Be On The Alert!

- A) During times of suffering, persecution, and difficulty (Peter’s context) trusting and following leaders can be very difficult. It is tempting to criticize and subtly withdraw loyalty from leadership, choosing only to follow when in agreement with elder leadership.
- B) Peter especially cautions the up-and-coming-leaders (young men) of the church to humbly submit to elder leadership (5:5), setting a strong tone of humble followership in the church family.
- C) As a word of encouragement, all followers of Christ are called to humbly submit to God’s “mighty hand” (5:6), trusting in God’s compassion for His people (5:7), and living in the hope of God’s victory, which will exalt His people.
- D) Of course, living for Christ in a hostile world can produce many anxieties! Followers of Christ are called to “throw” (5:7) these worries and stresses onto Jesus! Living for Christ means having a self-forgetfulness rooted in trusting God regardless of circumstances.
- E) Be Soberminded! Be Alert! The devil is hunting for you (5:8), seeking to devour your spirit through persecution. You are not alone, and the Lord has all these things in His mighty hand! The battle has already been won (5:9-10).
- F) God’s promise to you as you endure hardship and suffer as a Christian is to heal, support, strengthen, and provide a secure future for you by His grace (5:10-12).
- G) Stand firm in God’s grace (5:12), greet each other warmly and with love, and have peace in Christ (5:13-14). Circumstances are temporary, Christ is forever and ever!