

Scripture: I Peter 5:5-11.....1

Theme: The nature of Christian
Humility

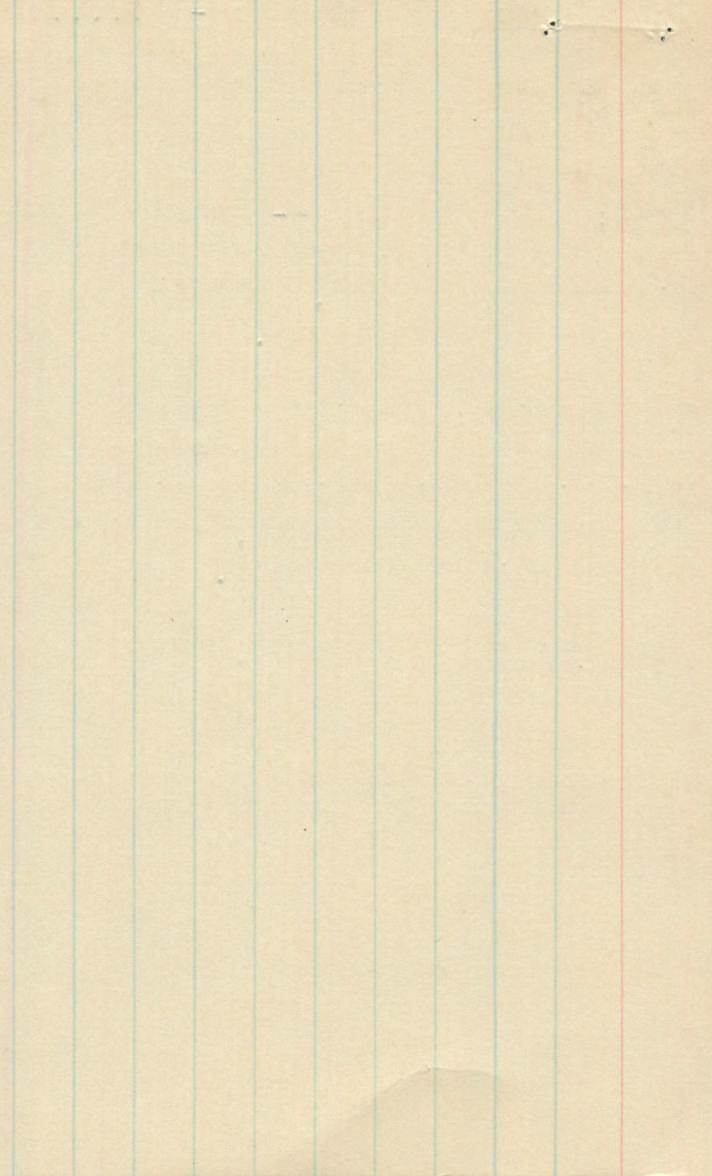
Text: I Peter 5:6 --"Humble
yourselves therefore under the
mighty hand of God, that in due
time he may exalt you."

Proposition: Humility toward
others and God is a necessary
Christian trait which requires
alertness and strength, and which
God bountifully rewards.

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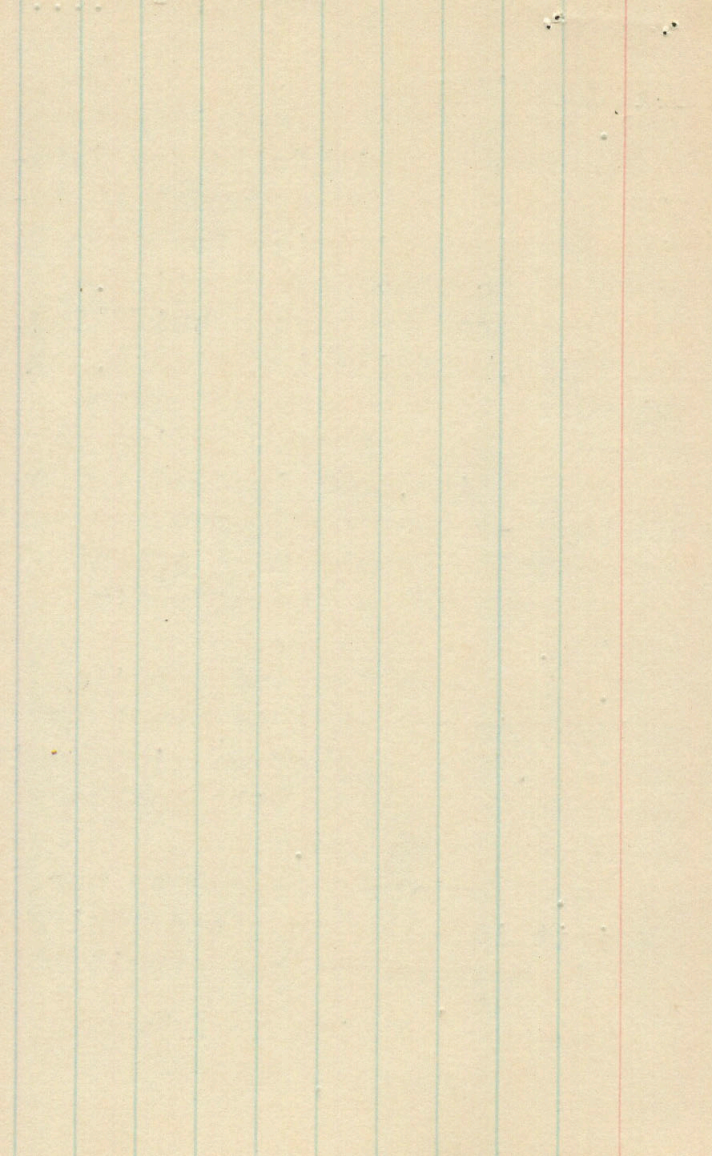
Introduction:

1. Armed forces magazine story of one German faithfully and fanatically holding up movement of entire American division for over 24 hours by accuracy of shooting. When captured he became sniffling, groveling, servile individual, so spineless that he was not even suspected by captors of being source of deadly fire, but instead a proud and tough-appearing German sergeant who actually fought back not at all was thought to be the effective soldier.

2. The groveling and servile attitude is not what is meant by humility, but many of us mistake it for that and say we will humble ourselves to no one.

a. "Invictus" expresses our spirit in a way we often admire:

"It matters not how strait the
gate,
How charged with punishments
the scroll,



I am the master of my fate:

I am the captain of my soul."

3. Groveling servility, like that of the captured German soldier springs from the tensions caused by fear, pride, or other deep emotion; but true humility comes from a relaxed and friendly state of being, the definition of "humility" emphasizing:

a. "humble in spirit"

b. "freedom from pride and arrogance"

c. "submission or humble courtesy"

4. The nature of Christian humility is the theme of the Scripture, and is of challenging interest to us living in a highly competitive age. Just what is the humility that a present-day Christian should practice?

I. Background of the Scripture.

1. Ist. Peter originally written to hearten and encourage Christians

in time of special affliction.

2. Has become one of world's greatest expressions of the glory of fortitude in enduring hardships of life.

3. Best understood as a revelation of a great historical situation in which the purer and higher triumphed over the baser and worse

4. "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility" (v.5) translated:

a. Weymouth: "gird yourselves with humility."

b. Moffatt: "you must put on the apron of humility"

c. King James and Goodspeed use "clothing with humility," similar to RSV.

d. Jesus girded himself with a towel at supper. It was a symbol of humility, for to carry a towel was a servant's task.

e. Peter girded himself with humility after the return from his denial, and in our Scrip.

urges his readers likewise to gird themselves with humility and serve one another.

f f. The concept of humility given in Scrip. is good for us today, worthy of more study.

II. A Christian must be humble toward others (v.5).

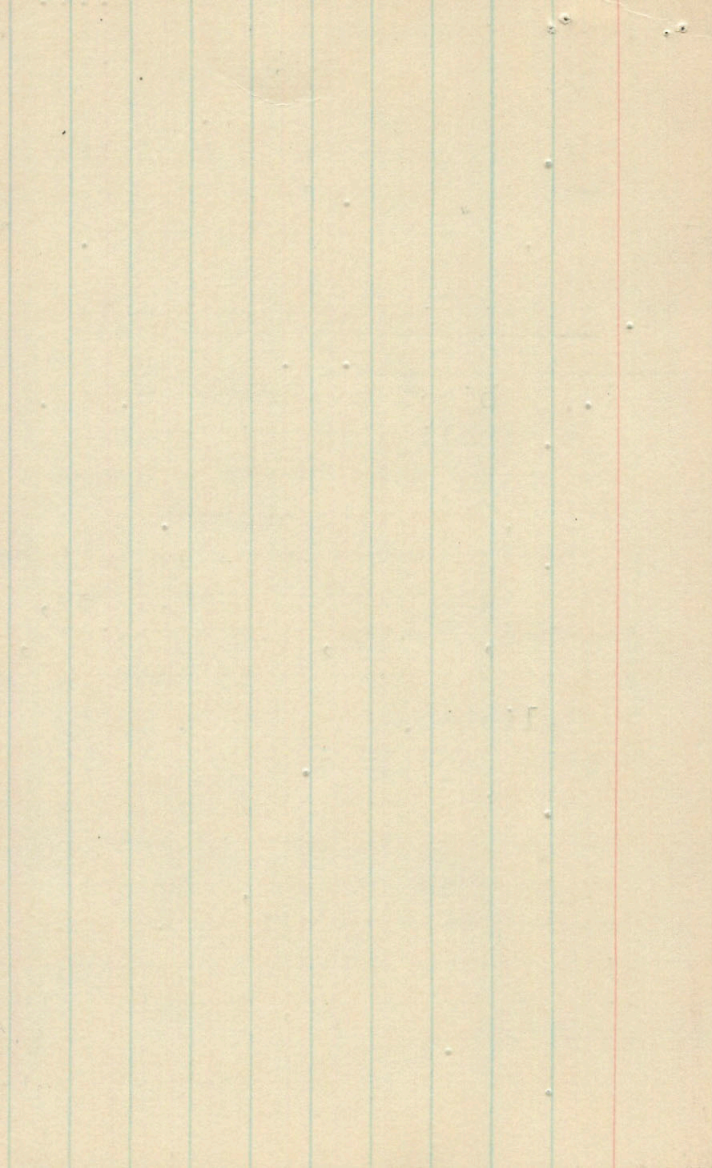
1. "Subject to elders"(v.5a).

a. Applied to spiritual leaders chosen from the congregation, in early church.

b. In common ever-day matters would apply to employer, boss, teacher, doctor, law officials, and others over us to whom we must listen, to whom we must humble ourselves.

c. Since one need not cheapen self to humble self in proper way to such persons, why not do similarly to all we contact? Listen carefully and courteously help where we can, "humble self" to others.

d. Jesus taught such conduct:



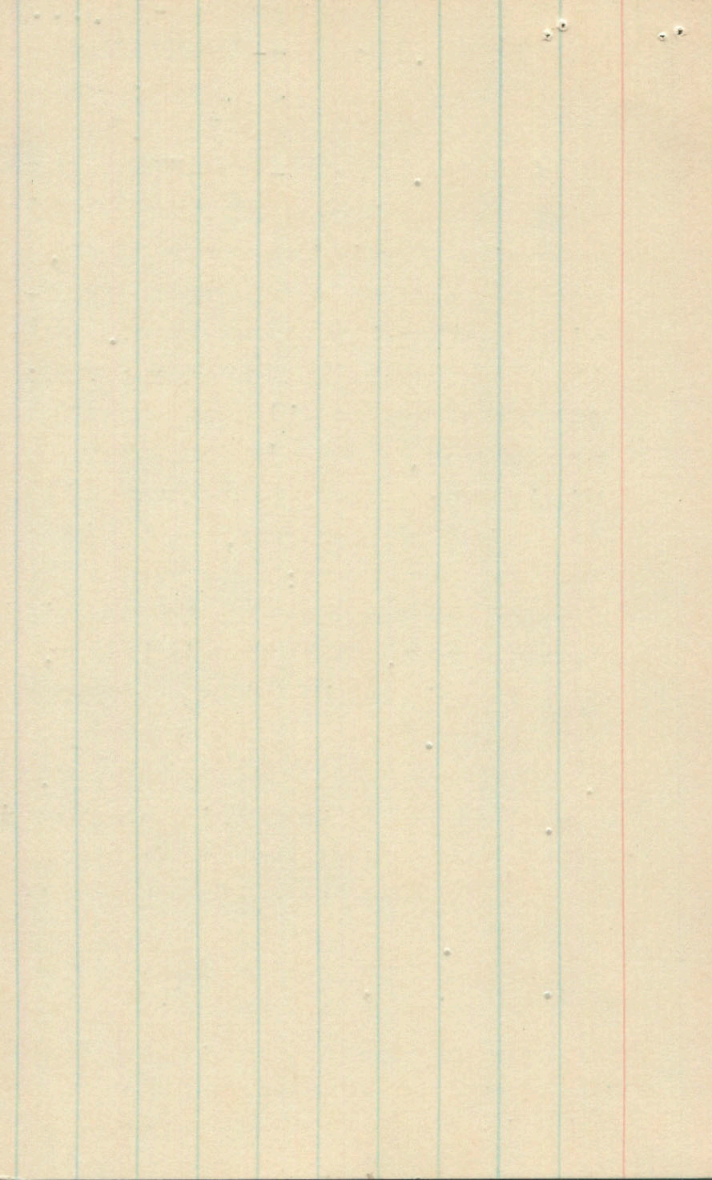
(1) Mt.19:30 --"Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

(2) Mt. 20:25-28--"You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

2. "God opposes the proud" (v.5)

a. Though this is in quotes & in RSV, can find no exact or very close wording elsewhere in the Bible.

b. However, the majority of the references in the Bible to the word "proud" use it to throw discredit upon proud people and to indicate God's opposition to



them. Typical are:.....

(1) From Old Testament: --
Prov.16:5--"Everyone that is
proud in heart is an abomina-
tion to the Lord."

(2) From N.T.--Romans 1:30,
lists the proud with other
evil--"Backbiters, haters of
God, spiteful, proud, boast-
ers, inventors of evil things,
disobedient to parents."

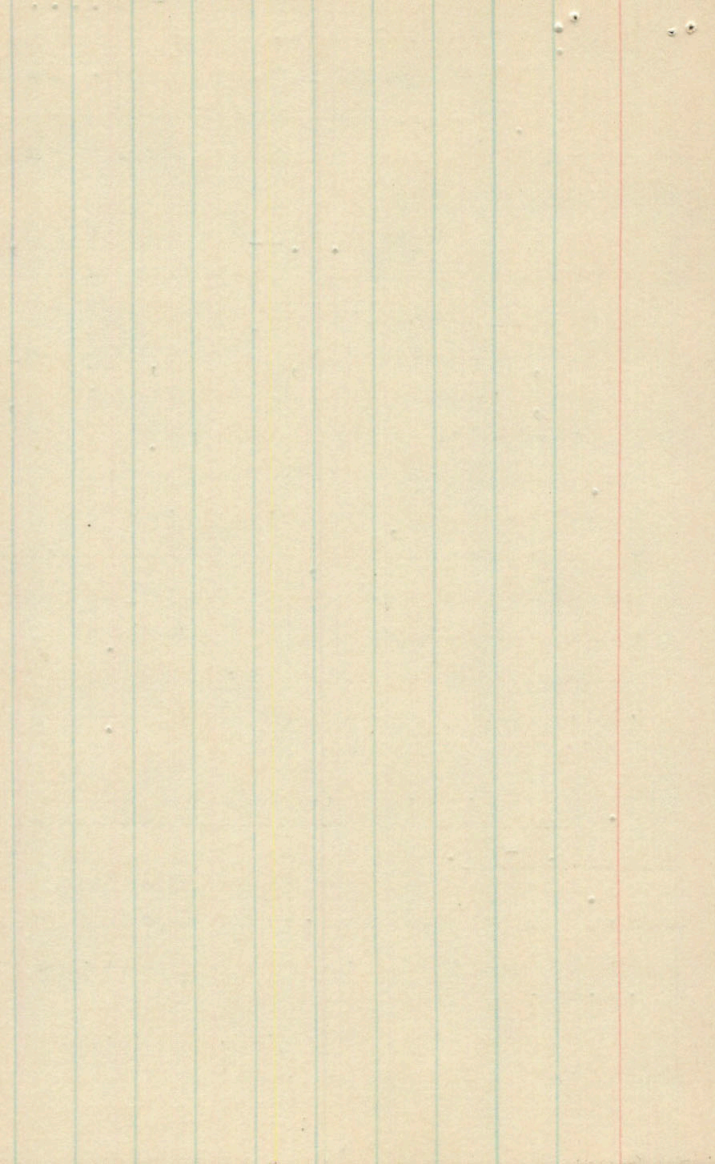
c. Sense in which "proud" is
usually used, and in which it
is objectionable, is "possessing
or showing too great self-esteem;
hence arrogant and haughty."

A proud person in this sense
isn't humble toward others.

III. A Christian is humble toward God (v.6-7).

1. Common sense demonstrates
man's need for humility before God
Paul Elmer More in "The Questing
Spirit":

"We are born knowing nothing
and with much striving we learn



but a little; yet all the while we are bound by laws that hearken to no plea of ignorance, and measure out their rewards and punishments with calm indifference. In such a state ~~humility~~ is the virtue of men, and their only defense; to walk humbly with God, never doubting, whatever befall, that His will is good, and that His law is right."

2. Friar Giles in Chapter III of The Little Flowers of St Francis (Fellowship of the Saints, p.128), quoted:

"Methinks humility is like unto a thunderbolt; for even as the bolt maketh a terrible crash, breaking, crushing, and burning all that it findeth in its path, and then naught of that bolt is found, so, in like manner, humility smiteth and scattereth and burneth and consumeth every wickedness and every vice and every sin; and yet is found to be naught in itself. The man that possesseth humility findeth grace in the sight of God,

through that humility, and perfect peace with his neighbor."

IV. Christian humility requires strength and alertness.

1. "Be sober."--

a. All pleasures in usefulness not destructfully overdone, but as recreating and relaxing.

b. Not dulling senses like an ax chopped into earth or stone, but sharpening alertness to wrong, like a good whetstone does a good knife or ax.

2. "Be watchful"

a. Ancient Trojan Horse story gives the idea.

b. Social drink leading to alcoholism; small-stake recreational gambling leading to uncontrollable addictive gambling, illustrate need for watchfulness in compromise with things that may lead to great evil.

c. Spiritual pride easy to creep in, and needs to be guarded against even more strongly.

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V. Faithful humility brings glory under God (v.10).

1. Words of hymns well summarize Christian faith in rewards of humility before God:

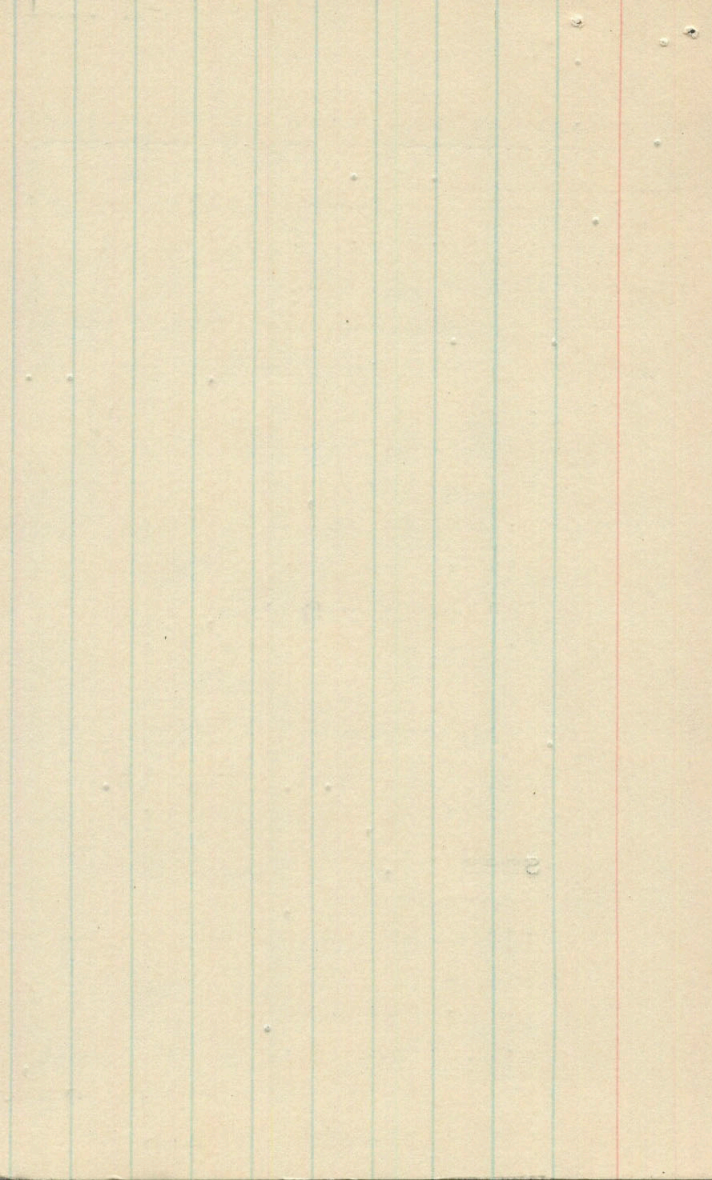
a. 2nd. verse of "The Light of the World is Jesus," by P.B. Bliss:

"No darkness have we who in
 Jesus abide,
 The light of the world is Jesus;
 We walk in the Light when we
 follow our Guide,
 The Light of the world is Jesus.

b. 4th verse of "Footsteps of Jesus," by A.B. Everett.

Then at last, when on high He
 sees us,
 Our journey done,
 We will rest where the steps of
 Jesus
 End at His throne.

Refrain: Footprints of Jesus,
 that make the pathway glow;
 We will follow the steps of



Jesus where'er they go.

Conclusion:

1. Text:--"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you."

2. Humility toward others and toward God is a necessary Christian trait which requires alertness and strength, and which God bountifully rewards."

