

1 Pet. 5:5-14

### Under The Mighty Hand of God

What does it mean to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God? Generally, it certainly involves an attitude of deep reverence toward God; letting every conscious thought be in submission to His will, in order that every word and deed might be pleasing to Him. It also means, when we fall short of this - we acknowledge that, repent and return to the right path, prompted by a conscience in tune with God's will.

But we need not leave this important matter in general terms. In the context, there are at least five things which define what it means to place ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

#### 1. BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY (5).

To be a Christian you must be dressed for that work. Many passages in the New Testament deal with that "dress" or "attire" that is appropriate for Christians (Colossians 3:12-14). Here in 1 Peter 5:5, we told to be clothed with humility. When I see myself as I really am before God; when I measure myself and judge myself by the perfect standard of God, telling myself the truth about who and what I am, the attitude produced by that process is humility. Humility is not self-hatred; it does not involve a denial of my potential or my good choices and character. Humility is a true, an honest view of who and what I am. Colossians 3:12 says we must put on humility, and this passage says that we must "gird" ourselves (clothe or wrap ourselves) in this attitude called humility. This is essential to placing myself under the mighty hand of God. Thayer makes the connection between this attribute (humility) and submission to God: ". . . to submit one's self in a lowly spirit to the power and will of God," (Thayer's, 614,615).

#### 2. CAST ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM (7).

Life here on earth will always entail a variety of concerns and cares. There are troubling distractions, fears, problems and pain. We cannot escape sickness, disappointment and emotional distress. For those Christians who were the original recipients of this epistle - there was the daily experience of persecution. As a child of God, I can turn these cares over to the Father! By trusting His Word, praying to Him and letting my perspective and attitude be determined by His written will, I am casting all my care upon Him. This is possible and this is powerful because HE CARES FOR US. "Care" as applied in God in this verse is not the care of anxiety, but the care of forethought and interests issuing in His providence for our benefit. Jesus said: "If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him," (Matt. 7:11). When I clothe myself in humility and cast my care upon the Father, I'm placing my life under His mighty hand! My father used to tell people, "Do all you can with that problem, but before you do anything - give it to God and decide you will follow His will!"

#### 3. BEING SOBER AND VIGILANT (8).

Peter said: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." If there is a vicious enemy out in the streets, "seeking whom he may devour," I MUST BE WATCHFUL. This verse teaches the necessity of constant attention, in view of the restless energy, the wiles and steadfastness of the enemy. To be sober is to be mentally under control; this means to think straight; to keep your mind focused and on task. To be vigilant is to be alert; to be watchful. I'm persuaded, some folks just don't pay attention to what's going on. They walk right into temptations, or they gradually slip into the devil's hands. They are not alert; not sober and vigilant. By being sober and vigilant, I'm placing my life under the mighty hand of God. "Christians have an enemy who is an accuser, slanderer, and opponent that desires to entice them to sin and thus destroy their souls. Accordingly, Christians need to be in complete possession of self-control and always alert and aware about what he is about in relation to them." (p.#318, Commentary on 1 Peter, Clinton Hamilton).

#### 4. RESIST THE DEVIL (9).

The enemy must be resisted, actively and personally! "Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world." By the wise use of defensive tactics and offensive moves; by preaching, practice and prayer; by using the mighty weapons of God, I am able to "resist the devil, and he will flee from" me (Jas. 4:7; 2 Cor. 10:1ff; Eph. 6:10-18). We can be strong and firm and effective in resisting the devil, based on "the faith."

#### 5. STAND IN THE GRACE OF GOD (12).

Our Father is the God of all grace. That simply means, He has favored us in every way and He affords us resources for every need! Name something you really need that God hasn't provided? There is no physical need, and certainly no spiritual need that God hasn't supplied; made available to us. He is the God of all grace, and we are called upon to stand in His grace. What does that mean? Learn, rely upon and live as one dependent on God's grace! "Having learned what the grace of God is, these Christians are enjoined to hold their ground in it or to persevere, continue, or persist in it. The reason for this standing firm is obvious in that when Christ is revealed they shall share the glory that he will give them about which he has spoken more than once (1:7; 4:13; 5:1,4,10)." (p.#335, Commentary on 1 Peter, Clinton Hamilton).

If we will study these concepts and examine ourselves; if we will take these steps, there is a promise we enjoy: "He may exalt you in due time!" "If one humbles one's self to suffer ignominy, abuse, and persecution in order to keep doing the will of God, there is the assurance that God will lift him on high with deliverance to share the glory of Christ," (p.#313, Commentary on 1 Peter, Clinton Hamilton).

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified," (Acts 20:32).