

Date: 04.10.2020

Time: 6pm

Preacher: Gavino Fioretti

Psalm:

Reading: 1 Peter 5

Text: 1 Peter 5:12-14

Outline: Closing Remarks

Introduction

God's servant

God's grace

God's church

God's peace

Closing Remarks

- **Introduction**

There is a wealth of teaching and blessing even in the closing remarks of this book.

1) God's servant

A brother: Silvanus was with Peter, described as a faithful brother, rather than a colleague. Peter was aware that he was a brother in Christ, a child of the same God, saved by the same Saviour, belonging to the same church and with the same Spirit. There's not jealousy here. Peter praises him before the congregation – he doesn't criticise or gossip about him.

A helper: Silvanus was a real helper. He is likely to have been the scribe for Peter in writing this letter. Peter trusted him in the work. He was happy for Silvanus to contribute and help. We need grace to help, but we also need grace to be helped. We belong to a body, to the church, we're given to each other for our good – we need one another and we're to work together as we seek to reach others with the gospel. In God's grace, he allowed Silvanus to be provided to Paul and Peter to be a helper. Peter and Paul were pulling in the same direction, though working in different ways to serve the same God and so Silvanus could help them both.

A son: We read here about Mark, who became a helper to Peter and Paul. Mark was a spiritual son to Peter. The depth of fellowship is striking, how close they were to each other and the respect and admiration they had one for the other. It's something special to call someone your child. We're not colleagues in the church, we're not a charity or a business – we're family. We all have different roles, but we're all brothers and sisters. We need to be reminded that we're family. We're the family of God. Paul was very critical of Mark in the beginning, but he became an essential helper to Paul at the end of his ministry. We see how much these men could do because they were united in love.

2) God's grace

Peter's theme: This letter is all about grace; it's all about the grace of God. Without His grace, we wouldn't be His children, we wouldn't be born again, we wouldn't have hope in suffering, we wouldn't know freedom from sin. The theme of this letter is the true grace of God. The theme of the Bible is that God is a gracious God. He hates sin and desires that the wicked turn to Him and live. What people need is the grace of

God. We don't preach the law so that people be better people, but so they see their need for a Saviour. God is a gracious God. The grace of God in Jesus should be the theme of every preacher's proclamation.

Peter's distinction: Sadly the grace of God is often misunderstood and misapplied. True grace has to be preached, not human grace. It's God's grace that saves, not false grace. We don't preach the grace that people would like to hear – we preach the grace of God. Some preach the prosperity gospel – that's not true grace as true grace involves suffering. The grace of man is fake grace that cannot save.

Peter's argument: The grace of God is the argument that Peter repeats in his exhortation to the people. He calls the people to be like Jesus. In the light of what God has done for you, there are things we must do. We don't have the strength to live God-pleasing lives without the grace of God. Sanctification is by His grace. God's grace is the foundation of Peter's argument.

Peter's exhortation: Peter commands that we stand firm in the grace of God. This should be our response to find our joy and strength in the grace of God, but in our nature, we resist it and try to be holy in our strength. We try to be strong in our strength and ability. But as believers, we need the grace of God. It's grace that we need today as we needed it the day we came to Christ. We have to grow in grace and learn what it is so that we can find our rest in the grace of God.

3) God's church

Chosen: This church is in Babylon; this could mean geographically, or symbolically, meaning in Rome – the place where God's name was resisted and God's people persecuted. This was a place where the Christian was hated and persecuted, where they felt a stranger and an exile. This was a place of spiritual warfare. Peter is in Babylon and so is the church – in a place of darkness where all is against the church. This same is true today – we're surrounded by darkness, by those who resist God. We're pilgrims and strangers away from home. The life of the Christian is not an easy one, but we're chosen by God. We're in Babylon.

One: There aren't denominations here; they're members of the same apostolic church. Peter can write from different locations and the church would receive that letter as the church was united and one.

Loving: One of the most important elements of the church is love. The greeting of a kiss was spoken of as a mark of brotherly love. Sometimes in church, we forget the purpose of the ten commandments; they can be summarised in two – love God and love your neighbour. You're not a Christian if you don't have love. Our love is not perfect, but we love. We're recipients and objects of the love of God so our love should be evident and manifest. We can have the best sermons and most amazing activities but without love it's all in vain. The people around us need to see the love of God in us.

4) God's peace

Peter closes with a benediction, a blessing.

Desired: Peter desires that the people find rest and joy in the peace of God. Man-made peace doesn't last, but the peace of God lasts forever. Grace is the foundation of peace. In the light of God's grace, we can have peace. God-given peace is grace-based peace that lasts forever.

Condition: The only way for us to know and experience the peace of God is to be united to Christ. Without Jesus there is no divine peace. The only way to be reconciled to others is through Christ. As we are united to Christ, we are united one to the other and so there is peace. To be a harmonious denomination what we need is Jesus. Making Jesus the centre and circumference of our church is vital. The more Christ is central in our lives, the more united we will be. Jesus is the only way to have peace. Christ is the perfect provision. God is the peace-giver. We need the peace that comes from Christ.