

Peter has already issued a clear call to God's people to pursue purity in their lives (1:13-19, etc.). And the author of Hebrews makes it plain that painful experiences are a way that God pursues that purity (Hebrews 12:1-17). Now Peter teaches us that God not only wants to strip away the sin that pollutes our hearts and lives, but He also wants to put us in our proper place.

That is, another purpose for and goal of the pain we go through is to humble us. God wants His people to be humble people. And He is actively working to humble us.

What does it mean to be humbled by God?

It means to be r_____-s_____ in our own minds and hearts. It means that we see God's greatness and our weakness. It means that we recognize His bigness and our smallness. It means that we clearly understand and embrace our always-dependent-upon-our-Creator creature status.

To be humbled is to be stripped of our self-reliance and arrogance. It is to get us to the place where we stop thinking and acting as if we are independently strong and wise and sufficient. To be humbled is to be made to rely not on ourselves but on God.

What does it mean to be a humble person?

To be humble is to be what humans were created to be. To be humble is to live in dependence upon God and interdependently with others. To be humble is to see ourselves with honesty and clarity. To be humble is to trust in God's ability to constantly control the circumstances of our lives. To be humble is to be confident that our Creator cares deeply about us as His creatures. To be humble is to rest in the reality that God indeed has the power and wisdom required to rightly run the universe He made and in the constant love He has for us as His children.

And to be humble means trusting God to set the record straight and to put everything right one day, whether in this life and/or when Jesus Christ comes again to judge and reward and reign.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,

What should we do when God's mighty hand works to humble us through persecution or some other painful experience?

Although God starts and drives the humbling process, we are not passive in this process. God's pursuit of humility in our lives calls for our c_____. In fact, we can work with God or work against Him.

The call in these verses is to cooperate with God as He works to humble us. It is to join God in His commitment to and efforts toward making us His humble people. It is to make "the wise move" of being a humble person who receives God's grace instead of His resistance. Pride not only closes the gate of God's grace; it also draws God's opposition against us. Humbling ourselves starts the flow of His grace in our direction. Continued humility results in a continuous stream of God's grace in our lives.

for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

What do humble people do?

How can you spot humble people in a local church? There are specific, observable actions to look for. They are here in 5:5-7.

1. Humble people s_____ to the leaders God has put over us.

Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders.

Citizens should voluntarily submit themselves to their governmental authorities (2:13). Household slaves were

expected to voluntarily submit themselves to their masters (2:18). Wives are to voluntarily submit themselves their own husbands (3:1). And humble church members voluntarily submit themselves to the leaders of their church. See Acts 20:28.

2. Humble people s_____ the people God has put around us.

Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another,

Humble people see themselves as slaves/servants. They look for ways to serve others rather than expecting others to serve them. See John 13:1-15.

3. Humble people s_____ o_____ the anxieties that would hold us.
casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Instead of pridefully carrying our concerns around with us, we humbly cast all of them on Him. Instead of being held by what would worry us, we hand it over to the God who cares for us. "From o_____ to d_____, He cares for you."

"Humbly casting instead of pridefully carrying is 'the secret sauce' of humility." Instead of turning things over again and again in our minds, we turn them over to the Lord who loves us. While we are not passive, irresponsible, or inactive in our lives, we are not going to let our anxieties imprison and paralyze us.

If submission is d_____ for us and worry is e_____ for us, then we are in need of humbling. We should ask ourselves if we really believe in God's sovereign power and personal love. And all of us should keep looking to the cross to remind ourselves just how much He cares for us. He really does. May He help us to really believe it. *Does Jesus care? O yes, He cares!*

All Scripture quotations taken from the ESV.

Humble People

1 Peter 5:5-7



Pain happens in the lives of God's people. It's a part of our story.

Sometimes the pain is mild. Other times it's severe. Sometimes it doesn't stick around for long. Other times, it stays. The pain comes in many forms, including persecution, misunderstanding, mistreatment, a fractured friendship, a broken bone, a sports injury, a fall at home, an uncertain future, an unexplained illness, a disease diagnosis, an unfulfilled longing, a missed opportunity, an accident, the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, etc.

Does God have a loving purpose for the pain that His people experience? Does God have good goals for the pain we go through? He does.

What loving purpose does God have for these painful experiences in our lives?

Our good God prioritizes p_____, u_____, and h_____ in the lives of His people. As our holy Father, He is firmly committed to these things in the lives of His children. He wants and works toward them both in our personal lives and in His local churches. And painful experiences are one of the ways that He works toward accomplishing these goals. He often pursues these priorities in our lives through our painful experiences.