

Living in an Abiding Relationship with Christ

Dr. Jeffrey A. Stivason

*Pastor of Grace Reformed Presbyterian
Church (RPCNA) in Gibsonia, PA*

When we ask what it means to live in an abiding relationship with Christ, we should begin by asking a simple question: what does it mean to abide? Well, it quite simply means to “accept or bear,” to “remain or stay,” and to “wait or stand.” The idea then is an uncomplicated one. To abide in a relationship is to continue in that relationship. The continuance may be easily accepted or born with much difficulty. Nevertheless, to think about living in an abiding relationship with Christ is to think about remaining in Christ.

Now, *remaining* or *waiting* is perhaps the single most difficult idea to put into practice. No one wants to wait. I remember watching television and movies growing up wherein the hero would instruct someone to wait or *remain* behind while he went on ahead to secure the bad guys, but inevitably the person whose job it was to remain could not follow that simple instruction. He had to follow the hero! As Christians, however, this is our calling. We are to remain, or abide, in Christ. It is little wonder that the Scriptures put such a premium on *standing*.

So, the question is how to live in an abiding relationship with Christ? How do we stand in Christ? In answering that question we should begin by consulting the Scripture. There are a variety of Biblical passages to which we could turn as we focus in on our topic. Although John 15 is not least among them, but, rather, is the *locus classicus*, it is our purpose here to turn elsewhere. We will look at 1 Peter in order to think through what it means to live in an abiding relationship with Christ and the reasons for doing so will become evident with progress.

The plan is as follows: First, we will set the stage theologically. In other words, we will go through some basic theological training that will prepare us to engage in exegetical cartography of 1 Peter. Second, having our theological bearings as well as a familiarity with the structure of 1 Peter, we will explore the *sitz im leben* or setting of the recipients of this letter and consider why it matters in light of our topic. Finally, we will explore some practical counsel that will help us to abide in Christ.

THEOLOGICAL BASICS: CHRISTOLOGY

We all know the basics of Christology. Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is one person with two natures dwelling in two estates. Now, it is the latter part of the formula that is of concern to us. What are the estates of Christ? It might be better to ask a more basic question first. What does the word estate mean? Estate is a dying word unless we are using it to talk about the remains of the dead. It usually conjures up thoughts of something old and musty. The word “auction” often accompanies “estate” in common parlance. In fact, type the word into your search engine and sentences about real estate will abound. In short, property has become the primary meaning of the word.

However, theologically, the word has enjoyed more precision than is currently the case. In theological discourse today, estate is interchangeable with the word condition. Now, this is not

entirely wrong. Nevertheless, by making these words synonyms theologians lose a vital distinction, which is obviously the bread and butter of theological discourse. Let us take a minute to understand the difference between state and condition.

According to Geerhardus Vos, “A state is the relationship to the judicial power within which one stands.”¹ In other words, state is the result of a judicial relationship. To put it tersely: no judge, no state. However, condition can and does exist in the absence of a state. Vos writes, “A sinful condition can always be conceived of as an inherent quality, even if there were no God in the world...”² Or to put it in another way, there would be a condition even if there were no judge to determine the state.

Let us flesh this out a bit. A sinful condition could be conceived of apart from God’s existence but such is not the case with regard to the state of guilt. In other words, one could be sinful in condition but, apart from God’s judgment, not guilty in state. Guilt is, according to Vos, a judicially imputed, accredited, or reckoned state.³ Therefore, we might say that God as judge ascribes to each one a state which is based on our condition. The state is the objectification of the condition.⁴

This distinction also allows for the transfer of one’s state to another without the individuals sharing the same condition. Consequently, when we speak of Christ’s estate of humiliation we mean that God imputed to Him the state of being guilty in order to become man’s surety.⁵ Therefore, with regard to Christ’s condition He was without sin, but as to His state during His humiliation He was guilty and cursed.⁶

Now, why is this important for us as we think about living in an abiding relationship with Christ? It is important because Peter wants us to understand that the abiding life is lived in union with Christ and that union life is objectified in the Christological paradigm of humiliation and exaltation. In other words, Peter contextualizes the Christian life in terms of Christ’s two estates. Before we think about some of the implications, let us consider now 1 Peter’s exegetical cartography. In other words, let us explore Peter’s Christological contextualization of the Christian life, and there too we will find the humiliation and exaltation of Christ.

EXEGETICAL CARTOGRAPHY

When we open to 1 Peter we are struck by a singular theme: the letter is about suffering and is addressed to those who suffer. In fact, the letter seems to be bookended by that very idea. Peter begins, “In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary you have been distressed by various trials” (1 Peter 1:6), and he matches that statement at the end: “After you have suffered a little while...” (1 Peter 5:10). The letter has rightly been dubbed the Job of the New Testament.

¹ Geerhardus Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics: Vol. 3, Christology*, Translated and ed. by Richard B. Gaffin, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 183.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 184.

⁶ Ibid.

But Peter goes beyond merely identifying the experience of his recipients. He frames their suffering. How does one frame something like that? Suffering has a tendency to overwhelm, cloud, and confuse the individual perspective. Fear usually has a way of playing its part as well. How does he help them to frame or, perhaps better, to reframe their experience of suffering?

An artist named W.E. Hill popularized what is sometimes called the young lady/old woman illusion. At first, Hill's drawing appears to be a young woman, but after closer inspection it appears to be an elderly woman. Often people find it quite natural to make out the younger woman in the picture, but to see the older woman takes a little more effort. Usually someone has to point out that the side of the young woman's face is the nose of the old woman and that is when the eyes light up in recognition.

That is what Peter does in the structure of his letter. In the midst of his readers' suffering, he points out Jesus. Now, the question remains: how does he do this? How does he fix their eyes in the right place so that they can see Jesus rather than their misery? The first thing that he does is point them to the gospel.

In 1 Peter 1:11, Peter describes the gospel as the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. Now, that ought to perk up your ears. Why? Because he is describing the gospel in terms of Christ's humiliation and exaltation. In fact, that description is used to bookend or to enclose almost the entire letter as well. In 1 Peter 5:1 he writes, "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed." Suffering and glory. Clearly, Peter has built his letter around the twofold state of Christ's humiliation and exaltation.

The first thing that Peter does emerges from a pastoral heart. He acknowledged the suffering of his recipients. Here is a valuable lesson for the man given charge over the people of God. In fact, he even closes out the letter with their suffering. However, he has framed the letter's teaching and, better yet, the suffering of the people in the paradigm of Christ's suffering or humiliation and His exaltation. In other words, he contextualizes suffering that will last for a little while in the One whose sufferings have eternal value.

But he does more than that. Secondly, he speaks of their existential participation in the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. He shows his readers their involvement in the same pattern: "But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God" (1 Peter 2:20). In other words, when you experience humiliation for doing what is good and right—presumably for Christ's sake—you also experience a foretaste of the exaltation that is to come. Clearly, Peter is bringing the twofold state of Christ to bear upon their situation.

We find a similar statement in 1 Peter 3:14: "But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed." Here again we find the categories of humiliation and exaltation applied to the recipients. However, notice that Peter makes the connection between Christ's humiliation and exaltation and their suffering explicit. He writes, "But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation" (1 Peter 4:13). The suffering and glory of Christ will lead us from humiliation to exaltation—something we can taste in this life.

Before moving on, think about what Peter is saying in this verse. Peter describes the recipients of his letter as having a "share in the sufferings of Christ." The word "share" is from the well known *κοινωνέω*, which is the verb form of the more popular *κοινωνία*. So, the idea expressed here is not 'fire hall fellowship'. The word has investment and partnership as its backbone.

In other words, if Matthew and Mark each put up half the money to begin a printing business, they are approximating the Biblical idea of *κοινωνέω*. Together they are investing in the work.

They are sharing the risks. They are enjoying the rewards. This is what Paul had in mind when he thanked God for the Philippians and their participation in the gospel (Philippians 1:5).⁷ In fact, when Paul speaks to the Corinthian church about the Macedonians' giving he says, "For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation (κοινωνίαν) in the support of the saints..." (2 Cor. 8:3-4). These believers begged for the opportunity to have real fellowship or partnership in the Gospel. And, as if to emphasize the point, Peter adds a third and final "if then" type statement in verse 14, "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed."

PUTTING THEOLOGY AND EXPERIENCE TOGETHER

All of this raises an important question: how can Peter use the estate of Christ's humiliation and exaltation as a paradigm for the believer's suffering, not to mention their impending exaltation? Focusing on Christ's suffering and humiliation, the question may be framed with even more precision. If Christ's humiliation arose from an imputed state of guilt and my humiliation emerges from a sinful condition how can Peter use the former as an archetype for the latter?

There is a twofold answer. First, we must remember that Peter is not identifying Christ's state with our condition. Instead, Peter is helping to see the two analogically. In other words, the believer who shares the state of Christ's justification and yet continues to struggle with the condition of the present age finds his condition analogous to Christ's imputed state. It is in the midst of this struggle that we look to Christ as our example, which is precisely what Peter exhorts us to do saying, "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps."⁸

The word "example" is used only here in the New Testament. A literal rendering might read "from the writing"—having the idea of being copied from writing. The word functioned well in describing how young children would trace letters in order to learn to write.⁹ This is the sense of it; Christ is to be copied. As though we were children sitting down at a table ready to copy the characters of the alphabet in order to learn how to write, so we are to copy the life of Christ.

This leads to the second point. The focus of Peter's doctrine of union with Christ highlights the *imitatio Christi* rather than the mystical or predestinarian aspect of union. In light of the first point, the reason should be obvious: although Peter is not drawing an identity between Christ's state and our condition, he is nevertheless drawing an analogy between our present condition—suffering for doing good—with Christ's suffering in His imputed state.

Now, two things must be noted here. First, there is absolutely nothing atoning in our suffering—even when we suffer for doing good. Rather, the suffering we experience for doing the good is part and parcel of abiding in Christ. It is a mark of our abiding in Christ. Second, as Peter says, there is no analogy between our sinful suffering and Christ's righteous suffering. Only suffering for doing good can be considered an imitation of Christ's suffering.

Now, all of this raises a very simple and practical question. What qualifies as suffering for doing good? To put it plainly, what type of suffering imitates Christ? What kind of suffering indicates our abiding in Christ? This leads to our next point.

⁷ The word translated participation in the NASB is κοινωνία.

⁸ 1 Peter 2:21. The value of Christ's death was not merely or primarily that of exemplar but penal. However, in this letter Peter's emphasis falls to this particular aspect of our union.

⁹ Paul J. Achtemeier, *I Peter: Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 199.

THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE LETTER'S RECIPIENTS

It is hard not to wince when opening the pages of this letter. Why? We have already noticed that the letter opens and closes striking the same note; these exiles are suffering. Now it might be helpful to explain why. One of the means of growth and expansion adopted by the Roman Empire was colonization. In fact, colonization was viewed as an important part of maintaining the peace and prosperity of the Empire. Rome would take a group of people and settle them in a distant land and yet they would remain under the legal jurisdiction of Rome.

But who do you send to these colonies? Who would want to go? The answer to that question varied a bit in Roman practice. But there is at least one answer that might be interesting to us. If the emperor or the senate viewed a group of people as troublemakers, those people would be deported to a newly acquired colony or some remote area of the empire. Often in Rome, troublemakers and religious groups were synonymous. Why? Because in Rome, even if a new religious group was tolerated, the tolerance was not total. New religions were considered a menace the moment they took advantage of tolerance in order to disturb the peace, offend accepted Roman morality, or engage in converting native Romans. That was in fact what happened under Emperor Claudius (41-54 AD).¹⁰

The Roman historian Suetonius tells us, "Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he [Claudius] expelled them from Rome."¹¹ In the latter part of the fifth decade (ca. 49 AD), Claudius had decided that the Jews (at that time not distinguishing between Jew and Christian) had tried his patience long enough and he had them expelled. A reference to this expulsion is made in Acts 18. One of our favorite couples in the New Testament, Aquila and Priscilla, found themselves ejected from Rome as a result.

The reason this explanation is important is that Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, all five regions mentioned in 1 Peter, were colonized by Emperor Claudius.¹² The point is this. It is possible and likely that Peter is writing to a group of people who had become Christians somewhere other than those five regions and Peter had some association with them prior to his writing this first letter. Now these people found themselves, likely as a result of the expulsion of Claudius, resident aliens scattered throughout Asia Minor. Peter writes them a word of encouragement. This is the setting of this letter.

However, Peter did not choose to record this historical background in order to make it an example of what it means to follow Christ in His humiliation. That is not to say that it would not qualify as such, but, at least textually, Peter is unconcerned with how they arrived in these five geographical areas.¹³ Nevertheless, Peter does provide us with examples of what it means to share in Christ's suffering, but these examples, as we will discover, reach into our experience as readers. What are they? The answer may shock you. We share in Christ's suffering when in our ordinary day-to-day lives we do what is right no matter the consequence. Notice Peter's list.

First, he says we are to submit ourselves to every human institution, whether king or governor. Often times, perhaps as a result of our perplexity when dealing with a text like this one, we allow our imagination to run with interpretations. Thus, let me tell you what would be a mistake for

¹⁰ Karen H. Jobes, *I Peter: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 29.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 32. Though debated by scholars, I am accepting that *Chrestus* is a corruption of Christ.

¹² *Ibid.*, 29.

¹³ It should be noted that there are varying interpretations about the exiles and whether the title alien in the opening verse is spiritual or geographical or both.

us. It would be a mistake for us to begin wondering about Peter's philosophy of government. Why? Because, Peter simply does not tell us what type of government has God's approval and what type does not. That is plainly not the focus of these verses. So, if that is not Peter's focus, then what is?

Peter is not concerned with the type of government so much as he is concerned with our behavior living under any government, and, again, government of any type. To put it according to our theme, Peter is concerned with our abiding in Christ while living under a government that does not allow us to do so easily or comfortably. This certainly strikes a chord especially in today's climate of political change.

Second, Peter is concerned with the behavior of a slave. Why? Because, according to Peter, a slave was not only to show respect to the master who showed kindness but also to the unreasonable and perverse master. Peter's intention is to encourage right behavior even on the part of believing slaves.

Third, Peter is concerned with the behavior of wives who find it difficult to live the Christian life in their present marriage arrangement. Peter says in 3:1, "In the same manner, the wife is to submit to her husband." Perhaps a better way, a more textually consistent way, of putting it would be that the wife's reverence for God is her motivation for submitting to her husband—even a harsh husband.

Part of the difficulty is understood in light of cultural expectations for women. For example, a wife was expected to have the same friends as her husband and that has some serious implications. Listen for example, to Plutarch's instruction in his *Advice to the Bride and Groom*:

A wife ought not to have friends of her own, but use her husband's as their common stock. And the first and most important of our friends are the gods. A married woman should therefore worship and recognize the gods whom her husband holds dear, and these alone. The door must be closed to strange cults and foreign superstitions. No god takes pleasure in cult performed furtively and in secret by a woman.¹⁴

Clearly, we see the difficulty of what it means to abide in Christ. But more, we see how it is that the women may have to endure the abuse and rejection of her husband in a way reminiscent Christ's own suffering in 1 Peter 2:21-25.

Fourth, Peter speaks to a husband who seems to have a difficult wife. It appears that the situation is opposite to the previous one; here we likely have a believing husband living with an unbelieving wife. Quite familiar is Solomon's saying about living with a wife who is less than agreeable: It's better to live on the corner of a roof or even a desert than it is to live with her. Elsewhere Solomon equates a contentious woman to a constant dripping on a day of steady rain.

Notice what Peter is doing. He is acknowledging the difficulty of the husband's position and then leading him to Christ. It should be obvious by now why 1 Peter 2:21-25 is set down in the midst of these scenarios. Peter is helping us to look at the example of Christ in the midst of our own sufferings—ordinary though they may be. Peter encourages this husband to follow the example of Christ, the one who humbled Himself and when reviled did not revile in return, who, while suffering, uttered no threats but instead kept entrusting himself to the Lord. Peter says that this is the One we are to follow.

¹⁴ Plutarch, *Advice to the Bride and Groom and A Consolation to His Wife*, ed. Sarah Pomeroy (NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7.

Finally, Peter sums it all up by telling these exiles to be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kind, and humble. What is more, he takes them back to the example of Jesus; they are “not to return evil for evil or insult for insult, but give a blessing instead; for you were called to this very purpose that you might inherit a blessing” (1 Peter 3:9). Peter again returns to the two estates of Christ: humiliation and exaltation. They were called to suffering in the ordinary relationships of life that they might inherit glory.

Now, this ought to minister to each one of us. We may not be exiles from Rome, but we are certainly living under a government which is becoming increasingly unfriendly to our faith, or we are in some form of servitude, or we are married. Peter’s point is absolutely clear. Life, even ordinary life, follows the contour of Christ’s twofold estate, which raises our next point.

PRACTICAL COUNSEL FOR AN ABIDING LIFE

Earlier we saw that 1 Peter is built upon the two estates of Christ. What is more, we saw that abiding in Christ is, at least in part, following the example of Christ and seeing our suffering in light of His suffering. However, this is not an abstract theological concept. In fact, good Biblical theology and systematic theology are rooted in the text of Scripture and such is the case here. What are the pastoral implications?

First, we need to remember that our humiliation and exaltation in Christ are in God’s timing. Notice how wonderfully Peter sets this out. In 1 Peter 1:10-12, he states that the prophets made careful searches and inquiries “seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.” The prophets were not only seeking to know the Christ’s identity but the time of his appearing.

However, in the same chapter, Peter says that the Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world and has appeared in these last times for the sake of His people. The idea is that the Christ who was known before the foundation of the world appeared at the exact time He was supposed to arrive. Now, why is this important? Because at the end of the epistle Peter says, “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”

That is simply brilliant! Do you see what Peter is doing? He is saying, look at what God did in Christ. Christ was revealed to you at the proper time in all of his suffering with the anticipation of glory to follow! And now, Peter is saying, follow him. Humble yourselves before God that he might exalt you at the proper time! Your day is coming. It is appointed. You feel only humiliation now but glory is coming. It is coming in God’s time. You can trust God for the details of your life—even when you are suffering.

Second, Peter wants us to see and understand that the connection between the suffering and glory of Christ and our own is made by apostolic witness. In other words, Peter is connecting what the prophets inquired into and the angels longed to see with his own apostolic office. He does this in two ways. In the first place he shifts the meaning of the suffering and glory of Christ. In the opening chapter it is a description of the gospel. However, in 1 Peter 5 the glory extends into the future. Second, he sets himself apart from that of a seeker or an inquirer. He is not one like the angels, longing to look. No, he is a witness of the sufferings and a partaker of future glory.

But notice something else. Peter is not setting himself up or apart from everyone else. Notice that he describes himself as a fellow elder and witness. The clear grammatical implication is that the elders are fellow witnesses. The gravity of this point cannot be understated. Peter traces the suffering and glory from the angels’ desire to see, to the prophet’s inquiries, to his witness and that of the elders in Christ’s church. In other words, when you sit under a pastor faithful to God’s word, you have an immediate connection to the suffering and glorified Christ.

Third, and very pastorally, Peter encourages us to cast the cares of our humiliation upon the humiliated One. This is an important lesson because many people stress over suffering. We have already noticed the types of things that create anxiety, but now the important thing to notice is how to overcome our anxiety about suffering. How do we cast our cares on the Lord?

There are four vital principles that come from 1 Peter 5 that will enable you to be more Christ-like in your living out the humiliation of Christ, and to cast your cares upon God. First, we must learn what it is to cast. Notice something about 1 Peter 5:6-7. Despite the fact that we often read it like two sentences, it is really one sentence, and as a result there is a logic to how these two verses fit together. In order to grasp the logic, it is necessary to understand the translation.. When translating an aorist participle like “casting,” introductory Greek grammars teach that is helpful to insert the word “after” in our translation in order to get the sense of time. Now, if we did that our translation would read something like this, “Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, after casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.” Now, that basic principle of translation really opens things up.

We first of all see the need to cast our cares upon God and only then can we talk about what it means to humble ourselves. Until we are ready to cast those cares on Him we remain prideful, thinking that we are able to manage on our own.

Maybe you are wondering what it looks like to cast our cares on the Lord. I used to have relatives that lived on the North side of the New River Valley in West Virginia, and when I was young we would visit. I only have a few memories of that time, but one that stands out vividly is my grandfather carrying a saddle to one of the horses and throwing it—or casting it on the horse’s back. That is the sense of this word. In fact, it is used in that exact way in Luke 19:35. The disciples were casting their coats on the back of the donkey that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem. The saddle that my grandfather carried from the barn to the field was his burden to carry. It was a large and awkward old saddle, not easily managed. But when he cast it upon the horse it was no longer his burden to carry. It was on the back of the horse. That is what Peter is wanting us to see here. *What burdens are you carrying that ought to be cast upon the Lord?* That cuts to the heart of things, does it not?

Now, perhaps you are thinking, “Well, that would be me, but you still haven’t told me how to cast. You’ve just told me what it looks like when I do it.” Fair enough, and this leads to the second thing you must notice. Casting our burdens is accomplished by prayer. It is accomplished when we talk to God. This is in fact what Jesus did. Think once again about Gethsemane. There Jesus prayed. He spoke to His heavenly Father. He spoke to Him in the darkness of Gethsemane about His desire to see the cup pass from Him. When He arose from prayer, at least that burden was gone.

At this point, you may be thinking, “Been there, done that, and it doesn’t work. Maybe it worked for Jesus but not for me.” If that is your response, consider another question. Did you ever stop to think that prayer is not just another fix-it tool for your spiritual toolbox but, instead, language, words, and conversation are an opportunity to develop a relationship between you and the covenant God? Have you ever noticed that when a relationship deepens between a husband and wife they do a lot of talking? In talking, they are learning. They are learning facts, birth dates, geography, and experiences, but they are learning more than facts. They are also learning how one another thinks, and how the other person moves logically from A to B. Moreover, they are not just learning methods of thought; through their talk they are harnessing one another’s affections.

What happens when the communication stops? The facts remain and the knowledge of how the other thinks is still there, but the affections begin to wander and sometimes that kind of thing

can lead a man or woman into an affair. Now, that man or woman may well know that what they are doing is wrong but they simply cannot disengage themselves from what they are doing. Why is that? It is because they have stopped communicating with their spouse and started communicating with another person. More to the point, if you have treated prayer more like a tool than the opportunity, that may explain why it does not seem to be effective in relieving the stress of humiliation.

Now, if you do pray and pray regularly, then a third thing happens. You begin not simply to know that you are loved, but you begin *to feel* loved. God has your affections because nothing else has your heart. When we cast our cares upon the one who presently and continuously cares for us, we get a sense of that present and continuous care. There are times when we are just overcome by a sense of His love and keeping power in our lives.

All of this leads to the fourth thing to notice: we are humbled. We humble ourselves after casting our anxiety upon Him. These two things go together. With that comes an interesting point. The text says, “Therefore humble yourselves...” as though humbling is something that we do. But that is not exactly correct. The verb for “humble” is in the passive voice meaning that we receive the action. In other words, it might be better translated “accept humbling.” Why? Because humbling happens when we admit that we cannot deal with our cares alone! Now, the only way that we are going to accept humiliation under the mighty hand of God is if we know that He cares for us because we have been able to cast our cares upon Him. Do you want to learn how to abide in the humiliation of Jesus Christ that you might be exalted at the proper time? Then you must learn to cast your cares upon the Lord.