

Ln 13 ... Determining the Right Result of Suffering

1 Peter 5:8-14

As Peter concludes this letter, he mentions two possible results of suffering. One is the result the devil seeks, and the other is the result God desires by allowing us to suffer. Responding properly to suffering and achieving the right result requires remembering **three** things: **the roaring adversary**, **the right action**, and **the right aftermath**.

The Roaring Adversary (5:8)

Casting our cares upon God ([5:7](#)) doesn't mean we sit back and do nothing. That is not faith; that is presumption. Our Lord warned Peter that Satan wanted to sift him like wheat to separate him from his faith in Jesus ([Lk 22:31](#)). From that experience, Peter learned two attitudes required to respond properly during tough times. He writes, *Be sober, be vigilant* ([5:8a-b](#)). This means we are always to be self-controlled and alert.

How does Peter explain why in the rest of that verse ([5:8c-d](#))?

One of the devil's most effective tactics is getting us to "write him off" as a myth or fairy tale. Satan wants to work incognito in our lives so we will be unaware of his tactics and influence. He hates the Bible because it reveals his reality and strategy. Therefore, he doesn't want you to read or study it. The word translated **devil** (*diabolos*, dee-ab'-uh-los) means accuser or slanderer. The devil is the arch *adversary*, or enemy, of truth and holiness. The chief target of his slander is the truth of the Bible. Satan cannot lead us into sin unless he persuades us to doubt the truth of God's Word. His oldest, most effective tactic is convincing us the Bible isn't true or that God doesn't mean what He says. He used this scheme in the original temptation. God tells Eve if she eats from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she will *surely die* ([Gen. 2:17](#)).

But what does *the serpent*, Satan, tell Eve in [Genesis 3:4b](#)?

Satan also tells Eve her eyes will be opened and she will be like God *knowing good and evil* ([Gen. 3:5](#)). However, the moment Adam and Eve bit into the forbidden fruit, they died immediately in their spirits because they became sinners. At that instant they also began to die progressively in their bodies. Sin could only enter the Garden of Eden after Satan convinced Adam and Eve to doubt the Word of God. His tactics have not changed; he still seeks to deceive us.

In [2 Corinthians 11:3b](#), how does Paul explain why Satan, who *beguiled Eve through his subtilty*, wants to deceive believers today?

Through deceit, Satan stalks us like a *roaring lion* ([5:8c](#)). Why does a lion roar? To create fear! A lion's roar near a sheepfold causes a frightened sheep to flee from the flock and become easy prey.

When life is tough, Satan roars to scare us into fleeing from the flock, which is the church.

Satan wants to *devour* us ([5:8d](#)). This doesn't mean he wants to *devour* us physically. He is not going to bite off a hand or leg for his lunch.

He wants to *devour* us psychologically and spiritually. He is very successful today at devouring people through one of his newest weapons, the internet. The fastest growing addiction in America for people of all ages is hard-core, internet pornography. As with Eve, Satan wants to get us to look at something forbidden and desire it.

That's why we need to pray what prayer in [Psalm 119:37a](#)?

The word translated ***vanity*** refers to anything morally worthless. Satan knows if he can get our attention, he can get us to sin.

Satan also wants to *devour* us because he hates what we represent—truth and holiness.

Remember **the roaring adversary** and be sure to take ...

The Right Action (5:9)

Instead of running in fear, *resist* him ([5:9a](#)). The word ***resist*** means to stand your ground and not retreat.

Nowhere in the Bible are we told to attack the devil, but we are to *resist* him. But how do we do that?

Our best example is Jesus Himself. Immediately after His baptism, Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness.

Each time He resisted Satan, Jesus used this phrase to introduce His answer, *It is written* ([Mt 4:4](#), [7](#), [10](#)).

Jesus resisted the devil by quoting scriptures He had memorized.

Jesus is the Supreme Example of what practice found in [Psalm 119:11](#)?

The only way to effectively *resist* the devil is the sharp, two-edged sword of the Word of God ([Heb. 4:12](#)).

After Jesus quotes scriptures to *resist* each of the devil's temptations, the devil leaves Him ([Mt 4:11](#)). This is an example of resisting the devil so *he will flee from you* ([Jas. 4:7b](#)).

We can only *resist* the devil with the authority and power of God's Word.

To prevent becoming discouraged, we must be *stedfast in our faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world* ([5:9b](#)). We should never feel sorry for ourselves, thinking no one has it as hard as we do. The devil tries to *devour* our spiritual strength through self-pity. However,

all of our sufferings and temptations are experienced by thousands of other believers throughout *the world*. Suffering is a common experience to all committed followers of Christ ([1 Cor. 10:13a](#)). Paul tells Timothy not to be ashamed of the *testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner* ([2 Tim. 1:8a](#)). Then, what does he write, which also applies to you and me ([1:8b](#))?

When our **roaring adversary** is met with **the right action**, the result will be ...

The Right Aftermath (5:10-14)

When we suffer, we have *the God of all grace* on our side ([5:10a](#)). This refers to God's empowering and sustaining grace ([Acts 4:33](#); [2 Cor. 12:9b](#)). When we are spiritually weak, *the God of all grace* will provide the power and strength we lack.

Peter reminds us God, *who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus*, will *make you perfect* ([5:10b](#)). The word translated **make you perfect** (*katartizō*, kot-ar-tid'-zoh) refers to mending a hole or tear in a net. Suffering reveals holes in our faith and character.

God allows suffering to reveal our faith flaws so He can mend our spiritual nets.

God also uses suffering to spiritually *stablish* and *strengthen* us ([5:10c-d](#)). Reading a book about body building will not make you strong. You must do some resistance training and weight lifting. The same is true in the spiritual realm.

To be spiritually strong, we must have spiritual resistance. Nothing strengthens our faith like the tough times of life when we learn by experience the truth of God's Word.

After conquering the Promised Land, what does Joshua tell the Israelites about God's promises in [Joshua 21:45](#)?

When life is tough, God will *stablish* and *strengthen* us, and at the same time, *settle* us in the faith. He can do this because *to him be glory and dominion* (power) *for ever and ever. Amen* ([5:11](#)). The power of God will never diminish because it is *for ever and ever*.

Peter concludes this letter by writing that with the help of *Silvanus* (Roman form of "Silas"), he has *written briefly* to his original readers ([5:12a](#)). This is probably the same Silas who accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey ([Acts 15:40](#)). Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter probably dictated the letter as Silas wrote it down. Also, Silas probably delivered this letter to its recipients.

Peter also sends greetings from *the church that is at Babylon* ([5:13a](#)). Babylon is most likely a metaphorical or cryptic reference to Rome, which is where Peter probably was when he wrote this epistle to churches in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor.

The Greek word for "**church**" (*ekklesia*, ek-clay-see'-uh) **is feminine**.

Also, what is the church called in [Revelation 19:7](#) and [21:9](#)?

Some scholars believe Peter may have been disguising his location to protect both himself and the church at Rome during the time of persecution. The reference to *Marcus my son* ([5:13](#)) refers to John Mark. Mark apparently became an associate of Peter, with Peter being Mark's main source of information for the gospel he wrote.

Peter concludes: *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity* ([5:14a](#)). This was not a romantic kiss but a cultural greeting, like a warm handshake.

At Bible study and worship, or whenever believers meet, everyone should be greeted with a warm handshake or a holy hug. In some cultures, the *kiss of charity* still applies.

Peter knows his beloved suffering brothers and sisters in Christ will suffer even more severely in the coming diabolic persecution. Therefore, he ends with this prayer: *Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus* ([5:14b](#)). This *peace* is only available through prayer and surpasses all human understanding ([Philip. 4:6-7a](#)).

According to [Philippians 4:7b](#) what is the result of receiving this kind of *peace*?

To determine the proper result of suffering, remember three things:

THE ROARING ADVERSARY,

THE RIGHT ACTION, AND

THE RIGHT AFTERMATH.