

An Exposition of the 1st Epistle of Peter

“RESISTING THE DEVIL”

1 Peter 5:8-9

Theme: The keys to resisting the Devil are successful when performed with utter dependency upon the “crusher of Satan’s head.”

Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8; Colossians 2:15; Romans 16:20



I. Recognizing the Reality of Satan’s Opposition – 5:8

A. The Description of Satan’s Opposition

1. In calling for the believer to not cling to their anxieties and cast their care upon the Lord does not mean that there is no need for personal vigilance.
2. We have a definitive enemy who is constantly seeking how to destroy our faith.
3. He is called *“your adversary”* [ἀντίδικος] – “against justice or rights” – this describes an opponent in a lawsuit; the “plaintiff” – cp. *Revelation 12:10; Job 1:6ff*
4. He is called *“the Devil”* [διάβολος] – “throw against” – that is a “slanderer” or “informer” – “one who defames” (a “mudslinger”)
 - a) He slanders God to the believer by causing the believer to doubt that God really cares about us or that He has forgiven us of all that we have done in offense to Him.
 - b) He slanders us to God by accusing us of demonstrating an empty, useless faith.
5. He *“prowls around like a roaring lion”* – roaring is one of a lion’s strategies for catching prey – they’ll creep up on the prey and when they are close enough that their prey cannot escape, they will let out a roar that is so loud that it produces confusion and strikes fear. The prey cannot “think” straight or react correctly out of fear and so is trapped and caught by the lion
6. This describes a restless energy fueled by an insatiable appetite – suggesting that victims are so numerous that stealth is not even necessary!
 - a) *“prowl”* [περιπατέω] means simply to “walk around” and is often used to describe the way a person conducts one’s life – a habit of conduct – cp. *Job 1:7; 2:2*.
 - b) It carries no inherent idea of sneaking or subtlety.
7. Essentially, the notion here is the persistent slander that the Devil roars

constantly at us to infuse us with fear and devour us through guilt, shame, and doubt.

B. The Design of Satan's Opposition

1. He is “... *seeking someone to devour*” [καταπίνω] – “to drink down” or “gulp” - that is, to satisfy his insatiable desire for scandal by prompting it and using it in the believer.
2. His purpose is to counter the power of Christ in the life of the believer – cp. **Jude 24**
3. Satan's purpose is to draw a person away from the Lord and one's confidence in Him and enslave them with faulty thinking and false belief – cp. **2 Timothy 2:24-26**.
4. The tragedy of this is that there are believers today who never give any thought at all about the inroads Satan has made in their lives – that they are slowly being “devoured” alive.
5. The only inoculation or antidote to the devouring of our Adversary is to rush to the One who is “able to keep us from falling” – the “Shepherd of our souls” – Jesus – and bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ – cp. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5**
 - a) He is infinitely greater than Satan – **1 John 4:4**
 - b) Christ has rendered him powerless (toothless) by His marvelous death and resurrection – cp. **Hebrews 2:14-15**
 - c) Draw near to Christ Jesus and throw yourself on the mercy and grace of Him who can deliver you from the jaws of blood-thirsty lion who seeks to devour your soul – cp. **James 4:7-8**

II. Readiness to Resist Satan – **5:8-9**

A. Resist Satan's Efforts to Intoxicate – **v. 8a**

1. “*Be sober*” [νήφω] – refers to the opposite condition of being intoxicated – under the influence of wine.
2. As a means of resisting Satan, Peter calls upon us to be “clear-headed” or “well-balanced.”
3. Our roaring adversary will use various “intoxicants” to cloud our spiritual judgment to the place where we sacrifice our commitments to Jesus Christ.
4. In such a condition, that which is unseen and future is overlooked and forgotten – cp. **1 Peter 1:13-16**

B. Resist Satan's Efforts to Induce Sleep – **v. 8b**

1. “*Be on the alert*” [γρηγορέω] – watchful, alert or awake
2. This form of resistance of Satan finds its expression in maintaining a vigilance concerning his efforts to lull us into spiritual sleep.

3. Bunyan illustrates this in reference to the efforts of the adversary to enter Mansoul through various gates (senses) by stealth – a discerning sentinel was needed.

C. Resist Satan's Efforts to Initiate Compromise – **v. 9a.**

1. *"... firm in your faith"* [στερεός] refers to having a compacted, firm and steadfast faith – the idea is that your faith isn't pliable.
2. The call here is to remain firm – committed to the absolutes of God's Word – cp. the deception of Eve, whose faith wavered.
3. This is not a reference to the embrace of the doctrines of the faith, but rather to the God who is revealed in those doctrines.
4. Faith is the conduit through which the power of Christ – the One who has defeated Satan – is made available to the believer and thus, resisting the Devil necessitates an even more blatant faith than ever – cp. **James 4:7-8.**

III. Reviewing the Resistance of the Brethren – **5:9**

A. The Focus on the Conformity of Our Sufferings

1. Here the encouragement comes from awareness that the struggles we endure have been sustained and surmounted by all the people of God – *"knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world."*
2. Our first thought in suffering is that nobody has ever had it "this bad."
3. In reality, nothing we endure is peculiar – cp. **1 Corinthians 10:13.**

B. The Fulfilling of the Charge of the Saints

1. The phrase *"being accomplished"* [ἐπιτελέω] conveys a sense of performing an assigned duty that we successfully complete; to bring to an end as according to a plan.
2. The believer then is not to yearn for the **cessation** of suffering, but for the accomplishing of the **goal** of suffering.
3. These sufferings and oppression by Satan are part of the means by which the believer on earth is made fit for joining the brethren who are "in heaven."
4. It is through suffering that we are perfected – cp. **1:6; Hebrews 2:10.**