

Our Enemy, His Glory

HVFC

August 17, 2025

1 Peter 5:1-11

We took a break from our study of the book of Hebrews this month. And I planned to preach just one Sunday on this passage in 1 Peter. And here we are on our third Sunday. I will finish it up today. And as you know I will be in Arizona next week, delivering a precious package to college.

And then winter will come... because summer is gone with school starting.

Over the past two weeks we have looked at the passage in Peter where he writes to his fellow elders, or leaders of the church. He writes and says that leaders are to shepherd the flock willingly and with compassion, not lording authority over the church as the world does. Our goal is to follow Jesus's example and to be an example to the church. Now that does not mean I am perfect, no one is, including you, but a leader should be open and transparent in his walk of faith, as an example of how to live a Christian life through the good times, the bad times, and the difficult times.

Next Peter speaks to the church. He instructs them to submit to one another. And in our discussion, we are humble when we place other people and consider their interest equal to our own. It is raising our view of other people, rather than following our natural tendencies to push people down to elevate ourselves. And one way we can do that is cloth ourselves in humility as Jesus did on the night he was betrayed, he clothed himself with a servants towel and washed the feet of the disciples. And he could do that knowing that all would abandon him, one deny him, and one betray him because he was under the mighty hand of God, and he had cast all his cares, his

fears, anxieties, and burdens on God. And we can do the same, knowing that God gives the grace and strength to those who humble themselves.

And why are these things important?

Because we have an enemy who walks about seeking to devour our faith.

And if we are divided amongst ourselves, we have done half of the enemies job for him.

Turn with me to 1 Peter 5:8 and we will read there.

1 Peter 5:8-11

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever.

NKJV

Let's Pray.

As I read this chapter, I get the sense of how personal this is for Peter.

All three points he is making here.

He opens with being a co-elder of the church. Yet we see in the Gospels where the disciples argued over who would be the leader of the disciples, and Peter was mentioned in scripture as a leader. And Jesus told them that he would do thing

different. It would not be like the world, where everyone is cutthroat and pushes others down, to get ahead on the ladder of success.

And then last week we talked about how when Peter was dealing with pride on the night Jesus was betrayed. How Peter saw his Lord put on a servants towel and said that Jesus would never wash his feet, only to hear Jesus say that this was the example they were to be to each other and to the church. They were to be clothed in humility just as Jesus was.

And then this morning.

Our passage highlights another personal moment for Peter.

The same night were Peter told Jesus he could not wash his feet, Peter is given some information that would eventually be the inspiration for this book of 1 Peter.

Luke 22:31-32

31 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

NKJV

Imagine how you would receive this information.

Jesus whom has showed you He is the Son of God, says that the enemy of humanity has asked to sift, another word would be devour or destroy, you by name.

And Jesus responds, but I have prayed for you that your faith not fail, but after you have struggled and wandered away, you will come back and when you do remember this moment and strengthen your fellow believers.

Thus Peter is writing to us to encourage and strengthen us in our Faith.

And that is where we are this morning.

Peter starts by reminding us we are to be sober and vigilant because we have an enemy.

1 Peter 5:8-11

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

NKJV

What does sober mean?

The first and obvious answer is “not drunk”.

And yes that does talk about alcohol, and most Christians understand that drunkenness is mentioned by Paul as a sin. And because alcohol has impacted most families in a negative way, even the world understands constant drunkenness to be a problem. Yet are there other ways we can be “drunk”?

Can you be drunk with power? Drunk with pleasure? Drunk with anger?

In this context, to be drunk is to be overwhelmed with something that leads to loss of self-control, clear judgment, and having your wits about you.

So we could say that to be sober is to maintain self-control, clear judgment, and having your wits about you. (alert, sharp, intelligent, to act and think quickly)

Peter is saying that we must be paying attention to what is going on around us. To be in control of our actions and facilities, to always be ready to give a defense or answer for the good news of Jesus.

We can't do that if we are drunk with power, pleasure, anger, emotion, or wine.

Whatever we are drunk with is in control.

Paul and Peter each mention that we are to be sober minded because we have an enemy looking for opportunities.

Next Peter says we are to be vigilant.

This is simple enough. We are to be watchful, aware, and alert.

Most of us have been around little kids, well actually kids of all ages. But I am thinking of toddlers just learning to crawl and walk.

Having had 5 kids, I always heard people say, oh I can't wait for them to start crawling and talking and walking.

I had a different perspective, a dad perspective if you will.

One of my favorite stages of raising kids is being able to put them down, walk away and get something done, or some food or a quick trip to the bathroom, come back and they are in the same place you laid them. That is golden.

However the moment they start crawling, and you look away for 2 seconds, they are gone, crawling to certain death, and it only gets worse when they start walking.

Because as they do and you go to get them, they are looking at you chasing them while walking/running full speed ahead until they make contact.

Peter is telling us to be vigilant, to be aware, alert, watchful, to not wander off to far. There is an enemy that is seeking an opportunity to sift us, to tempt us and draw us away.

1 Peter 5:8-11

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

NKJV

I want to point something out.

Most people read this and quote this as the devil is a lion and want to compare it to Jesus as the Lion.

I want you to read it again, because it does not say the devil is a lion. It says he walks around like a roaring lion.

Lions are a ferocious hunter. And think back to the time when Peter was writing this. They understood the might of a lion in Rome, as they were used for the games in the arena.

Lions in the wild don't hunt big groups. They will walk about and seek an opportunity by roaring and scaring a weaker animal to get separated from the group, and when it does the lion pounces and devours.

He is not a lion, he hunts like a lion. He wants to get us isolated and separated and fighting amongst ourselves so that he can destroy our faith.

Think back to the opening of the chapter, Peter is painting a picture of togetherness, he is a co-elder with the church that is submitting to each other, building each other up, and inviting others into the protection of the flock or the herd. Because we have an enemy that is seeking to separate us and distract us and ultimately destroy our faith in God.

Yet there is good news, the devil, our enemy, is not all powerful.

1 Peter 5:9

Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

NKJV

Most Christians can quote James 4:7, resist the devil and he will flee from you. That is the same Greek word used by Peter.

As people we have lots of ways of resisting. In thinking of kids, they will often resist by running away. Say you ask them to do the dishes, and they resist by finding something to do in the barn. Or maybe you have teenagers, ours are not this way, but you ask them to do something, and they just ignore the direction as if you were merely suggesting something to help with their boredom and they could choose to do or not to do. That isn't the resistance that Peter is talking about.

We can't just ignore him, nor can we always run away.

Peter is telling us we must withstand him.

To stand and face him, steadfastly, or with rocklike firmness, in our faith.

It reminded me of a personal favorite section of scripture that I would like to mimic in my life.

1 Chronicles 12:33

of Zebulun there were fifty thousand who went out to battle, expert in war with all weapons of war, stouthearted men who could keep ranks;

NKJV

I believe this is a picture of what Peter is saying here. As a church of believers we are in a battle with our enemy, and I want to be an expert at every weapon available to me, to be a stouthearted man who can keep ranks, or hold the line, to not break even in the heaviest fights. And to encourage and strengthen us to continue to withstand the enemy.

Thankfully God gives grace to us to be able to withstand our enemy.

And Peter understands this first-hand.

Remember in the scripture in Luke, the devil asked to sift Peter, but Jesus said that he prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail.

But Peter would suffer the consequences of his actions that night.

And would eventually be restored on the beach with Jesus as they ate the fish.

We all wish that life could be easy, that things would go right and that everyone would be happy.

However the truth is that life is hard. With lots of disappointments and suffering. It is a fact of life, and Jesus told us that in this life there will be troubles. And God uses all of them to make us more like him.

1 Peter 5:10-11

10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever.

NKJV

When we were in Greece several years ago, we were at the hotel in Thessalonica. And Autumn and I would always take off from the hotel after the day touring. And at this particular spot, it was away from a lot of things, but it was right on the beach. So we spent the evening walking the beach picking seashells, and for some reason this spot had lots of sea glass.

Are you familiar with sea glass?

It is a piece of broken glass that finds its way into the sea. Much like humanity.

We are all broken in some way, hurting, struggling, and suffering.

And get saved, Jesus forgives our sin, but we are still involved in this life.

Salvation doesn't remove us from the difficulties of life. We still have to work, we get sick, we have bad days, days that we question everything because nothing is going right.

And just like that glass in the ocean, all this sand begins to rub against it, following the movement of the waves and water. We are that glass, the difficult times and seasons are the sands, and life is the waves.

And as we are going through life, and the sands are rubbing against us, and God makes a beautiful work of art.

This is the promise Peter gives us, that through the suffering God perfects us, he completes what he has begun.

He establishes what is right within us.

He strengthens what is weak.

He settles or gives us a firm foundation to live life from.

Stand with me this morning.

What I have learned about this passage that Peter wrote is that he gave us a glimpse of what he walked through.

It wasn't a fable or some story, it was his experience.

He was once the proud leader of the disciples, that argued and tried to stand out above the rest, only to be attacked by the enemy and almost lose everything.

But through those sufferings he has looked back and seen how God has perfect, established, strengthened and settled him into his purpose.

This could be our story as well.

Are we willing to put away pride, embrace humility, face the enemy and allow God to work through our lives to make us into the men and women we were created to be. That is how God gets the glory, when we reflect and fulfil his purpose.

Let's pray