

a Staff, a Towel, a Lion, and a Kiss

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-6 Baptism Class. **Breakfast**. Bulgaria Prayer Mtg. **REAL**. Harvest Festival.
 B. **Prayer**: we desire bullet proof character.

II. Slide7a Intro: *a Staff, a Towel, a Lion, and a Kiss*

- A. **Peter our role model**. Sharing once again from his *real life experiences* of walking with Christ, **not** as an armchair theologian.
1. Peter witnessed Christ's sufferings (1). He was commissioned to care for the sheep (2, John 21:15-17). He saw Christ clothe Himself as a servant & humbly wash the disciples' feet (5, Jn.13). **And** Peter knew what it was to be *unprepared* when Satan was on the prowl for him (8, Mark 14:37).
 2. **As if to say God's *grace* was adequate for me, it will sustain you also.**
- B. **Slide7b** So what's **ministry** supposed to look like? *It's rewarding. You sometimes witness the darkest side of humanity. It's filled with high-highs & low-low's.*
- C. **Church leaders** need to be understanding & forgiving of the people they are serving. **And** equally important, **the flock** is to be understanding of *the church leaders* who serve as their under-shepherds.
1. **We need to** have attitudes of **grace** & provide a lot of *wiggle room* for each other. **We need to** give each other the *freedom to try & fail*, to be *imperfect*, to be *oneself*.
- D. **Slide7c** Long Term & Effective Ministry is never w/o disappointing dips & unexpected turns.
1. **I've** been accused of *wrong motives, criticized, my sincerity questioned*.
 2. **And**, I've made my share of *mistakes, misunderstood people, judged people wrongly, and jumped to conclusions only knowing one side*.

3. **That's ministry in the raw.** Chuck Swindoll said we are, *"Imperfect shepherds, leading imperfect sheep, in the service of a perfect God, who has a perfect plan!"*¹

E. **Outline:** let's see what we can learn from *a Staff, a Towel, a Lion, & a Kiss.*

III. Slide8a **A STAFF (1-4)** *Read 1-4*

A. **Shepherds do what?** – they **feed** (2, *shepherd*) & they **lead** (3, *examples*).

1. Peter learned this *straight from Jesus* in Jn.21. *Feed my lambs. Tend my sheep. Feed my sheep.*
2. *To love to preach is one thing, to love those to whom we preach, quite another.* [I care more about *learning* than about teaching]
3. Slide8b Russian proverb, *Without a shepherd, sheep are not a flock.*

B. **Shepherd** (elder, overseer, pastor) - to tend a flock, the basis for our English word Pastor.

1. We are **under-shepherds**, looking to *the Chief Shepherd*, as our inspiration and model.

C. Turn your eyes away from *self-interest* to the model of the Great Shepherd Himself, **Jesus**.

1. He will indeed reward *their diligent care* of His people, with the *unfading crown of glory*.

D. Slide8c There are **5 Crowns** offered to believers in Scripture:

1. **Crown of Life** (*Blessed is the man who endures tempt ...* James 1:12).
2. **Crown Incorruptible** (1 Cor. 9:25 *we run our race for an eternal prize*).
3. **Crown of Rejoicing** (*it is you in the presence of Jesus* 1 Thes.2:19,20).
4. **Crown of Righteousness** (*all who have loved His appearing* 2Tim.4:5-8).
5. **Crown of Glory** (*here, Shepherd the flock* 1Pet.5:2-4)

- a) Let's keep in mind Paul **isn't** speaking of salvation, but *Rewards*.

¹ Chuck Swindoll, Insights on 1 Pet., pg.234

b) Paul wants us running to the *finish line of life* with our sites on **winning** ... **not** just on *finishing the race*.

E. **Let me speak to all in Leadership Positions:** (tips from Chuck Swindoll)

1. **Remain a good student, stay teachable.** *Read, listen, learn, observe others*
2. **Admitting when you're wrong** is just as important as **standing firm** when you're right.
3. **Leading well includes delegating well.** Others will never do things exactly as you would (& that's good). **Learn to let things go.**
4. **Don't take yourself too seriously.** Laugh often ... *especially at yourself.* Make yourself the brunt of your humor. Point out your own foibles and fumbles. **People love when you're human.**
5. **Get rest. Back off. Loosen up.** Recharge your batteries. Refresh your personal life. Keep yourself from running full throttle day after day.
 - a) Stop repeating statements like, *"I'd rather burn out than rust out!"*
How dumb, either way, you're out! - **Don't go there.**

F. **Slide9a A TOWEL (5-7) Read 5-7**

G. (5) He dealt with the **elder** believers **and now** with the **younger** believers.

H. **Clothe yourself, all of you, with humility** - tie yourself up in humility. [used of a slave who *tied on an apron*]

1. Ellicott says, *it originally referred to a peculiar kind of cape worn by slaves.* **Thus** it was **a badge of servitude.**
2. Peter was prob referring back to when he witnessed Christ doing this, *Jesus rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel & girded Himself.*

I. (7) **Slide9b Rather than** wait for God to take the initiative **&** remove those *anxieties* troubling our hearts, **we are to take responsibility of casting our anxiety upon Him.**

1. **Throw yourself on the mercy and care of God.**

2. This is a decisive action on **our part**. It is neither *passive or partial*.
3. Ps.55:22 **Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.**
4. It's like the story of a man walking down an old dirt road with a backpack on. A man drove up and invited him to jump on the tailgate of his truck. But he noticed that he kept his pack on, he yelled out, "*take your pack off?*" but the traveler said, "*Oh I don't want to impose, it was kind enough for you to pick me up, you shouldn't have to carry my pack as well.*" – "*But whether your pack is on your back or off your back, I have to carry it!*"
 - a) Isn't it so w/our troubles also? Whether you worry or don't worry, it is the Lord who must care for you. **Slide9c** *Jesus is willing to be fully responsible for the things we are anxious about.*

IV. Slide10a **A LION (8-11)** *Read 8-11*

- A. **Slide10b** Pastor Dan and I had the privilege to do a photo Safari while in Tanzania. We had the chance to watch a lion stalk a wildebeest.
 1. Someone is hunting you. He lurks in the tall grass, stalking your every move, waiting for a moment to catch you wandering off or dropping your guard. Because when you do he'll pounce. He knows your strengths, he knows your weaknesses.
 2. Never forget you are his prey. That is why we MUST remain **alert & sober**.
 3. His one purpose is to destroy us. Destroy *our testimony, our hope, our holiness*, & if possible *our lives*. **Be aware of his tactics & have respect for his power.**
- B. So the devil is an adversary, not a friend; he is a roaring lion not a playful pet.
 1. Peter remembers the time where he thought **he** was able to defeat the enemy, **so** he did not heed the Lord's warning.

2. Lk.22:31-34 *Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to **sift** each of you like wheat. 32 But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, **that your faith should not fail**. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.” 33 Peter said, (pridefully) “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.” 34 But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me. [The result? **failure & shame**]*

C. **The devil** (term refers to slander of Gods people). **Satan** (adversary).

In Rev.9:11 it calls him **Abaddon** (Heb. destruction) & **Apollyon** (gk. destroyer).

1. Put these labels together & it describes him as a **dangerous, destructive deceiver who slanders & accuses** us at every opportunity.

D. Here’s what I think the **balance** of how we should respond to him:

E. **Slide10c** Some **underestimate** his power:

1. We need to take him **very seriously**. (stop pray sept/oct **sp attacks**)
2. We don’t need to be intimidated by him, **but** we can’t underestimate his power to inflict great harm on people through **temptation, deception, & destruction**.
3. Satan is the source of all kinds of pain & suffering in this world, even in the lives of believers.
4. His activities can be subtle in the forms of temptation & discouragement; **or** he may unleash fury, tragedy, & destruction.
5. We can’t ignore the potential damage he can do to our **physical & spiritual lives**.

F. **Some overestimate** his power:

1. There is no reason to **overestimate** Satan’s power by ...
2. Believing that **anything bad** that happens to you comes directly from the devil or his demons. Satan **isn’t** the immediate cause of all suffering & sin. [**i.e.** examples of **God** bringing **drought, calamity, disease, etc.**]

3. Fallen, depraved human beings can do enough damage to themselves & others w/o the devil's prodding.
4. Also, *the world system* we are told is *our other enemy*. We do not have just 1 enemy.

G. Slide10d Attributing **too much power** or **too little power** to Satan ... leads to either **overreaction** or a **lack of preparation**.

1. We must be aware of his tactics.

H. What are we to do when standing nose to nose w/the adversary? Panic? Run? Surrender? **Nope! Resist him, stand firm in your faith.** (not in your own ability/like Pete tried, but w/*the unshakeable faith in our all-powerful God*)

1. James 4:7,8 **Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.**

V. Slide11 **A KISS (12-14)** *Read 12-14*

A. Here we find a *big hand writing change* in vs.12-14. From Silas the cultured composer to the rugged fisherman Peter's pen.

B. Pete wraps up with a few cryptic statements: *the lady, the city, & the son.*

1. *The lady (she)* - possibly the church in Rome. (could be his own wife)
2. *The city (Babylon)* - is in modern day Iraq? (Peter's ministry never extended here though). Or it's a figure of speech, referring symbolically to Rome (his later ministry centered in Rome).

a) We are told this name was *code language* for **Rome** in both Jewish & Christian circles in the 1st & 2nd cent's AD.

3. *The son (Mark my son)* - most likely **John Mark**, his son in the faith.

a) **Justin Martyr** (100-165) referred to Mark's gospel as the "*Memoirs of Peter.*"

C. (12) Let's not miss what Peter was hoping to accomplish by writing this letter, let's read vs.12 over again.

D. Keywords: forgiveness, god, Grace, Jesus, peace.