

8 ¶ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.^{9*} But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.¹⁰ ¶ After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.¹¹ To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.¹² Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard *him*), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! 13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and *so does* my son, Mark.¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.

Peter continues with an exhortation to all concerning the enemy of the body of Christ who is the Devil. If you recall, Peter used this similar language earlier in the letter in two places:

1Pe 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1Pe 4:7 The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

We are to keep sober in spirit. Sober is to not only be serious but the metaphor here is as opposed to being drunk. In other words we are to be unaffected by that which would impair our spirit. When a person is drunk, they are not in control of their faculties. They are easily deceived and swayed to do all manner of things. Judgement is impaired and the consequences can be devastating.

We could also describe it as being of a sound mind; one who follows sound reason, and who is not under the control of passion. The idea is, that we should have our desires and passions well regulated. Perhaps the word prudent would come nearer to the meaning of the apostle than any single word which we have.

Prudence is care, caution, and good judgment, as well as wisdom in looking ahead. It is always being prepared for the right choices based on what we see before us as our transformation continues to progress in the righteousness of Christ.

Prayer is an essential element of how we live until Jesus returns.

It is with prayer that we will find our comfort. It is in prayer that rests in the sovereignty of God and his purpose that we will be able to endure those things that are waiting to test us and to try us and to help refine us for the glory of God.

We don't need to be strengthened for a great escape, we need strength to endure.

And now Peter uses the term be sober in relation to staying alert against our adversary the Devil. Nothing has been said about this adversary anywhere else in the letter. Peter has been explicit about the difficulties that are coming for those who are Christ's concerning suffering and persecution. But now he makes them aware that there is another enemy that wants them destroyed.

Peter has encouraged believers with the facts of having so great a salvation and that in a sense we are to be carefree – casting all our anxieties - our cares on him. But to be carefree in that sense of a mindset that rests completely in the promises of God regardless of our circumstances as believers in Christ should not make us careless when it comes to having an adversary.

And yet we will see that this adversary is only a servant of God's greater purpose.

In this exhortation we can once more realize that Peter has recollection from the time he spent with Jesus.

"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:41, NAS95.

Be on the alert for temptation is what Jesus is saying. The temptation at that time was to give in to physical weariness. We need to stay alert to not fall into the temptations that will attempt to keep us from holding to Christ's promises as we suffer and are persecuted.

Spurgeon remarks that "there is no temptation in the world which is so bad as not being tempted at all, for to be tempted will tend to keep us awake. Whereas, being without temptation, flesh and blood are weak. Though the spirit may be willing, yet we may be found falling into slumber. Children do not run away from their father's side when big dogs bark at them. The howlings of the devil may tend to drive us nearer to Christ, may teach us our own weakness, may keep us upon our own watch tower, and be made the means of preservation from other ills." Spurgeon, C. H. Satan, A Defeated Foe)

The ancient sport of falconry used trained hawks or falcons in the pursuit of wild game.

When the "educated predator" was allowed to fly, however, it often rose too high for human eyes to see it. So a hunter often carried a small caged bird called a shrike. By watching the antics of the little bird, the man could always tell where his hawk was, for the shrike instinctively feared the predator and cocked its head to keep it in view.

The Christian desperately needs the alert perception of the shrike when it comes to detecting his spiritual enemy. We're to be always on the alert. It would be nice if God had giant sirens to warn us of an attack by the devil. But the Lord doesn't operate that way. Instead, we must read the Bible regularly, meditate on its truths, maintain a prayerful attitude throughout the day, and be in step with the Holy Spirit. Only then will we be sensitive to an imminent onslaught of the evil one, and be armed by grace to meet it.

This lion, the Devil, produces a howling or roaring sound. The lion uses his roar to frighten his game. By his roar, he immobilizes his victims. His roar is a weapon. What the Devil cannot accomplish through allurements he tries to achieve through dread. Lions usually range near six hundred pounds, standing four feet high. They run at twenty feet per bound and at about a hundred yards in five seconds. They are totally unpredictable. They will attack for no apparent reason. They have extremely powerful voices. Fear will blunt an aggressive Christian life. A roaring lion intimidates by his roar. The Devil intimidates by fear. He casts fear into weak Christians because that will intimidate them from a life of faith. As a lion in the wild chases a herd of gazelles and runs down the weak of the herd, so the Devil usually catches weak Christians first because he freezes them in fear. Fear incapacitates us from moving ahead with our Christian walk. Fear of performing correctly for God, for people and for ourselves.

But perfect love casts out fear.

Satan is a lion who may roar but who has been de-fanged at the cross. Yet the sound of his roar - his deceptive lies - are still potent and he has the power to devour souls and rob Christians of effectiveness.

If a lion wants to eat someone you'd think it would sneak up on them instead of

roaring. In fact that's the way the devil is described in other places: he's like a snake. It's subtle. It can fasten onto your heel before you know its there. It doesn't roar. It hides and slithers. The devil is like that. He's dangerous sometimes because he is subtle and quiet and hidden. But that's not the case here. He is dangerous for other reasons. A lion is dangerous not mainly because it sneaks, but because it's so strong. Even if you know it's there, you're a goner unless you have some power more than your own -- like a rifle, or a gigantic net, or God.

Seeking means to go in search for, to strive to find or to try and discover. Zeteo is present tense indicating that our adversary's "search and destroy" mission is constant, that he is always looking for an opportunity to deceive us, trip us up or overwhelm us. He is not playing games but has as his aim to sow discord, to break fellowship, to accuse God to men, to accuse men to God, to accuse men to each other, to undermine confidence, to silence confession and to get us to stop serving God.

The devil will continually do all he can to strike back at God by staining our lives and spoiling our witness. He is looking for any weakness which he can exploit and sometimes he attacks through an area we thought was our strength. An enemy once took Edinburgh Castle from its steepest side because the occupants assumed that no one would try to do that. All their defenses were placed on what they believed to be the weakest approach, the more gradual slope, and they were deceived and defeated. Be on the alert, for it is true that the devil can even use against us those characteristics which we believe to be our greatest assets.

As Spurgeon says: "Thou wast once a servant of Satan, and no king will willingly lose his subjects. Dost thou think that Satan will let thee alone" (Morning and evening : May 3 AM)

John MacArthur has his usually insightful thoughts on the devil constantly prowling and seeking to devour writing that in the book of Job we see

"the Lord said to Satan...Job 1:8...Have you considered My servant Job?" You want to try to chew on him, see if he'll go down? You want to try to devour Job? "There's no

one like him on earth, a blameless upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And Satan says, Let me have him and I'll show you how strong his faith is. So God said, All right, have at it." And you know the story, no matter what happened in Job's life Satan couldn't devour him. And Job said, "Thou He slay me yet will I trust (hope in) Him. (Job 13:15) And Job said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD. Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God." (Job 1:21-22) And the Lord took everything away from him, everything he owned, his property, took away all of his children, took away all of his wealth, all of his animals. The only thing the Lord left was his wife and I think there were some days when he would gladly have traded her for somebody else because she was always telling him to curse God and die. ("Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!" 10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips." Job 2:9-10) But even she as an instrument of Satan couldn't bring him to do that. But, you see, that's Satan's ploy, to move through the world to find somebody he can consume. The prowling roaring lion is a symbol of viciousness in Scripture."

In short we as believers need to understand Peter's picture in his description of the devil as one who "prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" Peter is painting an ugly portrait of an Adversary with malicious intent moving around wanting to rip your life to shreds. His goal is to devastate and to destroy. Although the Devil cannot take away your salvation, he can , if you are not being sober minded and cautious, help to weaken your life and your testimony in this temporal life.

Satan did not cause Adam to sin, but he was an influence.

Praise God that we are already perfect in Christ and all of our weaknesses are already overcome because of him and that in Christ and with Christ we will stand in glory regardless of our present struggles to be more like Christ.

9* But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

Rather than be devoured by him we are to resist him and we do this by being firm in our faith. Again, where does my faith or increased faith come from? The Word of God and all of the promises that are in Christ.

John wrote to a persecuted church in the Revelation. Let me give you an oversimplified summary of that book. Jesus holds the keys to life and death. Churches may lose their light if they are not truly relying on Christ for all things. Persecution is part of living for Christ until He returns. When He returns, every enemy of Christ will be crushed and all His enemies from the beginning of time will be judged and condemned. They lose - we win in Christ!

We resist by acknowledging all the truth of the word of God that reveals to us who Christ is and who we are in Him and what His purpose is for us.

Peter could have said, Resist him, firm in the faith and go back and read the first nine verses of this letter:

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter 1:1-9, NAS95.

9 But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

Peter is not saying anything new here he is just reminding them that wherever there are Christians they will be suffering to some degree just as they were or will be in the near future. This has proven to be true even at the present moment, somewhere in the

world of God haters who are energized by the same mind as the Devil and yet it is all in the providence of God as we saw in our reference to Job earlier.

10 "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you."

No matter how much suffering is ordained into our lives, it is only for a short time compared to the eternal glory we have in Christ. This is common apostolic truth.

Paul wrote :

"Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this *house* we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- for we walk by faith, not by sight-- we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:8, NAS95

And as we have learned, the elders are to be an example to the flock in godly living even in suffering.

We need to grasp this, brethren. So many Christians are living on false promises of health and wealth and when it does not come then they are told they have a faith problem. This is dung heap religion for that is where these promises come from. They are not found in the Bible. They are the twisted machinations of false teachers whether they are sincere or not. All of these false teachers have been shown that their teaching is not biblical but they refuse to be corrected. Rebuke a heretic like those in Crete,

Tit 1:13* This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith

We need to rest in the promises of Christ along with the surety of those things that Christ said we will encounter: suffering and persecution.

And Peter ends this with the fact that all of this what it is because of who God is. To

Him be dominion forever and forever. He is the Sovereign Lord, the God of all grace.

All grace? What does that mean? It means that Christ is the God of saving grace, of sanctifying grace, of sealing grace and securing grace. He is the giver of whatever measure of grace we need when we need it. Grace is not static. It flows continually from the throne of grace to those who are saved, sanctified, sealed and secured to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus.

12 Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard *him*), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! There is no reason for us not to stand firm in the true grace of God. Peter's entire letter is a teaching on the true grace which enables believers to endure until Christ comes. But we can fail at times to endure as we should yet we will endure to the end if we are Christ's. We are never absolved of our responsibilities in obedience to Christ for this one reason. God has enabled us to do so. We do so imperfectly – Christ did so perfectly and we are in Christ so that we can in any capacity do it in this life even if it is not perfect. Every trial is a way of bringing us closer to the perfection we have in Christ.

Christ in me by the agency of His spirit makes me as a member of the Spirit Covenant one who is able to live in the fullness of God's grace. There was no grace under the Law Covenant at Sinai. It had a gracious purpose but the Covenant was one of death. When God gave grace it was outside of the covenant itself.

The New Covenant –the Spirit Covenant brings life and is completely a Covenant of Grace. It is not merely a new administration of an old covenant of grace it is a New Covenant of the Spirit not of the Law and it's essence is grace and truth and they came together in the person of Jesus Christ our New Covenant. Peter has written that in the difficult times we are to look to Christ and to His truth-His promises to endure to the end. We are a people who were born again unto a living hope with the express purpose of obedience to Jesus Christ. And to stand firm in Christ and His promises is being obedient to Christ who is the embodiment of our laws in the Spirit Covenant and they are also revealed as His truth-His commandments. We do this because we are set apart

1 Peter 5:8-14 New Covenant Baptist Fellowship Pastor Joseph Krygier May 20, 2007
by the work of the Spirit and sprinkled with His blood, not by obeying the Law
Covenant.

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13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.

As Peter closes the letter he encourages the brethren with greetings from others including his spiritual son John Mark who wrote the Gospel of Mark which is probably from the viewpoint of Peter. She is the church in Babylon, which is probably cryptic for Rome. They too would soon know severe persecution by Nero and suffer greatly.

The bond of brotherhood is very evident in this closing.

14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.
This same kiss is mentioned in Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor.16:20, 2 Cor. 13:12 and appears to have been practiced by Jesus and the disciples in Lk. 22:48.

Whatever the circumstances that God puts us in we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. In Christ who is our peace we have peace, it passes all our human comprehension and is a part of that grace in we are called to stand firm.

May we grasp these truth brethren for we do not know what hard times may befall us.

But whatever may come and in whatever degree may we live in obedience unto Christ and His eternal glory.