

Women's Bible Study  
1Peter 5:8-9  
January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Sharyn Balogh

We will be finishing 1Peter Chapter Five with **a warning** in verses 8 and 9; **a promise** in verses 10-11, and **a reminder** that there are others working together in following Jesus, verses 12-14. We will cover verses 8 and 9 today.

1Peter 5:8-9 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 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.

In our last study of 1Peter, we were reminded that God is powerful over all, and that humility and trust is necessary in accepting whatever circumstances are in our life. God does have a perfect plan and will work all things together for our good and His glory. Confidence in God's plan will help to keep us from being anxious about the concerns we have in this world.

Continuing with verses 8 and 9, we read some warnings given to the church by Peter. If you continue with the previous thought in verses 6-7, you might word it this way – *'be humble, don't become anxious, instead be ready'*. **Be of sober spirit, be on the alert.** Meaning literally to abstain from wine; or figuratively, to be discreet, to watch, to keep awake, to be vigilant. We need to back up here and remind ourselves of the culture the Apostle is writing to. Many scholars suggest this was written in or near the time of Nero's persecution of Christians. It was inevitable that being loyal to Christ meant suffering for Him. According to one publication, "Christians were burned every night in Nero's gardens," (*What the Bible is All About, Henrietta Mears, Revised edition, 1983*). I imagine that using any means to avoid the pain of this suffering was enticing. However, Peter placed a higher call upon Christ-believers to remain steadfast and diligent in their walk rather than shrink away and hide. Consider what happens when we focus on anxious thoughts – they can consume us! We can easily become entangled in the cares of this world. Instead, we ought to seek to be disciplined to set our eyes on Jesus, to be certain we are following His truths. We need to be saturated in God's truths

so that we easily and quickly recognize our foes. Picture yourself climbing over a pile of logs. Each step you take is exacting because you are aware that at any moment a wrong move may cause you to fall.

We see this same direction to be on the alert elsewhere in the New Testament.

1Thessalonians 5:6-8 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

2Timothy 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

1Peter 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.

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

We might consider that today we do not experience such persecution as when this was written. Praise God, right now in our nation we have the freedom to openly follow and exalt the God of the Bible. However, this might lead us to become 'sloppy' in our faith, forgetting that there is an unseen enemy ready to crush our witness of Christ.

**Are you careful, vigilant in your walk with Jesus, mindful of checking your thoughts, words, and actions, with the Truth? Do you ask yourself, 'am I representing the God I love right now'?**

**Is your heart devoted to seeking Christ each moment of each day, in every task He has ordained for you?**

**Are you quick to repent when you find yourself 'off-track'?**

Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

This is true and it is scary! But it is necessary to understand that Satan hates God and everyone who belongs to Him. He is your enemy, and He is occupied with making you ineffective for Truth. It is Satan's mission to take you out at your expense. He cannot snatch you from your Father's hand, yet he can injure your testimony; he can set you on the sidelines – if you are not careful. When our affections are greater for the world than for Christ, we are vulnerable to Satan's attack. We have been given a great visual of Satan's tactics. Think of a prowling lion. They are stealthy and quiet, using their padded paws to sneak up on an unsuspecting victim, usually the one who is alone or weakened. The lion's roar is powerful; so is the devil. But God is stronger, He is more powerful.

1John 5:4-5 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Peter well understood the pitfall of not diligently keeping watch over his heart. He was overtaken by fear, not wanting to be associated with Jesus because he might also suffer, and this led to his denial of Jesus. There is good news, God is greater than the enemy and there is a limit to Satan's temptations.

*“-- seeking whom he may devour: This strongly expresses the insatiable rage of the enemy of mankind to hinder their salvation, and the danger we are in from his devices. This account of his malice is given with great propriety by St. Peter, to whom our Lord said, "Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee:" he likewise had good reason to recommend watchfulness, since he had fallen so miserably himself, notwithstanding this warning from his Master.” Drs. Macknight and Doddridge.*

Luke 22:31-32 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

2Corinthians 2:11 so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

Luke 21:34 "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;

1Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

James 4:7-8 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

The Brethren NT Commentary says this of Satan, *"He makes use of the most successful means to chase the saint out of his Christian enclosures, then ensnare, or entrap, and take him as his prey."* **Think! How necessary is Christian fellowship and involvement in a local church? Why?**

Moving on to verse nine, **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.**

We resist the devil by fully relying upon God and His resources. We need to be on guard towards the world's enticements; we need to be on guard when we are feeling weak and beaten down. Perhaps resisting temptations is only part of the equation – we also need to persevere in our understanding and application of God's word. We should not hide; we need to be proactive. **How do you withstand Satan's attacks?**

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

*"Though invulnerable, he is not unconquerable: the weakest follower of God can confound and overpower him, if he continue steadfast in the faith-believing on the Son of God, and walking uprightly before him. To a soul thus engaged he can do no damage."* Adam Clarke's Commentary

A known battle strategy is to become aware of how the enemy thinks and acts so that you recognize their infiltration. Equally important is to have

every weapon and means available to withstand attack. We need to be dressed in the Word of Truth, relying upon God's strength, so we can stand. We do have the perfect resources available to remain firm in our faith. We can be encouraged by the truth that Satan has already been conquered; when we resist his schemes he will run. We know standing firm is possible and God has graciously given us examples of those who are remaining firm. Peter uses the examples of others as an encouragement to the persecuted church.

It is encouraging to know of others who have overcome similar adversity. The thinking is if they are able, then we might be able. It might be tempting to think that our struggles or trials are different from others, but the Apostle Peter reminds us that we are not unique in our difficulties and temptations. God's grace has covered them, and His grace will cover us.

**Think!** None of us chooses to walk through trials yet are not those very trials the proof of our salvation. We should not be surprised by the challenges in our life, rather we should expect them and prepare for them. God uses the difficult to discipline us; He disciplines us because He loves us.

Hebrews 12:5-7 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Psalm 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread?

Psalm 28:8 The Lord is their strength, and He is a saving defense to His anointed.

Psalm 29:11 The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace.

Romans 16:19-20 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good

and innocent in what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

*“Whom, therefore, as you regard your safety and life, be careful stoutly to resist, being steadfast in your adherence to the Christian faith, and armed with the most heroic courage and resolution in its defence. And to this you should the rather attend, as knowing that the trials, with which you are exercised, are not peculiar to you; but that the same afflictions, which you are called to encounter, are accomplished in others of your Christian brethren, who are in the world; and you may reasonably hope, the same grace which is their support will be also yours”. Doddridge*

**How will you respond? What is your foundation for fighting sin in your life? Have you left yourself vulnerable to attack?**

Think upon these truths:

First, you will be challenged by adversity so expect it, prepare for it, trust in God’s power to overcome and lead you to continue in your faith, strong in Him.

Second, do whatever is necessary to strengthen your faith. Take advantage of opportunities to gather with other believers, to carry one another’s burdens, and to encourage one another to remain steadfast.

Third, be reminded who you are in Christ. You have all the resources needed to live according to His word in a manner which glorifies Him.

Four, focus on Him. Follow what you say you believe.

1Corinthians 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

