

FBC POWELL, 7-28-19 AM NOTES
"Counsel for Battle-Weary Christians"
1 Peter 5:7-14

19 (Final) in Series, "Standing Firm in the True Grace of God"

1 Corinthians 16:13 (NKJV) "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong."

1 John 2:15 (NASB) ¹⁵ "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

1 Corinthians 3:1, 3 (NASB) ¹ "And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ...³ for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"

I. Be Humble Before a Caring God (v. 7)

A. The Action – Casting (v. 7a)

B. The Object – Anxieties (v. 7b)

Proverbs 29:23 (NASB) "A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor."

C. The Motive – He Cares (v. 7c)

II. Be Alert to the Enemy's Plan (vv. 8-9)

A. Recognize His Motives (v. 8a)

Revelation 12:10b (NASB) "...for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night."

B. Respect His Might (v. 8b)

Revelation 5:5b (NASB) "Behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome..."

Jude 1:9 (NASB) "But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'"

C. Respect His Methods (v. 9)

1 John 4:4b (NASB) "...greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."

James 4:7 (NASB) "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB) "No temptation [trial] 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."

1 Peter 5:9 (NASB) "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."

III. Be Matured by the God of All Grace (v. 10)

Philippians 3:20 (NASB) “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

A. An Earthly Perspective Overlooks God’s Grace (v. 10a)

1 Peter 5:12b (NASB) “...testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!”

Ephesians 1:6 (NASB) “To the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

B. An Earthly Perspective Overlooks God’s Goals (v. 10b-e)

1. He Perfects Us (v. 10b)

2. He Confirms Us (v. 10c)

3. He Strengthens Us (v. 10d)

4. He Establishes Us (v. 10e)

Conclusion

1 Peter 5:12-14 (NASB) 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! ¹³She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark. ¹⁴Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.”

Sermon 19: Counsel for Battle Weary Christians

1 Peter 5:7-14

Biblical Christianity is not for cowards and those who choose to take the path of least resistance. 1 Corinthians 16:13 (NKJV): “Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.” Many Bible scholars have reduced the constant battles the Christian faces to three battle fronts – the world, the flesh, and the devil. In the New Testament, the world is a system of values that are the opposite of God’s values. The world is summarized in 1 John 2:15: “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” Here are some examples of the warfare between God’s values and the world’s values: God values humility while the world values pride. God values giving, but the world values getting and getting more and more. God values all human life, starting at conception. The world values the choice of having a child or killing the child based on the decision of the mother. We could go on and on with scores of examples, but I think you get the point.

The second arena of warfare is the flesh. 1 Corinthians 3:1, 3: “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ... ³ for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?” For Christians, the flesh used in this negative context is the *self-life*. It is living based on our own strength and yielding to the power of indwelling sin that results in a life of frustration that is devoid of genuine joy and consistent victory over sin. The Scriptures show us that every believer is either living in the power of the Holy Spirit who indwells them or the old programming of the flesh.

The third area of warfare is with the devil. The devil (Satan, Lucifer, the evil one), was created as the highest-ranking angel. However, he desired to be equal with God. As a result, he was cast from Heaven along with a third of the angels who followed him. Those fallen angels are called demons. Satan, the devil, is not a medieval myth. He is real and he along with his demons seeks to deceive, discourage, and de-rail God’s people. He desires to keep the lost from hearing the good news (the Gospel) that God has made a way to reconcile ruined sinners unto Himself through the crucifixion and resurrection of His Son – the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you see what I mean when I say that true Christianity is not for cowards! As we battle with the world, the flesh, and the devil, we must be continually on guard and continually wearing the armor that is described in Ephesians 6:10-18. Because of these battles, true Christians become battle weary and tend to lose their joy. This message focuses on counsel for battle weary Christians.

I. Be Humble before a Caring God (v. 7)

Verse 7 is describing how humility acts. Humility casts all our anxieties on the Lord who cares for us. The word “anxiety” is referring to that which divides us or pulls us in a different direction. It means to be divided or distracted. A paraphrase would be “casting all that causes you to be anxious on Him.” The word “casting” in verse 7 means to make a once for all deposit and leave it there.

Have you ever thought of anxiety or worry as a manifestation of pride? It doesn’t look like pride, but pride is really sneaky. Worry or anxiety involves a refusal to rest in and live in complete dependence on the One who alone controls the future. Humility simply rests in complete dependence on our sovereign God. Anxiety proudly refuses to rest in God’s sovereign plan and refuses to trust Him for the grace we will need when that unknown future becomes the present. Worry is the primary manifestation of pride! Humble people rest in the Lord and refuse to worry. Let’s look closely at verse 7.

A. The Action – Casting (v. 7a)

The Greek word for “casting” means to throw upon. If you’ve ever done much horseback riding, it is the picture of taking that heavy saddle and “casting” it upon the strong back of the horse. The tense of the word indicates a onetime once for all act of throwing my care (that which is the object of my worry) upon the Lord and not taking it back. You don’t partially cast a care upon the Lord; it is all or nothing.

What would you think if you saw a man sitting on a powerful horse, and that man had on *his* shoulders, not the horse’s back, a large thirty-five-pound western saddle? Suppose you come alongside the man and say, “Sir, why don’t you put the saddle on the horse and you just sit comfortably on the saddle and let the horse do all the work?” The man answers, “Oh no, it is

enough that the poor horse is carrying me; I couldn't ask the horse to carry the saddle also." You would know immediately that the man was about "a quart low". Think how foolish it is to say that you trust your whole being for all eternity to Jesus and yet you can't trust Him for some need.

B. The Object – Anxieties (v. 7b)

That Greek word translated "anxiety" literally means to be pulled in different directions. Have you ever heard someone say, "This thing is tearing me apart"? That's what "anxiety" means. I want you to see something in this text. Look at the first few words of verse six, "Therefore humble yourselves..." and then verse seven, "casting all your anxiety on Him..." Casting our anxieties upon Him is how we humble ourselves! Therefore, to refuse to cast your anxieties upon Him is pride which puts you in the position of being resisted by God. When you look at it through biblical lens, anxiety or worry is just not real brilliant. We are saying, Lord, you are not sufficient.

Where humility begins, anxiety or worry ends and where worry or anxiety begins, humility ends, and pride takes over. Proverbs 29:23: "A man's pride will bring him low, But a humble spirit will obtain honor."

C. The Motive – He Cares (v. 7c)

The reason He invites us to cast our anxieties upon Him is that he cares for us. The J. B. Phillips paraphrase says, "...you are His personal concern". This is the only explanation for His invitation to you to cast your cares on Him; He cares for you.

The humblest thing we can do is to cast our anxiety on Him who cares for us and rest in Him instead of being pulled apart.

II. Be Alert to the Enemy's Plan (vv. 8, 9)

The phrase "sober spirit" means to be watchful and mentally self-controlled. The opposite would be flippant and careless. This would be a good place to say that we need to be biblically balanced in our view of and approach to Satan. I don't like making jokes concerning the devil; I don't like to treat him lightly. He is real. I am not afraid of him when I am filled with and walking in the Spirit, because "greater is He who is within me than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). However, don't ever get the idea that in your own strength you can handle him. The reason we are told to be "on the alert" (literally to "stay awake") is that He is powerful, evil and a schemer (deceiver). This shouldn't scare you. This truth ought to motivate you to be totally yielded to and praying for the constant filling of the Holy Spirit. What is involved in being alert?

A. Recognize His Motives (v. 8a)

Satan's motive is to devour you! The imagery Peter uses here is a shepherd who is watching the flock at night. In biblical times, lions were not that uncommon in Palestine. Often at night a lion would stalk, circle around the flock looking for a sheep that was vulnerable to being devoured. Learn this, Satan and his demons want to devour you, to render your testimony ineffective, and take away your joy and influence. The Bible is clear that a regenerate (saved) person, a person who is "in Christ" cannot be taken out of their union with Christ. However, saved people can lose their joy, their peace, their testimony with non-believers, and their influence with fellow believers.

We learn a lot about our enemy by looking at the different names or descriptions attributed to him. Let's look at two of those names. The first name is "adversary" in verse 8. That word refers to an opponent in a lawsuit who is accusing you of wrong. We see an example of that in Revelation 12:10b: "...for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night." The enemy comes to us to accuse us and as our text says "to devour" us.

A second name our enemy is given in verse 8 is "devil". The word "devil" (*diabolos*) means one that falsely accuses, slanders, and divides people.

Here is the main point: We have a real enemy. He is a personal created being. He is our adversary! He seeks to destroy those that God loves. He will do anything he can do to disturb your mind, deceive your heart, and defeat your life. Don't be ignorant of his motives.

B. Respect His Might (v. 8b)

I don't mean to "respect" him in the sense of honoring him. I mean to respect in the sense of recognizing his power. Several years ago, we had a decorative light in the bathroom that that hung on a chain. One day the bulb was flickering, and I grabbed hold of the chain and the top of the bulb to make sure it was screwed in all the way. I had a "shocking experience"! It knocked me back and broke the decorative chain and the light fixture came crashing down into the lavatory. My problem was a lack of respect for electricity.

Satan is the second most powerful being in existence. Only our triune God – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit has more (infinitely more) power than does the enemy of our souls. Never forget that this "roaring lion" in verse 8 can only be defeated by the one who is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah". Revelation 5:5: "... behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome..." I would avoid jokes about him or treating this evil one with flippancy. We read in Jude 1:9: "But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'" Respect his power, never take him lightly, be sober and vigilant lest he "devour you".

C. Resist His Methods (v. 9)

Allow me to emphasize again the balance we must keep - we respect his power, but we do not live in fear of Satan. 1 John 4:4b: "... greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." Our command is not to pursue Satan, seek "power encounters" (some teach this, but I find no merit for it in Scripture), or taunt him. Again, our command is to "resist him". The Greek word translated "resist" is a military word which means to stand firm against the onslaught of an enemy. James 4:7: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

We resist standing strong and sure on the facts of our faith – he is a defeated foe, he cannot prevail as long as we stand against him in the power, the might, and at the direction of Christ and not in our own strength.

Oh, dear people, be steadfast in the faith! Don't be caught unprepared when times of disappointment and times of trials come.

III. Be Matured by the God of All Grace (v. 10)

All through this series, I have been encouraging you to develop a pilgrim's mentality. Remember that a pilgrim is a traveler on the way home. Christians must never see this world as being home. We are in a foreign land going home – Heaven is home! Philippians 3:20: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ”. The moment that we fail to acknowledge that we are pilgrims here, we are in extreme danger! How do we know that we've lost the perspective of a pilgrim? It is when our identity, our goals, our joy, our worth, our treasure is tied to things that happen here on this earth. Allow me to give you some specifics of an earthly perspective.

A. An Earthly Perspective Overlooks God's Grace (v. 10a)

In this passage, Peter describes our God as “the God of all grace”. That means that all true grace, saving grace, suffering grace, enabling grace dying grace, persecution grace, maturing grace – all grace comes from, flows out from our God. He is the depository and the manufacturer of all grace. There is no other source of true grace. That grace has been one of the main themes of this series. In fact, our title of this series came from 1 Peter 5:12b: “...testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!” When we look to our Lord and not ourselves, our family, our “luck”, our retirement account, we see that His grace is always sufficient.

An earthly perspective trusts in our “natural” abilities, our hard work, our training, and experience; but a heavenly perspective realizes that everything good that we have is 100% grace. He called us to salvation by grace, He saved us by grace, He keeps us by grace, He enables us to walk with Him by grace, He takes us through suffering by grace, and He takes us to Heaven by grace. That makes me want to say with the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:6: “to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

B. An Earthly Perspective Overlooks God's Goal (v. 10b-e)

In the last part of verse 10 Peter tells us specifically what God accomplishes in us through suffering.

1. He Perfects Us (v. 10b)

The Greek word here means to mend or make fit for use. It was used of setting a broken bone. It means to fit something for its intended use. The God of all grace allows us to suffer a while that the suffering fits us for our intended purpose. There are some things that we will never be fit for until we have gone through the school of suffering.

2. He Confirms Us (v. 10c)

This means to put on a solid foundation, to be grounded. Trials and suffering ground us in what is eternal.

3. He Strengthens Us (v. 10d)

Just as working strengthens our physical muscles, trials, and suffering strengthens us in obeying the directions of the Lord.

4. He Establishes Us (v. 10e)

To establish us means to make us firm and steadfast; to provide a foundation. Trials and suffering take our roots down deep and that leads to stability. You can go to seminars or read a book or get a degree, but God's best school is the school of suffering.

Conclusion (vv. 12-14)

Paul closes out this wonderful epistle! If you are going through a difficult time, let me suggest that you spend a significant amount of time on this passage. God is at work in you. It involves suffering. It always involves dying – dying to your goals, and your stuff. It is equipping you to have an impact with all that you encounter. Don't run from God.

NASB (New American Standard Bible)

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