

# Sermon

## VICTORS OR VICTIMS: THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES

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*Bible Reading: 1 Peter 5:1-11*

*Text: 1 Peter 5:8-9*

Message : Since Jesus has saved us out of darkness, we are to resist the Devil by every means

### I. Introduction

### II. Since Jesus has saved you out of darkness, resist the Devil by knowing who he really is (5:8b)

#### A. Our Adversary

1. Peter calls the Devil the believer's adversary or enemy? He calls the Devil, **your** adversary. (5:8)
2. But that's not always the case. The Devil becomes our adversary only because as Peter has said earlier in 1 Pet 2:9 -we have been called out of darkness into God's marvellous light.
3. Outside of Christ Jesus, you are a follower of the prince of the darkness, Eph 2:2. His evil spirit is at work in you. You are his ally and pawn. Willingly or unwittingly you are fulfilling his agenda in the world. Hence, there is this urgent gospel call to seek to be freed from the Devil's bondage by believing in Jesus.
4. Church-goers are not free us from this darkness. Jesus told the orthodox religious of his day in John 8:44 – You are the children of the devil.

#### B. His nature

1. The word adversary or *antidikos* has the meaning of a prosecutor in a law court or an opponent in a lawsuit whose sole aim is to pin crimes on to believers. The Devil does this day and night . Rev 12:9-10. The devil as a murderer and father of lies. Joh 8:45.
2. Further, Devil or *diabolos* means a slanderer, one who defames, falsely accuses and unjustly criticizes to hurt (malign) and condemn to break a relationship.
3. He slanders man to God. He slanders man against man He causes division and undermines the love of brethren ( 1 Tim 3:11, Titus 2:3)

### C. His tactics

1. He operates by stalking his unsuspecting prey Job1:7 and orchestrating circumstances for the right opportunity for his host of junior demons to pounce on his victims.
2. He seeks out his victims. In deceiving his prey, he uses his evil influence directly or indirectly with neutral materials such as music, literature, films, food, fashion and so forth to tempt, manipulate, lure in order to destroy.
3. The Devil's larger and wicked scheme is destroying God's kingdom and separating souls from Christ.
4. John said in 1 John 5:19, the world is under the power of the Devil.
5. We have a tendency to trivialize this adversary. Keeping unbelievers blind to the gospel and believers distracted from Christ is his main strategy.
6. The Devil is also a wild roaring hungry man-eating lion. His roar is a picture of intimidation, strength and power especially under his command is an army of demons (Eph. 6:11–12).
7. Left to ourselves we are no match for the Devil and his demons. They can have great, destructive, influence on us.
8. But the Devil's roar can also melt into a smile when he can't get his way. He has the ability to transform himself even into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

### D. His destiny

1. But no matter how strong the Devil may be, he is still only a creature. The Bible does not teach that God and the Devil are equal in power and strength. Instead, the Devil is subject to the will of our Father in Heaven (Job 1-2). Satan and his demons can neither indwell believers nor control our minds (1 Joh 4:4 - greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world).
2. In Rev 12:7-11 and Heb 2:14-15, we are told of his final destruction together with his army of demons  
*“Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery”*. Heb 2:14-15

### **III. Since Jesus has saved you out of darkness, resist the Devil by steadfast faith (5:9)**

1. The Christian wages spiritual warfare on 3 fronts. The 3 battlefronts are the world, our flesh, and the Devil himself. But we end up losing the spiritual war on all fronts when in the very first place we forget or trivialize the existence of the Devil.
2. C.S. Lewis, in his Screwtape Letters, said: “There are two equal and opposite errors concerning the devil. One is to disbelieve he exists. The other is to be obsessed with him.

#### **A. Resist with vigilance and soberness (5:8a)**

1. The main focus in our fight with the Devil is to resist him. To be able to resist the Devil, we have first of all, to be sober and to be vigilant as v8 tells us. To be sober is to be self-controlled or temperate. It is in contrast with being drunk. And to be vigilant is to be awake and watchful or alert. This in contrast with being sleepy or drowsy.
2. Peter knew what it was to be lacking in vigilance. He slept instead of watching and praying at Gethsemane.
3. We are not stronger than Peter. Be self-control and vigilant.

#### **B. Resist with steadfast faith (5:9a)**

1. When we fight against the Devil, Peter tells us to resist rather than run away as in the case of sins such as idolatry, fornication, lusts, etc. James 4:7, Eph 6:13.
2. It's our natural tendency to quit at the first sign of loss, sufferings or pain especially in this comfortable generation of ours.
3. The divine armour in Eph 6 does not cover the back. The breastplate protects only the front.
4. Christian soldiers are to stand their ground in the face of the attacks of the evil one.
5. Steadfast can be translated as firm, sure, immovable or strong. Our resisting the Devil is not based on our personal tenacity, strength or ability. It is founded on a God-given trust in adhering firmly in the faith of death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. It is through dying and the raising of Jesus that Jesus broke and overcome the power of the Devil who has the power of death.
6. Believers are to have the firm conviction and persuasion of the finished and final work of Christ at Calvary. This is his divine armour..

7. The Christian soldier might falter. But at the end of the fight he will remain standing as Paul assures in Eph 6:13, with the words “having done all, to stand”. Calvin commenting on this verse says that there will be no danger which may not be successfully met by the power of God. Nor will any who, with this assistance, fight against Satan, fail in the day of battle.

#### **IV. Since Jesus has saved you out of darkness, resist the Devil by the encouragement that you are not alone in your sufferings (5:9b)**

1. Finally, Peter encourages believers with the observation that these kinds of sufferings are common to all the brethren.
2. Because fellow-Christians suffer these same sufferings, there is encouragement in the following ways:
  - a. To be afflicted as a result of this battle, is a mark of Christian brotherhood: it is a sign that we belong to God’s family.
  - b. We are in circumstances where we may have sympathy and support from the suffering Christian family.
  - c. When Peter speaks of the suffering that must be ‘accomplished’ or ‘brought to its end’ by the ‘brethren’, he means that their suffering has its place in God’s plan for His kingdom of justice, peace and glory.
  - d. That our brethren were enabled to bear their sufferings should be an encouragement to prove to us that we would also be able. The grace which sustained them will sustain us.

#### **V. Conclusion**