

Standing Fast in the Grace of God

“Stedfast in the Faith”

1 Peter 5:8-11

In these verses, Peter continues speaking to believers who are living under real pressure and persecution in a very hostile world. In the previous verses (vv. 5-7), he called them to humility — to be “clothed with humility” toward one another, to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and to cast all their care upon Him. But that humility was never meant to become carelessness. Casting our care on God does not mean forgetting that we have an enemy. Trust in God does not cancel vigilance; it demands it.

So now Peter turns from the believer’s posture under God’s hand to the believer’s alertness in spiritual conflict. He reminds these saints — and us — that the Christian life is not lived on neutral ground. We are called to be steadfast because the conflict is real, the adversary is active, and the grace of God is sufficient.

I. THE REALITY OF THE CONFLICT — v. 8

A. The character of the believer’s watchfulness

1. “*Be sober*” (νήψατε) — a command to be self-controlled, clear-headed. It speaks of spiritual steadiness, mental clarity, disciplined judgement, and freedom from carelessness.

1 Peter 1:13

¹³ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 4:7

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

2. *"Be vigilant"* (γρηγορήσατε) — a command to stay awake, keep watch, remain alert. In context here, it means to not assume there is no danger.
- Sobriety has to do with inward self-control while vigilance has to do with outward watchfulness.

B. The identity of the believer's adversary

"Your adversary the devil"

1. *"Your adversary"* (ἀντίδικος)
 - a) This is an opponent or adversary who brings a case against another — often used in a legal sense for an opponent in court.
 - b) It isn't just saying "your enemy," though that is true. It says "your adversary," a word suggesting hostility, opposition, active accusation, or one set against you.

Revelation 12:10

¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

- c) The word highlights the personal nature of the conflict.
 - d) This is not only that Christians struggle against bad circumstances or vague evil influences. There is a real, personal adversary.
2. *"The devil"* (διάβολος)

- a) As we've seen before, the term means slanderer or accuser; one who throws accusations across. It emphasizes his malicious, lying, accusatory character.
- b) We need to be careful we don't go to extremes with this. One extreme is that people tend to deny or minimize the devil, and the other is they become fascinated and imbalanced about him.

Peter doesn't do either — he is direct that the devil is real, he is your adversary, and you must take him seriously, and he moves on.

C. The danger of the adversary's activity

1. "*As a roaring lion*" (ὡς λέων ὠρυόμενος)
 - a) "*Lion*" suggests strength, danger, ferocity, and terror.
 - b) "*Roaring*" is in a verb tense (present middle/passive participle) that gives the sense of ongoing action. The picture of a "*roaring lion*" is to demonstrate a threatening enemy who seeks to strike paralyzing fear, as a lion does with his roar.
2. "*Walketh about*" (περιπατεῖ) — as with "*roaring*," the present tense of this verb shows ongoing activity. He is walking about, moving about, prowling about. He is actively, continually engaged.

Job 1:7 [and 2:2]

⁷ And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

3. *"Seeking whom he may devour"* (ζητῶν τίνα καταπίη)

- a) *"Seeking"* — another present participle showing ongoing action. He is actively seeking, looking for opportunity, searching for prey.
- b) *"Whom"* — he is looking for victims.

Luke 22:31

³¹ And the Lord said, *Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:*

- c) *"He may devour"* — means to swallow down, gulp down, devour utterly.
- d) For believers, this doesn't mean the devil can destroy our salvation, but it does mean he can overwhelm us, ruin our testimony, shatter our usefulness, bring severe spiritual damage, and crush through fear, temptation, compromise, discouragement, or persecution.

II. THE RESPONSE OF THE CHRISTIAN — VS. 9

A. Resist the devil — *"whom [the devil] resist"*

- 1. *"Whom"* (ὃς) points directly back to the devil in verse 8. Peter is saying that this adversary is not to be courted, entertained, negotiated with, or ignored — he is to be resisted.
- 2. *"Resist"* (ἀντίστητε)
 - a) This is an imperative meaning to stand against, oppose, withstand.
 - b) The term carries the idea of taking one's stand against an opponent.

Ephesians 6:13

¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

James 4:7

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- c) The context shows that this resistance must be carried out in faith, not in fleshly self-assertion.

B. Remain “steadfast in the faith”

1. “*Stedfast*” (στερεοί) — firm, solid, fixed, stable.
 - a) The idea is settled firmness. The call is to stand with stability rather than wavering.
 - b) This is necessary because the devil often works through fear, confusion, discouragement, instability, compromise, guilt.
 2. “*In the faith*” (τῇ πίστει) — this speaks of two things:
 - a) Faith as personal trust — we can resist the devil by continued confidence in God. We stand against the devil by trusting God.
 - b) Faith as the Christian truth — we are to also remain steadfast in what we believe. As noted, the devil works through lies, deception, accusation, fear, and pressure. We must stand firm in the Gospel truth and not be moved.
- The text isn’t saying resist and then separately: be steadfast. It’s saying that the steadfastness explains how the resistance is to take place.

C. Remember the shared suffering of the saints (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)

"Knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world"

1. *"Knowing"* (εἰδότες) — this introduces something believers are to keep in mind as part of our steadfast response. It shows that the believer resists not only by what he does, but by what he knows.
2. *"The same afflictions"* (τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων)
 - a) The believers undergoing the persecution then (and believers today) are reminded that their sufferings are not unique. The same kind of sufferings were being experienced by other believers. This isn't meant to minimize their pain, but to place them in the fellowship of the saints.
 - b) One of Satan's effective tools is isolation: "No one understands"; "No one else has to deal with this"; "Your case is different"; "You are alone in this conflict," etc.
3. *"Are accomplished"* (ἐπιτελεῖσθαι) — suffering is being experienced by the whole family of God.
4. *"In your brethren"* (ἐν τῇ ἀδελφότητι) — they were reminded that although they were suffering, they belonged to a larger fellowship of believers.
5. *"That are in the world"* — saints around the world.

III. THE REASSURANCE OF GRACE — VS. 10-11

A. The source of your help — “*the God of all grace*”

1. “*But*” (δὲ) — Peter is contrasting everything just said about the devil, conflict, and suffering with the greater reality of God’s grace.
2. “*The God of all grace*” (ὁ θεὸς πάσης χάριτος) — this means that every needed grace is found in Him, every sustaining grace comes from Him, every restoring grace belongs to Him. There is no deficiency in His supply.
 - Whatever the conflict or trial requires, the God of all grace is sufficient to supply.

B. The certainty of our future

“Who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus”

1. “*Who hath called us*” (ὁ καλέσας ἡμᾶς) — this is God’s saving call; His gracious summons that has brought His people into salvation and fixed their future.
2. “*Unto His eternal glory*” (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν) — we are reminded where grace will take us: “*His eternal glory*.”

Peter has repeatedly set present suffering in light of future glory (1:6-7; 4:13; 5:1, 4).

3. “*By Christ Jesus*” (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) — this calling to glory is only ours through union (“by” or “in”) with Christ.

C. The season of our suffering

“After that ye have suffered a little while”

1. *"After that ye have suffered"* (παθόντας) — Peter doesn't deny suffering. He shows that there is a purpose for our suffering.
2. *"A little while"* (ὀλίγον) — this is a critical point to see. Measured against God's *"eternal glory,"* and His eternal purpose, and everlasting life with Him, suffering is only for *"a little while."*

D. The promise of our establishment

"Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you"

1. *"Make you perfect"* (καταρτίσει)
 - a) Carries the idea of restore, mend, fit, complete, put in proper condition. It's used elsewhere in Scripture for mending nets, restoring what is lacking, or putting something in order.
 - b) This isn't speaking of sinless perfection, but restoration and completion. What the suffering and trials have shaken, God will restore.
2. *"Stablish"* (στηρίξει) — to make firm or set fast. What God commands in verse 9 (*"stedfast in the faith"*) He promises to support.
3. *"Strengthen"* (σθενώσει) — this speaks to imparting strength. God doesn't simply tell believers to do better and then leave them on their own. He supplies the strength for them to do what is required. This is grace, not demand.
4. *"Settle you"* (θεμελιώσει) — this has the idea of laying a foundation, grounding firmly, or making secure. It suggests deep stability, not just temporary encouragement.

- These future verbs pile up, so to speak, to give the fullness and certainty of God's grace and help. It's as if He is determined to reassure the suffering believers from all angles.

In other words, God will restore you, stabilize you, strengthen you, and firmly ground you.

E. The praise due to God alone — v. 11

1. "*Glory*" (ἡ δόξα) — literally, *the glory* — He is worthy of praise, honor, and worship.
2. "*Dominion*" (τὸ κράτος) — *the dominion* — might, power, ruling authority. Peter has just spoken of the devil as an adversary. The adversary may "*walk about*" (prowl), but dominion belongs to God, not him. The "*roaring lion*" is not sovereign — only God is.
3. "*For ever and ever. Amen*" — the final word on the matter shows that God's reign is absolute and forever.

Conclusion:

Peter's message is clear: do not underestimate the conflict, do not fail in the response, and do not forget the grace of God. Be sober; be vigilant; resist the devil; and stand steadfast in the faith. And when the struggle feels hard, remember that suffering is only for a while, but the God of all grace is forever. The lion may roar, but dominion belongs to God.