

Excel Still More: Grow in your Defensive Life (1 Peter 5:8-11)

- As we endeavor to live our life “to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31), God tells us we will face three enemies:
 - 1) The worldly system of evil (1 John 2:15)
 - 2) The fleshly lusts “*that wage war against the soul*” (1 Pet. 2:11)
 - 3) The Satanic army of terrorists who seek to “*steal, kill and destroy*” (John 10:10a)
- Jesus came to “*destroy the works of the devil*” (1 John 3:9) which “*rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son*” (Col. 1:13). Satan is a defeated foe, yet He is alive and active and God has given believers powerful defenses to utilize.
- In 1 Peter 5:8-11, God gives us three defensive strategies that can keep us walking in victory.

1. Use the defense of sober-minded readiness (v.8)

- God calls us to know our enemy, so we can be ready to “*fight the good fight of faith*”
 - “*be of sober spirit*” (stay calm and clear-headed)
 - “*be on the alert*” (stay watchful and ready to respond as needed)
- Readiness demands a **serious recognition** (“*your adversary the devil*”)
 - Believers are targeted by an “*adversary*” (an opponent in a lawsuit or an enemy)
 - Believers are targeted by “*the devil*” (a malicious slanderer and false accuser)
 - The devil and his demonic force are spirit beings (immaterial, angel of light), a sensing beings (exhibits intellect, emotion, will with moral culpability), supernatural beings (has access to God, dwells in heavenly places, roams around on the earth), strong beings (controls demonic kingdom, world system of unbelievers, uses the forces of nature, bodies of animals, influences leaders, inflicts disease, possesses people, performs false miracles), and sinister beings (described with 19 names or designations: anointed cherub, star of the morning, prince of the power of air, god of this age, ruler of demons, the enemy, the authority of darkness, the ruler of this world, Satan, devil, serpent of old, the great red dragon, wicked one, Belial, angel of light, father of lies, tempter, accuser of the brethren, deceiver, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience)
- Readiness demands a **serious respect** (“*prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*”)
 - We can’t underestimate his power (2 Cor. 2:11) or overestimate his power (Heb. 2:14)
 - Satan is proactive (“*prowls around*”: He’ll find you), powerful (“*a roaring lion seeking someone to devour*”: He is always working to ruin, destroy, tempt, tear apart, defile, deceive, etc.) and persistent (“*seeking*”)
 - Revelation 12 tells us the devil has four main objects: Jesus Christ (12:4-5); Israel (12:6, 12-17); angels (12:7-8); and believers (12:10,17) as he uses “*schemes*” (Eph. 6:11 – craftiness, trickery, cunning) to defeat us.
 - Satan’s goal is to dethrone God (Rev. 13:13-18, 12-15) and his game plan is to keep unbelievers deceived and believers struggling and falling prey to temptation.

2. Use the defense of strong resistance (v. 9)

- We are commanded to “*resist*” (to oppose or stand against – James 4:7; Eph. 6:13) and to do it “*firm in your faith*” (be stiff, solid and stable)
- How can we stand firm in our faith?
 - a) Stand firm in the authority of your faith (God’s Word) like our Lord did (“*it is written*” 3x) and use the “*sword of the Spirit*” (Eph. 6:17)
 - b) Stand firm in the access of your faith (prayer: “*keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*” – Matt 26:41)

- c) Stand firm in the appropriation of your faith (James 4:6: *“submit therefore to God, resist the devil”*)
- d) Stand firm using the armor of your faith (Eph. 6:10-18: *“put on the full armor of God [6 pieces], so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil”*)
- e) Stand firm in the assurance of your faith (1 Jn 4:4, 2 Thess. 3:3)
- f) Stand firm in the awareness of your faith (Satan works by permission: Job in Job 1, Peter in Luke 22:31; Paul in 2 Cor. 12:8-10)
- g) Stand firm in the affinity of your faith (v. 9: *“knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world”*)

3. Use the defense of supernatural refinement (v. 10-11)

- God uses a very unconventional weapon against our enemy and for our protection. He uses Satanic suffering to shape our faith, not to allow ruin in our lives.
- God’s refinement is painful (*“suffering”*)
- God’s refinement is passing (*“for a little while”*). God controls the level of our temptation (1 Cor. 10:13)
- God’s refinement is providential (*“the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you”*).
 - As the *“God of all grace”*, He gets us in the kingdom, keeps us in the kingdom, and gets us all the way to the finish line.
 - He orchestrates Satan’s assaults to *“perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you”*
- How can we survive Satan’s assault? Because God *“called you to His eternal glory in Christ”*
- How can we be sure? Nothing nor nobody can override His plans (v. 11)