

# 1 Peter 5:8-14

## Subject: Stand firm in God's grace

Have you ever felt like someone had it out for you? Bad things keep happening and you are wondering if you are part of a bad joke or that someone just doesn't like you? Peter sums up his letter with why all this suffering is happening and who is responsible for it.

Verse 8 – James 4:7

Here we find that Peter is attributing the suffering going to be as a result of Satan. He calls him a lion to show the ferociousness of what Satan wants to do to us. His only desire is to devour us like a lion and his prey in order to keep us from God.

Self-controlled and alert – Also be sober minded – Don't let anything mess with your mind about what is going on, thinking that God is not real, that Jesus didn't really die, or questioning where God is through all of this fear.

This reminds me of Star Wars: Episode II – We see the progression of a teenage Anakin Skywalker and his progression to become Darth Vader. Yoda says **“The Dark Side clouds everything.”** As he gives in to his anger we realize how his mind has been clouded and not self-controlled and alert, he lets his feelings for Padme overtake him. During this time Yoda says this: **Yoda – “Do not assume anything, Obi-Wan. Clear, your mind must be, if you are to discover the real villains behind this plot.”**

We have to understand that Satan is the real villain and he desires to steal, kill and destroy everything that God has created and glorifies him. Especially us! We need to have a clear and alert mind to know when we are falling into sin.

The devil seeks to destroy your faith – His roar is the persecution he is using to try and intimidate believers in the hope that they will give up at the prospect of suffering.

Have an eternal perspective that is focused on God and not on your suffering, stay alert to know that Satan is trying to defeat you, which is impossible for the Christian because we have already won.

Many of you know people who no longer live for God because their minds have been clouded and taken over by the enemy. One guy who I spent time disciplining has done just that and now he lives the exact opposite way from what God desires. But, it wasn't an overnight turn; it was a slow process of giving in to his fleshly desires. Every choice we make is important – is it pulling me closer to God or closer to the devil. In verse 9 Peter helps us understand how we do this.

Verse 9 – The word resist here is active not passive. Believers will not triumph over the devil if they remain passive. How do you do that? Each believer must stand firm in the faith – that is, in their trust in God. This comes right after verse 7 which says to cast all your cares on God. They need to stand firm knowing that God truly cares for them and will sustain them to the end. Faith is the hope we have. **Hope – we talked about this in the first chapter – Hope = great expectation, not wishful thinking but a confident optimism.**

You aren't the only person who is going through something; know that others are dealing with what you are dealing with. Too many times we marginalize ourselves and compare our struggles to others and say things like, man how come they never go through anything like this? I must be doing something wrong. When in reality we are good at hiding things, aren't we? Here Peter is telling the followers of Christ in that time, you aren't the only ones being persecuted. Satan is attacking all Christian right now. You aren't alone, another common theme of 1 Peter.

### **If you do what verses 8-9 say, then the result is verse 10 because of verse 11**

Verse 10 – The God of grace – God has pardoned the Christians' sins and showed them grace – giving them what they don't deserve – a full pardon for everything they have done that went against God and given them glory through Christ's death and resurrection.

Once you suffer just a little (in light of all eternity) – Ever felt like it was eternity when you are going through suffering? But, through God's grace, because of Jesus, we will be restored with a firm, strong foundation so that you will be ready for anything that comes your way. Sometimes you have to go through some pain to get the blessing in the future. You have to study to get an A on a test, you have to work out to get some muscle/lose weight; you have to work to get a job then work at that job to make some cash money. You have to go through trials to understand what it means to trust God. **You have to suffer a little with nothing to realize Jesus is your everything!** Jesus told us that you have to give up your life in order to find it.

### **Restore - kä-tär-tē'-zō - to mend (what has been broken), to repair – to complete**

Verse 11 – This is referring to God's power over everything. The whole dominion of earth belongs to Him and Peter wants his readers to understand that God is sovereign and in control.

Verse 12 – Summarizes the purpose of the letter – to exhort believers and to testify to God's grace. Silas was mentioned in Acts as Paul's partner in ministry. Peter seems to have used Silas to deliver the letter.

Verse 13 – Some people think this refers to Peter's wife who sometimes traveled with him. However, many other people use the church Babylon in reference to Rome. Most likely this is Peter saying the church in Rome sends greetings. Mark was someone who Peter had a deep affection for, and was most likely discipling.

Verse 14 – This was a literal kiss – not on the lips but on cheeks. Paul also talks about this in most of his letters and calls it a holy kiss. It was a greeting that was used as an expression of friendship. Peace – Peter starts and ends his letter with a benediction of peace. In the midst of suffering we must realize that through the storms we find peace that goes beyond all understanding (Philippians 4) in God's grace.

Verse 12 tells the believers going through the persecution to stand fast in this grace – this means to make firm and establish. Peter wanted the believers to know that what Jesus did on the cross was how God showed us grace. That's the gospel. However, we have to stand firm in it. The only way we can resist the devil, be self-controlled and alert, and be restored is if we stand firm in that grace – **Ephesians 2:8-9 – for it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works. So that no one can boast.**

When we stand firm in God's grace He restores us, makes us strong and steadfast. Then when we go through suffering we will not ask God why this is happening. But understand that we have an enemy trying to separate us from trusting in God and that His grace is enough. Instead we will persevere through the suffering and know that God will use it to make us more like Jesus. How do I know this? John in his letter tells us this: **1 John 4:4** – "You dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." God is near to us by His own initiative of grace.

### **Stand firm in God's grace**

We endure suffering and confidently live for him because he has provided such overwhelming, sustaining, eternal and compelling grace for us.

A guard who sees the enemy approaching doesn't run by himself and fight, he reports to his commanding officer who organizes the defense. When satan attacks, it is foolish to try and do battle with him alone. Like the soldier on guard duty, we should simply report to the commander and leave the defense in his hands.

That is the bottom line: **Stand firm in God's grace**