***Omega: BIB 109***

***1st Peter – Always Be Prepared***

***Lesson 15***

***I. Onward Christian Soldiers***

🡪 Toward the end of his letter, the Apostle Peter touches briefly on the subject of spiritual warfare. He warns us that our greatest enemies are not the secular kingdoms of this world such as the Roman Empire (then), or the communist governments and Islamic jihadists (today).

🡪 “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places,” as Paul says in Ephesians 6:12. Along this same line Peter reminds us here that the enemy we must take most seriously is the devil himself.

🡪 1st Peter 5:8-11

🡪 The Bible and the Christian Faith are full of military symbolism. Warfare is a fact of life, and its realities are appropriate of the spiritual life in a fallen world. We Christians are exhorted to “put on the full armor of God” and to “fight the good fight.” Peter’s teaching in our present text reflects this spiritual warfare.

***A. Our Evil Enemy***

1. Sometimes we hear a contented, peace-loving person say, “I don’t have an enemy in the world.” That may true as far as other human beings are concerned, but every individual human being has at least one enemy, namely, the devil. The Greek word translated “devil” is diabolos, which means “slanderer, false accuser.” The devil, or Satan, is “a malicious enemy who makes accusations and presses false charges.”

2. We should note that this adversarial relationship is very personal; Peter calls the devil “your” enemy. Each of us Christians is the object of Satan’s enmity and his attack. Why is this so? Because the devil is primarily God’s enemy, and he wants to disrupt God’s plans and desires in any way he can.

A. In the final analysis, God’s plans and desires revolve around us. Thus, if Satan can seduce and defeat us, to some degree he defeats God’s purposes.

3. Peter describes our enemy as a “roaring lion” who “prowls around” seeking prey.

A. As a dangerous predator, the devil-lion does three things...

1. First – He Howls... The word translated “roaring” is oruomai, which means “to howl, to roar, to sing loud.”

A. A lion roars to intimidate his foe. The devil wants to intimidate us, to fill us with fear, to make us think he is stronger than he really is.

2. Second – the devil also prowls. The word means “to walk around.” The main point is that the devil does not simply “lie in wait” for us.

A. He is not a passive enemy, but actually seeks us out, or comes along looking for us.

3. Third – Peter says the devil “devours.” This word literally means “to drink down.” He wants to use us as his meal.

A. Lions of course are carnivorous, meaning they are flesh-eaters. Working through our human enemies, the devil has certainly feasted on the martyred flesh and blood of many faithful Christian believers.

B. But Satan gets no ultimate nourishment (i.e. pleasure) from this kind of meal, since it does not include the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Mt. 10:28

C. Ultimately, he wants to devour the whole person, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. This would include convincing Christians to give up on Christ and deny the faith.

4. In what ways does Satan attack us? He uses three basic strategies.

A. First he attacks our MINDS through false teaching. The Bible clearly teaches that the devil’s main work is deception.

1. Ever since the Garden of Eden, this has been his primary methodology. He “deceives the whole world.” (Rev 12:9) Jesus said that “there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (John 8:44)

2. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). Satan and his demons are behind false religions and idolatry (1st Cor. 10:14-22).

3. False doctrine in the church come from “deceitful spirits” and is the “doctrine of demons” (1st Tim 4:1).

4. Satan can even empower his victims to work miracles to deceive people into believing false teachings. (Matt. 7:21-23; 2nd Thess. 2:9; Rev. 16:14).

5. To defend ourselves against the deceptions of the devil we must be sure that we are thoroughly familiar with the teachings of God’s own Word, the Bible.

A. The 1st thing we do when we put on the armor of God is to gird our loins with truth (Eph 6:14), and the last thing is to take up “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Eph 6:17)

1. We must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the truth. (John 8:32)

2. We must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the truth. (2Thess. 2:12)

3. We must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the truth. (2 Thess. 2:10)

B. Only then can we escape the devil’s:

Schemes (Eph 6:11), Devices (2 Cor. 2:11), and Snares (2 Tim 2:26)

B. Second, he attacks our WILLS through temptations. The point of temptation is to get us to act contrary to what we know to be the truth.

1. Satan (usually through his demons) puts it into our hearts to practice evil (John 13:2; 1st John 3:8-10).

2. We are not told the mechanics of temptation, but in some way the devil and his angels have access to our wills through our subconscious minds.

3. They may manipulate our subconscious through subliminal suggestion (what are called “hidden persuaders”). They may bring certain thoughts and images into our consciousness, knowing our weaknesses and exploiting them.

A. Our defenses against this kind of assault are the power of God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 4:1-11; All of Psalm 119)

B. Also, the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is our main defense. (1st John 4:4; Rom 8:13)

C. Third – Satan’s final strategy is to attack our BODIES through demonic invasion (what used to be called “demon possession”). The gospels give us many examples of this.

(See: “Faith Once for All” Pages 170-178)

5. In each of these three ways of attacking us – deception, temptation, and invasion – the devil works through agents. Satan himself is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ being.

A. Therefore, to maximize his effect and influence he has to work through agents; demons/evil spirits (lesser angels who sinned along with him in the original angelic fall. (2nd Peter 2:4)

B. He also works through human agents. Through the strategies discussed above, he takes control of many human beings and works through them to attack, deceive, and persecute faithful believers. (In the context of 1st Peter, the pagan Roman officials who assaulted the Church were literally the devil’s agents.)

6. How can we fight the devil? Peter gives us four specific instructions on how to conduct our spiritual battle.

A. First he says in verse 8... We must be of “sober spirit.”

1. This means we must stay in control of our thoughts and senses at all times.

(1 Thess. 5:6, 8 & 2 Tim. 4:5 & 1st Peter 1:13; 4:7)

2. This is one of the main reasons why it is wrong to ingest strong drink and drugs, and why it is wrong to seek mystical experiences.

3. Partaking of anything that makes us lose control of the mind or the will reduces our ability to defend ourselves against Satan’s wiles. We must make sure we stay in control of all our mental processes.

B. Second he says in verse 8... We must be watchful and alert.

1. Jesus uses this same Greek word when He told us to be constantly ready for His return 🡪 Be on the alert! Mark 13:35, 37

2. It is also the exact same term Jesus used when He told his disciples to “keep watch” when He went further into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.

3. We know that the devil is always pursuing us, coming at us with all his wiles, at least through his evil minions.

4. That is why it is important for us to know how he works: we need to know what to watch for.

5. We need to be watchful about everything we do, so what we do not engage in anything that gives the devil and opportunity or advantage over us. Eph. 4:27.

C. The 3rd thing Peter says we must do is found in verse 9...

We must actively resist the devil. See also James 4:7

1. This is not something we can do on our own inherent power, but only through the strength which God supplies through His Word and His Spirit.

A. A full description of the full armor of God – Eph 6:10-17.

D. The 4th and final element of our strategy – Stand firm in the faith.

1. We hold fast to the teachings of the Bible. Jude 3

2. Do not compromise what you believe. Remember Satan’s main strategy is to deceive us with false doctrine.

3. When we get soft on doctrine, we have already given the devil a place to stand in our life and in our church.

***B. Our Victorious God***

1. A great source of encouragement in our battle against Satan is to know we are not alone. We are just part of a great brotherhood which is under attack.

2. We are not alone in persecution and suffering. Most significantly, though, God is with us; He is on our side. Satan can only operate only via God’s permissive will, and God is the ultimate victor in this battle.

3. Our confidence and our assurance come from knowing that our infinite God is “bigger than” the devil.

A. God’s plan encompasses eternity. The devil may cause us suffering, but it is only “for a little while,” Peter says in vs. 10

B. God has eternal blessings in store for those who stand against the devil. He gives us “eternal glory” (vs. 10); his dominion is “forever and ever” (vs. 11) See also Romans 8:18

4. God’s resources are infinite! He has power that goes on forever and ever. (vs 11)

A. This is the power that enables Him to destroy His enemies. God is omnipotent; Satan is not. (Vs. 6 The Mighty Hand of God!)

5. God of all GRACE. This is a different kind of power, the power that moves and strengthens God’s people from within. This is the power that envelops us and comforts us, the power that encourages and builds us up and keeps us from falling. See Jude 24.

6. God’s incentives are unmatched. Through the gospel message God has called us to join His army, to fight for Him and against the devil; and He has guaranteed the victory!

A. 1st Thess. 5:24 🡪 “Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.”

B. He has promised those who remain faithful to Him the gift of “eternal glory.”

C. For those who remain steadfast – He will Himself, perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you![[1]](#footnote-1)

1. Entire Lesson pulled from: Studies in 1st Peter – Dr. Jack Cottrell. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)