

Your Adversary the Devil

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Date: 13 October 2021

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[0:00] please, and get them opened up to the book of 1 Peter, chapter number 5. 1 Peter, chapter 5, please.

And while you're turning, I'm going to have a word of prayer. Father, thank you for Wednesday night service, and thank you for the chance that we have to once again come apart and open up this holy book.

And so, Lord, I pray that this time be profitable to each one, that our hearts will be open to the word of God, and that your spirit could minister to the needs in the lives of folks here and in this church as well.

And God, help us to understand this truth and to submit ourselves to the word of God. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. 1 Peter 5, look at me at verse number 8 and 9.

1 Peter 5, verse 8. The Bible says, be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resists steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

[1:12] And those afflictions that are accomplished in your brethren are the devouring of the devil. And you're told to resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that he's successful, and he's being successful, and he's having his way.

And in verse number 8, as we read, the devil, or Satan, is compared to a lion. He's likened to a beast that we can see and we can study his characteristics.

And one thing that's interesting about that is about Satan is just, this is one case of many. He's just an imitator of Jesus Christ. Lord Jesus Christ, long before 1 Peter 5, is called the lion of the tribe of Judah.

He's identified as a lion. And back in the prophets he is. And there's so many points. There's well over a dozen, maybe up to 20 different points that you can show what Jesus Christ is and how the Satan, the devil, imitates that and mimics it.

But there's a, studying these comparisons that the Word of God gives can yield some truth and yield some light in understanding things in a spiritual realm.

[2:23] Just like the parables that Christ gave about a sower sowing seed. He's not talking about seeds and dirt, but he's talking about the Word of God in the hearts of men. And that's something that men just, they just don't understand on the surface until it's related to them.

And so here's Satan, called our adversary, is likened unto a lion, a roaring lion. And studying some of the characteristics in the natural world can inform us of spiritual truth.

In Romans chapter 1, verse 20, I'll just read this, or verse 19 and 20, the Bible says, Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them, for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power in Godhead, so that they're without excuse.

Now they're speaking about God's power in Godhead, his power in Godhead. But the natural world, the creation, can reveal things to us about the spiritual realm.

And so the devil's likened to a fearsome, roaring beast, and it's something we ought to take note of and learn from.

[3:37] This verse here, it's a warning. It's a command to the Christian to be sober and to be vigilant. The command is to pay attention and to keep your guard up, because Satan is real, although you can't see him.

He's very real, and he's alive, and he's active, as we'll see in this passage. And he desires to devour, and to destroy, and to cause problems.

And if there's something that God takes pleasure in, well, then that's going to take Satan's radar. I don't think that anybody that gets saved, like, oh, now you're a child of God, Satan hates you, and he wants to destroy your life.

I think if you start walking with God, then he's going to show up. If you start, if God takes pleasure in something, that's what Satan, Satan's beef isn't with you.

His beef is with God. And if you're with God, and right with God, and a pleasure to God, like you should be, well, now he has a problem with that. And so now he shows up.

[4 : 40] He's called your adversary. He's your enemy. And he's against you if you're with God, and if you're on God's side. And in the verse, verse 8 says that because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking, seeking whom he may devour.

That's an action verb. The devil is seeking. He's actively engaged in an activity. He's on the prowl constantly looking if you want to keep with the picture for a meal.

He's seeking. I've once heard a message. Maybe you have too. In your years of sermons, I've heard a man preach a message about a roaring lion. And from this passage, obviously.

And the point that I took away that I recall anyway was that he said the roaring lion is deceiving you. He's scaring you.

He's trying to intimidate you. He's not trying to take a bite out of you with his roar. He's trying to get you to flee into a trap. Because the female lions are laying in the high grass behind you, and you didn't know they were there.

[5 : 55] And he comes around the front and roars, and off you go running for your life right into a trap. And I found that to be an interesting thought, an interesting message about a roaring lion.

And here, our adversary, Satan's called a roaring lion. He's likened to a lion. A lion. How many of you are afraid of a lion if you met one face to face?

A real lion. A roaring lion. A lion can overpower a human, right? I know somebody in here is big and tough. I know somebody in here has it in them to roll up your sleeves and square off.

But no. If you met a full-grown adult male lion roaring after you, you'd be well to be afraid. In this illustration, the devil is as a roaring lion, the believer is told to be sober and to be vigilant.

Because he's walking about. Because he's seeking. You're commanded two things there, to be sober and to be vigilant.

[7 : 03] He is, the believer is to walk through his life paying close attention for signs or for glimpses of evidence that the devil is close by.

And that he might be on the prowl. And that I might be in danger. And because the Bible says he's seeking whom he may devour, he's after believers.

He's after the children of God that are serving God. He walketh about. So where is he right now? Is he in here? Is he seeking?

Is he walking about in our presence right now? And I'm not trying to scare you. Neither is Peter in this passage. Really, Peter doesn't say be fearful. Be afraid.

Because, you know, he says be sober. Pay attention. Have a clear mind. And we can discern then from that command and from that truth about our adversary, we can discern that a believer can be in great danger when he's distracted.

[8 : 11] And when he's not, as Paul says, walking circumspectly. We could be in great danger when we don't have our guard up. Now turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 7.

I want to give you tonight three areas that the devil, our adversary, seeks to attack in some ways he can, and to warn you to be sober and to be vigilant.

1 Corinthians 7. And let's just pull a thought out of this. Verses 32 and 33.

Paul's dealing with the husband and wife and marriage and single folks and things of that nature.

And he makes these comments. And we'll understand what he's saying and get the truth from it.

But verse 32. But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord. How he may please the Lord. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world.

[9 : 19] How he may please his wife. Notice he says this. The things that are of the world. Now he's not talking about setting your heart upon the things of the world and sin.

It's a reference to these natural responsibilities that come along with marriage and a family. And the single man or woman that is unmarried doesn't have to think about those things.

They could, if they chose to, as in the passage, they could just give themselves completely to God and go all out, nothing hindering them in this life, and just give all their time and energy to the Lord. A single man or woman, for that matter, could put all their energy and their life into a particular direction, whatever it would be. Hopefully it would be for the Lord. But whatever it would be. To a career. To a hobby.

To whatever. But when you tack on, in the case of a man, when you tack on a wife and children, that really puts the brakes on pretty quickly to how much you can do for the Lord or how much time you have.

[10:25] Because now you've got this thing called the things that are of the world that you have to care for. And that can be a distraction. Now watch.

Let's think of this. This is just a silly illustration. But if you're a single guy, or I'm a single guy, and my refrigerator and my apartment goes out, I'm probably good for two months.

Two years. And whatever I really want to do with it, I'll do with it. I'll find a way. I'll survive. I'll eat out. I'll go to people's houses. I'll walk the neighborhood when I smell the right smell.

Hey, how you doing? A single guy has a way, and he can get by in this world. I hope I'm not giving away secrets to some of the guys in here that are trying to get by. But put a wife and children on that, and the fridge goes out.

You've got two hours. Two days at the max before that thing has got to be fixed. Right? You know why? Because there's this difference in cares, and there's such a difference in responsibilities.

[11:30] Now a man that's given to a woman and to a family has got a responsibility and a care for their health, for their well-being, for their mental health, to bring it into 2021's vernacular, for their education, for activities for them to engage in, for the children's development, for the sanity of his spouse.

All of these things become real and become on his plate. But a guy that's single, he can just go. At the drop of a hat, go.

Nothing's holding him back, ever. He can do whatever he wants. And in this case, for serving God, he's undistracted. But there's this thing, we're calling him the cares of this, or the things that are of the world.

And they're not wrong. That's just, that's the, I mean, family life, married life is a gift of God. It's a wonderful thing. But family life can distract.

And in this illustration, we're seeing from single to married, it can very much cut into time that could be or would have been given to the Lord. A career can cut into a place that God has, or God should have in your life.

[12:45] A hobby. And there's a list of things that can cut in that are just cares of this life. They're the things of the natural life that we have to deal with. But they can cut in.

And they can distract us, even. And they can take over and take a place that God has, or should have. And here's what I want us to consider. Our adversary is walking about, seeking.

And he's wise enough that when he sees what has your attention, when he sees there's something that I'm interested in, there's something that I gave my Sunday toward, and I thought that was a good use of my time, or there's something that I started spending my money on, when he sees as he's walking about, seeking whom he may devour, when he sees what takes your attention, he'll use that to take you down.

He'll use that to keep you occupied. And you'll never notice that the devil's working with you. The devil's working with you to keep you occupied and distracted.

And you don't even notice it. You don't even notice it, that you're giving yourself to something else. That's your distraction, and he's just going to pave the way. Hey, oh, do you want to work this job, or do you want to have this opening, or do you want...

[14:01] And he'll work with his people to find favor in your eyes, and open the door for you to step through it. Don't think he can't do some stuff. Don't think he doesn't have this world under control.

Amen. There's the things of this world that can distract us, because our adversary, and I'm saying our adversary will use it. He'll use it to keep you from God, and keep you from his will, and keep you from having your undivided attention and worship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

All right, now go to the same chapter, come back to the beginning of this book. I'm sorry, this chapter, 1 Corinthians 7. So be sober, Christian, and be vigilant.

Have a clear mind. Stay attentive. And be careful that you're not distracted by things of this life, even the natural things that are not evil of themselves necessarily.

1 Corinthians 7, and now notice verse number 5. Here's this husband and wife relationship, and Paul says something about it in verse 5. Defraud ye not one to the other, except to be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

[15:26] Now, it's really, if you study your Bible and look up words and references, it's really rare that the Word of God references Satan.

He's not mentioned all that much. You might be surprised. I mean, he is, but when it comes to tempting, you don't see those two words together an awful lot.

Now, I'm not saying he's called the tempter, and I fully acknowledge he's a tempter and he tempts. But the point I'm getting at is, we probably say it more regularly than the Word of God says it.

And, oh, Satan's really tempting me today. Or, oh, it was a rough day, and the devil's really on me. Or, people say things like that. But the point I'm making is, when the Bible does say something about Satan and tempting, then we ought to pay attention to it.

And in this case, he's not just attacking the believer, but in this case, he's seeking whom he may devour. In this case, he's interested in devouring and destroying marriages.

[16:31] In this verse, it says that Satan, the reason that you behave a certain way one with another is so that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. That is, he's paying attention to the husband and the wife.

In this passage, it shows us that he is watching the husband and the wife and their relationship. And when they make a decision to fast and to pray and to serve God, and there's some things, and they withdraw themselves from each other, the devil notices it.

And Paul's warning them and trying to give them some insight on how to avoid problems and avoid being tempted of the devil. But the point I'm drawing out of it is that as he's walking about, he notices when there's an opening, and he notices, I might be able to get in right here.

I might be able to do some damage in this area right here. And in this passage, it gives us some light that Satan is watching the marriage with the husband and the wife. And so, be sober, and be vigilant in your marriage and in your home, because he'll attack when the opportunity presents itself.

And that's exactly what Paul's warning the husband and wife about. He'll attack. He'll tempt. He'll try to cause division. Be sober and be vigilant for signs that the adversary is active.

[17:55] He might be tempting one of you. He might be tempting both of you. You need to have your guard up. He'll cause friction. He'll cause unrest. He'll work on one or the other with discontentment or a fear about a certain thing.

And he'll find a way to get in. So stay humble. Stay humble to your partner, to your spouse. Stay in submission and in love with each other.

And as the Bible says, in honor, preferring one another. And do this, staying focused on serving Jesus Christ and being faithful to Him in all ways. Keeping your eyes open, keeping your ears open for the adversary, the devil, because he's not too far away and he's watching.

The Bible says he's seeking. And so he's not just seeking in the lives of believers individually and watching what might take their heart and distract them and then go that route.

And he's not just looking at the marriage and looking for an in. And I'd say that just that marriage relationship, it's more than that, without a doubt. You can apply that to the parents' and children's relationship.

[19:08] You can apply it to your relationship with others. That he's looking for a way in. And he's looking for a way, something's there, I can exploit that. I can take that to the next level. Because he's seeking whom he may devour.

You think he's playing games? I guarantee he's not playing games. Look now at 2 Corinthians chapter 2. 2 Corinthians chapter 2.

Here's another case. 2 Corinthians 2. And this is tagging on some information from the first epistle to the church of Corinth.

And they had an issue they dealt with. A man was way out of line in sin. And they had to boot him out. And this is kind of touching that topic after the thing had been resolved.

And so now look at chapter 2 and we'll pick it up in verse 6 through 11. Paul says, Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many.

[20 : 22] So that contrarywise, you ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one shall be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that you would confirm your love toward him.

For to this end also did I write, talking about the first epistle, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also. For if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it for your sakes, forgave I it in the person of Christ.

Why? Verse 11. Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we're not ignorant of his devices, because we know he's walking about, seeking whom he may devour.

And in this case, Paul's concern wasn't just over that guilty individual that had been ostracized from the church for his sin, but the situation regarding their forgiveness of him and the situation and how it unfolded.

And Paul addresses it, and he warns them that there's potential for this whole thing to be exploited by Satan. So he says, lest Satan get an advantage of us, we better take care of this.

[21 : 36] We're not ignorant of his devices. Paul's concerned about it. Now notice, this isn't just Satan walking about, seeking to devour a believer that's distracted and falling into something.

He's not just watching the husband and wife or relationships, looking for a way in. In this case, he's ready to take advantage of a local church and find a way in and see what he can do in that church.

And Paul knows it. And he says, we're not ignorant. And so Peter warns us to be sober and to be vigilant. He's seeking. He's walking about.

He's looking for a way in to the local church. He's looking for an angle to create division. A situation where he can just work his way right in the door.

Look at Galatians now, chapter 5. One more book to the right. Galatians chapter 5. Galatians chapter 5. And in this chapter, this is a whole other, this is actually plural, churches that Paul's writing to.

[22 : 54] But he's dealing with a situation where they're being trained and trying to be brought back under the law after they received Christ. And so he's dealing with this in this whole epistle here.

And I'll just catch in verse number 7. And we'll read through a little portion here. And he says this in verse 7, Galatians 5, 7. Ye did run well. Who did hinder you that you should not obey the truth?

This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. So whatever's going on, somebody's hindering them. It's not coming from God. Verse 8. A little leaven.

Leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord that you will be none otherwise minded. But he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment whosoever he be.

And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, yet do I suffer persecution, then as the offense of the cross cease, I would that they were even cut off with trouble you. For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty.

[23 : 55] Only use not liberty for occasion of the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Now notice the last verse of this reading. Verse 15. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another, because there will be nothing left after that.

Do you notice the word devour again? The same thing that the devil's seeking to do? And he says churches, church members can do it themselves.

If ye bite and devour one another. Now Satan's not named here. He's, there's people, and he mentions he in verse 10, and who in verse 7, and a they in verse 12, but these people are not born again, they're not of God.

This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. And I'd say then they're of their father the devil, if that's the case. But this carnality that he refers to in verse 15, of biting and devouring one another, is followed by instructions to walk in the spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

[25 : 17] And as he carries on through the passage about the flesh, he references words about hatred and variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, things that aren't true.

And Paul points out that churches can be influenced by means that are not from above, by means that are not from God or his spirit, and they can result in the complete destruction of the local church by just a carnal display of biting and devouring and strife and seditions, and as he calls it, just a display of the flesh.

A display of the flesh. Be sober. Be vigilant. Have your guard up.

Because there's an adversary that wants in. Brother Spurgeon was here, and we talked, one of the times we were talking, he said something to me that I mentioned a little bit of this the other day. I just appreciated that he said he's for this church. And he said that he drives around the world, around the states, and he doesn't have this, oh, these people and some are my dearest friends. [26 : 30] I mean, his friends and home churches in Ohio, and he's got children and grandchildren there. I mean, that's where his heart's at. Don't mistake anything about that. But as he's traveling the states, and he goes from church to church, and he named off so many guys and friends of mine and people I know and stay in somewhat contact with that he preaches in their churches, and he's like, you know so-and-so?

I was like, yeah. And he's like, you know, and just went right down the list. I was like, those are my people. And he's like, well, they're my people too. And he goes, and I come here, and he goes, he said this, I come here, and I'm thankful to be here.

And he goes, when I come to Silmar, I look at this area, and he said, I'm for this church. And the reason is because God saw fit to put a church in Silmar. And because God did that, I'm for it. He didn't say, I can't wait to see you all, and I love you all so much in the Lord, and it's not as much of a human relationship as it is a spiritual thing, that he sees this as what God's work is, that God saw fit to do something, and he's going to try to help it out.

And he said, I don't want to see this church fail. I don't want to see it go away. And if God's interested in keeping it here, I want to help it be here. That was his statement.

[27 : 43] That was his heart. That's why he comes back. That's why he wants to come again. The Lord will and we will. But the point tonight, church, is whether it's your personal life, or whether it's your marriage, or relationships in your life, in your home, or whether it's this church, this local church, the command is be sober, and be vigilant.

Have your mind clear, and aware, and attentive, and attentive, because your adversary, because your adversary, is looking for a way in. He might be just looking to get into your heart, a little bit, to take you away from your Bible.

He might be wanting to take you away, from attending church. He might be wanting to cause some real division. If you're sober-minded, and you're vigilant, you see it.

So don't get distracted by what we might call the cares of this life, or by worldly attractions, or even decisions that others make in this life. The Bible says, we read it in 1 Peter chapter 5, whom resist, steadfast in the faith.

He doesn't say, be afraid of him, and flee. That doesn't say run, like that illustration of the roaring lion, trying to get you to fall to a trap. You're not told to run from him. You're told to resist him, steadfast in the faith.

[29 : 16] And James, you're told, submit yourself therefore to God, resist the devil. Same word. And he will flee from you.

Paul says to stand against the wiles of the devil. So, be aware of your enemy, and of his intent, from the word of God, what this book teaches about him.

Be aware of it. Then recognize his working, that it's not God's working. It might be his working, that he's walking about seeking something.

And then resist it. Stand against it. Don't fall for it. Be more spiritually minded. If you're aware, and you're sober, and you're vigilant, you'll see it for what it is.

You'll have discernment. And God will help you. But you better believe it. What I said at the beginning, he's nothing to mess with. And he's likened to what would be the king of beasts.

[30 : 24] And if there's any beast in this Bible that's bigger and stronger than him, it's him. Leviathan. He's nothing to mess with. And he's not playing games.

And if he can get into your heart, or if he can get into this church, whichever it is, he's looking. And he's been doing a good job of it for 6,000 years.

6,000 years, you want to go back to the Garden of Eden and find a perfect man and a perfect woman with no sin in their lives? And watch how quick they fall. Because he was walking about seeking for an opportunity to get between them.

And because God was interested in it, he's decided, I'm going to take it out. So, let's be sober. Let's be careful about our adversary, the devil.

Father, please bless the words that were said, the scripture that was taught and preached. Lord, may it find a place in every heart. God, may we take serious our adversary.

[31 : 32] May we take a stand against his wiles. May we not be ignorant of his devices. Lord, I don't just chalk everything that's negative up to saying it's the devil. But God, I believe he's our enemy.

I believe he's real. I believe we're to be warned and cautioned about him. So, Lord, I trust that I did my job tonight in cautioning folks. So, Lord, help us to take it serious then.

And, Lord, it's my prayer that the Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified. That there wouldn't be any casualties of war because a lion was trying to devour somebody.

Lord, it's my prayer that we'd be bonded together, that we'd be bonded with our Savior, that our walk with you would be precious and real, undistracted. Lord, I pray our homes and our families and our relationships would be tight, that there wouldn't be an opening, that we'd be spiritually minded together in love serving one another.

And, Lord, I pray for this local church. Lord, I pray that the devil wouldn't get in. Lord, help us to be spiritually minded, help us to have our eyes open and be vigilant and to bond together in unity and strengthen one another.

[32 : 51] We love you tonight, Lord. You're good to us. And we thank you for your words. Thank you for how holy and precious it is and help us to take heed to them today. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Thank you.