

# Resist the devil (All-Age Talk)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Dorothy, thank you. I don't know whether adults and children you need to hear this right now,! But Peter says to us really, stay awake! Stay awake! It's there in verse 8. Do you see how it starts?

Verse 8, be alert and of sober mind. He means don't be sleepy, don't be lazy, don't not see what's going on, but stay awake, be alert, be sober. We're in our last Sunday today reading through 1 Peter and 1 Peter is written to people who've turned to Jesus Christ and Peter has said to you who believe in Christ you're part of God's chosen people, you belong to him, you're his special possession, you're set for glory, you will see your God one day and yet at the same time you live in this world as foreigners, as we said at the beginning. In a world which doesn't follow God and love Jesus, you're living differently and sometimes that may bring hurt to you. As you stand out from the crowd at work or or at school, you're the odd one out and the government says you can't believe what you believe, it's not right. Peter writes here to Christians to strengthen them, points them to Jesus, says look at him, follow him, keep going and right at the end of his letter here from verse 8 onwards comes some very strong commands to us. It starts in verse 8, there's three things this passage says to us and children on the table I'm going to show you in a minute what to do to help you remember this. So the first thing

Peter says to us in these verses is this, be alert because the devil is out to get us. Now imagine being in Africa and you're an antelope or something like that, an animal in the midst of a savannah. What do they do as they're wandering around the savannah? They're alert, they've got their eyes up. Why have they got their eyes up?

Because they know that there is danger around every turn. The antelope is all alert like this because they know that hiding just around the corner might be a lion who is out to get them.

So listen to this, 1 Peter 5 verse 8, be alert and of sober mind because your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. I was going to just bring, I do have a lion mask at home and I was going to put it on like this and try and be scary but it's just a silly little lion mask and it doesn't scare anyone.

[ 3 : 01 ] I meant to run out of church this morning petrified but Peter tells us that the devil is like a roaring lion. I don't know if you've ever been to a zoo and seen a lion and they're behind a cage and a moat and you're perfectly safe. You hear the lion roar and even though you know they are safe you still go, because the roar is so loud and the lion is so fierce.

Well Peter says here in these verses and he's not just trying to make things up at all, be alert, your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour and there's no fence and there's no moat like at the zoo. It's like you're out in the open.

Well I wonder what you think about that. There are some places in the world where people seem very, very aware of the devil, the one who is against God. I think I grew up not really believing in him quite much. I believe in God yes but I don't mention the devil much and little children walk around at Halloween in little devil costumes and people laugh at them and it's kind of a little bit like that for a British person like me but actually the Bible says the devil is real, as real as God, we cannot see him and what he is doing is prowling around like a lion looking for Christian believers to devour.

Well you think I've not seen him, I don't know, how does that happen? In 1 Peter it happens you get devoured through what happens to you as you live.

In Peter's day Peter says to the Christians live such good lives among the pagans, those who don't know God, though they accuse you of doing wrong. Because there may be times when Christians are told you're wrong what you believe, you must stop, you must sit down, you must hide away and go away.

[ 5 : 09 ] It says a bit later in Peter's letter, they are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless wild living and they heap abuse on you. So Christians live for God, they follow Jesus and from the world around them, from people around them, stop, you're doing wrong, you're believing wrong things, oh you're not behaving like we do, you terrible Christian. And Christians are tempted to give in, hide away, become like everyone else and not live holy lives.

And what is going on as that happens, it's not just people who are looking down on you and heaping abuse on you, this is how the devil does his work. So here you are in class and maybe you're the only one who follows Jesus and people find out and they start pointing at you because you're the Christian and you go to church and you're tempted to think, oh maybe I should stop following Jesus and join in.

As that is happening, the devil is trying to devour you. Or you're at work, it's the same thing in the workplace and you're the one Christian or there's a few of you and people start pointing and heaping abuse on you and saying you're doing wrong or saying you're being discriminatory and we may have to sack you and people are against you and really it is the devil trying to devour you. Or maybe not so much in England these days, you're in prison somewhere because you follow Jesus and the state is clamping down on you, they're against you, you must stop having Jesus Christ as Lord. But it's not just those people who are against you because behind that it is the devil trying to devour you.

This is what Peter says in his letter here, be alert and of sober mind. If you're an antelope in the savannah and you're just sleeping like this and you're not really thinking about anything, you've got to wake up. And Peter says here to people who follow Jesus Christ, if you can't see the devil just as we can't see God, wake up. You've got to be alert because the devil is out to get you and he does want to stop you following Jesus.

Well what should we do? Well just before we do that let me show you on the table here. Do you see what you've got? You've got an A4 piece of paper and you've got some things to colour in.

[ 7 : 48 ] There we go, you've got your lion to colour in and then you're going to need a pair of scissors like this to cut out your square and then you probably need some help from a grown-up and you can make yourself a little lion like this. Can you see Charlotte? With a mouth eager to devour.

And you can open it up and inside you will see what God says, where he says, be alert and of sober mind and keep following God. So maybe you might need some help from some parents on your table but see if you can make one of those just as you listen.

So Peter says to those listening to him, to Christians, be alert, verse 8, your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. What should we then do?

do? Like if you understand that it's not just people in the world who might be against me but the great evil one. Well here we are, verse 9. Resist him with rock solid faith. In 1 Peter 4, Peter says you've got to arm yourselves. Not with a sword but with the attitude of Jesus.

Peter says here, resist the devil, not with a sword or a flaming weapon or something like this. Resist him standing firm in the faith. How do you keep going following Jesus as a church?

[ 9 : 25 ] You stand firm in the faith that you have. Peter may well have in mind here a passage from the Old Testament. Speaking about Jesus or this is the third servant song in Isaiah. Listen to this.

Jesus talking or the looking forward to how Jesus would be. I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard. I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. Because the Lord helps me I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint. I know I will not be put to shame. And Jesus in the Gospels, he knew it was time to go up to Jerusalem and die. And he set his face like flint, like a strong rock, as he went forward to suffer and die.

What Peter's saying to Christians here is the message of the whole letter if you've been with us through the series. In verse 12, with the help of Silas whom I regard as a faithful brother, I've written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying to you that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

Jesus suffered and died. Jesus rose from the dead. If you trust in him you will never be put to shame and you will make it home to an imperishable inheritance. Cling on to him. Stand fast in your faith with Jesus as your saviour and copying Jesus as your example.

This is what we're called to do. Resist him with rock solid faith. I don't know if you've ever been and visited this place. Anybody know what this is? Anybody know what that is? That's Stonehenge, which are some very, very big 25 ton, I think, rocks standing there as they have done for maybe

4,000 years or something like that. They are rock solid and storms come and protesters come and spray them and yet they are still there. They are solid. Stonehenge found it.

[ 11 : 50 ] And Peter is saying to Christians here, stand firm in the faith. See this bunch of stones? It's a bit like us, if I can put it like that. A church together, like Stonehenge, standing firm in the faith. Together we are going to hold on to Jesus and we're going to trust him come what may in our lives, whatever storms come to us. Why would we do that? Well, verse 9, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kinds of sufferings. Last Sunday we said goodbye to Charles, who went back to another country far away. And on Tuesday I drove him and his son to the station and we hugged one another and we said goodbye. I don't know what Charles is doing this morning.

He's not meeting with brothers and sisters like this. But he is in danger of this same kind of suffering in China as people are in Pakistan. As people are all over the world. Peter says, imagine that all over the world this is happening. Together.

Will you stand firm following the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, this is where we've got to in 1 Peter. I don't know how it makes you feel. We're 35 people here this morning. There's people away on holiday and camp. Sometimes there's 50 or 60 of us. And most of us would say we believe in and follow Jesus.

And that's wonderful. And yet we do sometimes feel we are the odd ones out in the world. And we do feel the pressure sometimes to give up on Jesus and put our heads down and not live these holy, distinct lives.

And Peter's saying here, the devil is out to get you. Like he really is. And you need to resist him and stand firm in the faith. And maybe together as a church and Christians all around the world, we feel, I haven't got it in me.

[ 14 : 07 ] Like I would love to. I would love to keep following Jesus to the end of my days. But sometimes it's very, very, is there any help out there? And at the end of this little section, Peter says, so very obviously there is.

Be alert. The devil's out to get us. Resist him with rock solid faith. How can I? Know that God will restore us. As we draw this little bit to a close, look at verses 10 and 11 with me.

They're so precious. And the God of all grace. Because we have a God in heaven who is so gracious and kind and powerful.

This God who called you to his eternal glory in Christ. Because that is where you're going. You're going to eternal glory and you'll be with Christ forever.

After you have suffered a little while. Because it is a little while to keep going following Jesus before the eternity of glory.

[ 15 : 19 ] This God of all grace will himself restore you and make you strong and firm and steadfast. Restore is like men, fishermen, mending their nets.

There are holes and they, well of course they're holes, but there are rips and they, they mend and put the net back together. And that is what our God can do for us now today.

He can restore us. He can make us strong and firm and steadfast so that we resist the devil. And for sure after we've suffered a little while, we will finally be restored and made strong forever.

You and me and believers in Pakistan and believers in South Asia and Charles and all of God's chosen people.

We will be restored. We will be restored. And that's why Peter finishes off to him be the power forever and ever. All praise to God. Who works in weak Christian believers like us.

[ 16 : 48 ] Who face the devil. And are called to stand firm together. Our God is able to carry us through. You know, God speaks to us and tells us.

He says, you've got to be alert. You've got to resist the devil. You've got to stand firm. And I think it is a little bit like this. You get to a busy road.

A parent and a child. And the parent says to their child, put more hand in mine and hold on very tightly. Hold on tight because we're going across the road. And the child, little child, does their best to hold on tight.

But why do they get across the road? It's because their dad has them in his enormous grip. Resist the devil. Live for God.

Don't move. Stand firm. Put your hand in his. And we and Christians around the world must know and can know that he himself will hold us tightly and take us home to be with him.

[18:02] Well, let me lead us in a prayer. And then we're going to sing together. Almighty God, we meet this morning in your presence.

And at the same time with a devil prowling round looking for someone to devour. Before him, by ourselves, we cannot stand.

We desperately need your help and your grace. Thank you for Jesus, our saviour, who set his face like flint and endured all sorts of hardship and suffering because he knew that you held him and would not put him to shame.

Please make us those together through our lives who set our faces like flint and stand firm in the faith.

And may we do that together through this little while until the time when you call us to your eternal glory in Christ.

[19:09] Make us bold and alert and of sober mind and keep us until the final day, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.