

Introduction: This is also the Word of God.

The commands of Scripture flow out of the doctrine of Scripture and are as inspired as the doctrines. 1Peter 5 is the word of God as certainly as the book of Romans and Ephesians. Jesus said, “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?”

Last week we looked at the wiles of the Devil, the devices that he uses to ensnare the souls of men, either leading them to damnation or turning them aside in their effectiveness in their service for Christ. He uses the legitimate desires of men to turn them against the commands of the Lord. From desire comes sin and from sin comes death.

Even the heathen knew this, but did not know what to do about it. The Hindu solution is to banish desire, to cease to be human. The Roman Church’s solution is to replace desire with the vision of God, that is, become angelic and other worldly. The Biblical solution is to present the body to Christ and use all things for the glory of God, within the command of God and His provisions for us. Faith, in other words. The just shall live by faith.

The way of escape is the way of the church, and Peter wants to be sure that the church is in good order. Thus.

- a. He warns of fiery trials that are coming and they must be armed in order to endure.

4:1

- b. They must have the oracles of God among them. Vs. 4:10,11.

- c. Judgment must begin at the house of God; It must be in good order. 4:17

- d. The elders must take the lead in this, humbling themselves and feeding the flock.

e. So I decided to preach through 1 Peter. I did so back in 1998, 17 years ago. But this is a series of new messages, and I am starting at the end. I will very likely, the Lord willing, preach from this text again at the end of the series, which will last for several months.

f. I was trying to put this sermon into context, and that is why I decided to preach through the whole book, but this sermon will serve as the overture to the symphony and set the tone, I hope, and introduce some of the themes.

I. What to Do: Three Imperatives: Be Sober; Be Vigilant; Resist

A. Be sober. The sober person does not lose control.

1. Doesn’t throw tizzy fits. Is not a drama queen, or king, for there are drama kings as well as drama queens. Temperance is the result of knowledge, but is perfected by patience, for it does no good to be temperate for a moment.
2. Soberness is also the fruit of humility, doesn’t take itself too seriously; it will not be the end of the world if you do not get your own way. We are to submit one to another in the fear of God.
3. The well disciplined army does not lose control, each warrior running around like a chicken with his head cut off. Each athlete on the football field or basketball court, or volleyball court, must do their own job and stay in their own area, if the team is to be successful; so it is in the church.

4. The very great coaches know this, and coach to ability.

B. Be vigilant. Watchful.

1. Do not allow yourself to drift. Be aware of what is going on. Walk circumspectly, is the way Paul puts it: “14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Eph. 5.
2. He will trap you by your desires, the things you want more than anything in the world; just as he offered them to Jesus Himself on the mount of temptation.
3. Pr 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Keep means guard. Set a watch about your heart.
4. Ps 141:3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

C. Resist in the faith. It is the truth that sets you free.

1. The truth of faith. There must be sound doctrine: the oracles of God.
2. The truth of hope. This world is not our home: What does it profit, if I gain the whole world and lose my soul.
3. The truth of love. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good. Jesus prayed for his enemies and so must we.

II. How To Do it: Humility and Faith

A. Humility and faith go together and cannot be separated.

1. You have a powerful adversary [Prosecuting attorney], and enemy who knows the law better than you do. He comes as an angel of light; He comes as a roaring lion; He comes as a flaming dragon; He comes with lies and deceit, with charm to beguile. You are no match for him, and the pride that gives you self confidence is the very tool that he will use to destroy you.
2. God resists the proud so you will have Him against you as well as the devil. Humble yourself under the hand of God, and He will lift you up above the devil and his enmity. Casting your care upon Him. Ye have not because ye ask not.

B. Faith teaches me to submit to God, to Scripture, to my brethren. Verse 5

III. The Powerful Knowledge. Vs. 9 see also 4:12, 13.

- A. All afflictions have a purpose that transcends your desires and ideas. They must be accomplished before the glory is revealed. 4:12,13.
- B. 5:9, 10 Our sufferings are in common with “the brethren” There hath no temptation taken you but what is common to man. This knowledge will teach temperance. You are not so special.
- C. Perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Application. Patience and Longsuffering. I would make an application from Hebrews 12:13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but

let it rather be healed. Peter: Mt 16:23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Whatever Peter’s motive, it came from earthly desire. What arrogance to seek to reprove Christ Himself, although he was very pious and “spiritual.”

It must needs be that faith be tried. Jesus must endure this trial also, but what a terrible thing to be the occasion of the trial and the temptation, when we should be encouragement and hope.

Well we have played the Overture. I hope what follows will be music to the soul, enlightening to the eyes, and energizing to the will.

May God bless you.