

How can we starve the lion?

1. We starve the lion by s_____ a_____ and a_____.

8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Peter may be basically saying, “Don’t do what I did.” That is, “Don’t let you guard down spiritually.” He and other disciples did **not** watch and pray in the garden (see Matthew 26:36-46).

Spiritual awareness and alertness and prayer are repeatedly found side by side in the New Testament. And sleeping when we should be praying is a danger to avoid. Yes, sleeping too much is a problem, but sleeping itself is needed and normal. The main idea seems to be that we must be (spiritually) awake when we’re (physically) awake. We need to be as vigilant as bodyguards who are always watching and scanning so that there is never a successful attack. Also see 1:13 and 4:7.

Like we do in other dangerous situations (walking somewhere at night, driving through a dangerous area, etc.), we must think clearly and watch carefully. We stay aware of what’s happening. We remember we are never on holiday spiritually. We keep in mind that there are no safe zones spiritually.

How can we starve the lion?

2. We starve the lion by s_____ f_____ in our f_____.

9 Resist him, firm in your faith,

We are indeed called to fight, not to flight. We are called to stand against, not succumb. Yes, by God’s grace, we can successfully resist the devil. We fight him off by staying firm in our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We continue to believe what God has said in His Word. We cling to the promises He has made to us.

The devil will **b**____ **u**__ from us when we humbly **b**____ **d**____ before God in faith and receive His grace in our times of suffering and temptation. See James 4:6-7. Our God is “the God of all grace” (5:10) who continuously gives grace to the humble (5:5).

If we choose pride over humility, then we become easy prey. There is protection and safety in genuine humility. There is exposure and vulnerability in pride. God **o**_____ proud people (5:5), and Satan **o**_____ them (5:8).

Question: *What truth helps us to stand firm in our faith?*

9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

Answer: *This suffering is shared by others.*

Knowing we are not alone in our suffering helps us to stand firm. We aren’t the only believers in Jesus who are hurting. “The family of believers throughout the world is going through the same thing.” (NIRV) We have brothers and sisters in many other places who are also fighting. Many Christians are enduring affliction, especially the affliction of persecution. See Hebrews 10:32-39.

Question: *What other truth helps us to stand firm in our faith?*

10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen

Answer: *This suffering will end soon.*

Remembering the temporary nature of suffering makes it easier to endure. The reality is that all suffering is short-lived for people who belong to Jesus. All of our pain has an expiration date. God’s people will outlast everything that hurts them. See 1:6-7.

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Answer: *This suffering will give way to unending glory.*

Yes, every trial has a termination point. We know that our forever-sovereign, gracious God has irrevocably determined that our future will be endless glory. And He will restore, strengthen, and establish us. See again 1:6-7.

The day will come when you will see great gain from your losses, your crosses, your troubles and your affliction. From your affliction this glory shall spring, and the deeper your sorrow the louder you'll sing. -Charles Spurgeon, "Beside Still Waters"

Something to ponder: Who is the "someone" in 5:8? If I do stand against Satan by staying aware and alert and by standing firm in my faith by God's grace, then who benefits from that? Am I the "someone," or is there possibly something grander going on here? Could it be that such vigilance and resistance protect not only me **but also helps others** from becoming the devil's prey?

How do my choices endanger or help to protect others in my family, church, community, etc.? How is my vigilance and resistance or lack thereof affecting the people I live, study, work, worship, and/or play with? How am I caring for their souls? Am I harming or helping them?

Will you (re)commit yourself to this vigilance and resistance?

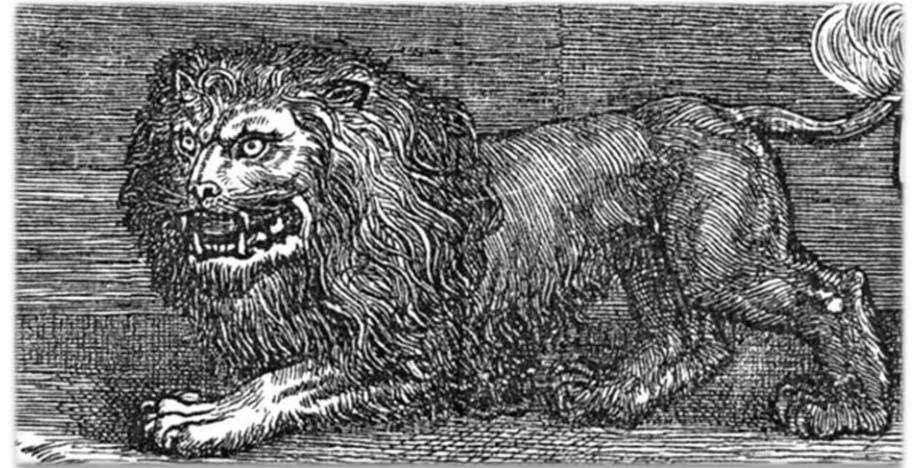
Let's starve the lion. May he find no one to devour here.

All Scripture quotations taken from the ESV (unless noted otherwise).

Starve the Lion

(Standing Against Satan in Suffering)

1 Peter 5:8-11



Should Christians be concerned about Satan? Can the devil do us harm after we come to trust in Christ and belong to God? If he can, then how do we successfully stand against this unseen yet very real enemy of ours? How do we starve the lion instead of becoming his prey?

Satan **is** our predominant, present-day, external, lion-like enemy. He **h**_____ us, and he wants to **h**_____ us. He's not retired. He is still our relentless, external adversary. He's not sitting back; he's on the attack. His hunting days aren't over, and his hunting grounds include where we live. He's on the hunt in our neighborhood. None of us are off limits; we are all his potential prey.

The devil is still devouring today. He can **d**_____ and **d**_____ Christians like us. You or I could be his next victim. Peter has the scars to prove it (Luke 22:31-34). See also Ephesians 6:10-18.

We are called to **f**_____, not to **f**_____. We are called to stand against, not succumb. How can we succeed at this? What must we do so that we don't get devoured?