

# Resisting the Devil, Standing in Grace

## 1 Peter 5:8-14

**Introduction** – These are not simply ‘closing words’, but earnest commands and benedictions of grace and peace to a people loved by Peter and God. As Peter completes this letter to a people he knows will undergo great trials, he calls them to faithfulness, to God’s grace, and to one another. When we are in Christ, we are His body, the church, and this church will be triumphant over all that the world brings.

**Resist the Devil** (vv 8-9) – Peter has warned his readers to stand firm against the world’s persecution and the lusts that war within. He turns to our third major foe – the devil.

**The Adversary** – Every other time this title is used it describes one who is bringing a lawsuit against you or one who is accusing you in a court of law. This is what Satan did to Job. The “Devil” is the slanderer or false-accuser.

**Satan’s Status** – He is already a defeated foe (Heb 2:14, also Luke 10:18-20, Col 2:15). But in God’s sovereignty, we do not live nor expect a utopian world. While the kingdom, all of heaven and earth, has been given to our Captain (Matt 28:18, Acts 2:33-35), God continues to use Satan to punish His enemies and purify His saints.

**Take Him Seriously** – So we are to be sober, watchful, and vigilant. We must resist him. His interest is to devour – to ruin and destroy. One error Christians can fall into is to not take the devil seriously.

**Steadfast in the Faith** – But the other error is to take the devil ‘too seriously’. We stand against him in the same way we stand against our persecutors and our flesh – by faith. He dresses as a counterfeit, like an angel in light (2 Cor 11:14). Your best ability to notice the counterfeit is to have your senses well-trained to recognize the Authentic Christ.

**What’s in a Benediction?** (vv10-11) – Persevering faith is not something you muster up. It is a gift of God, and is the stuff of your saving faith. The faith that saves perseveres to the end. At the end of the worship service, in the Old and New administrations, we see that the people of God are blessed by the minister with the name of God placed upon them. This was instituted in Num 6:22-27, and we see it practiced Lev 9:22, Deut 10:8, and 2 Chron 30:27. We see the same practice, carrying over from the synagogue traditions, taking place in Christian ‘synagogues’, or assemblies. Heb 13:20-21 is very likely a sermon outline, and the apostles’ letters, read in the assemblies, often end with the same benediction-like blessing (2 Cor 13:14, Eph 6:23-24, and more). Jesus Himself did the same act just before His ascension (Luke 24:50).

**God’s Grace** – In placing God’s name and beseeching God’s grace upon the gathered people of God, what are we to expect? Having heard the Word with faith, having renewed our covenant with Him, having feasted at His table, we are sent into the world with a grace that, in the midst of whatever sufferings, will “perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle” us. And so, we receive this benediction with our ‘Amen’ – an ‘amen’ full of faith and thankfulness.

**Called Ones** – Grace is not a ‘tame’ thing. It places you on the other side of an infinite chasm from the rest of the world. It is by grace that you have been called – called “to His eternal glory...” You have not been invited. You have been summoned. And that divine and powerful summons no soul can refuse, resist, or ignore. That divine calling is to glory (Rom 8:30).

**Real History, Real People** (vv12-13) – There are no useless verses in scripture. Here we get a glimpse into the 1<sup>st</sup> century church.

**Silvanus** – this is the Silvanus who had earlier preached alongside Paul in Corinth (1 Cor 1:19). Silas is his Greek name, and this is the Silas Paul took with him, leaving Mark (Acts 15:39-40) who is now mentioned to be with Peter as well.

**Mark** – also known as John Mark, is the fond ‘son’ of Peter. Many believe that the second gospel is actually Peter’s gospel, penned by Mark, as this epistle is penned by Silvanus.

**Babylon** – So where is Peter? ‘She’, who is in Babylon, refers to the church. It is very possible that this is the literal Babylon, or Mesopotamia. Others, seeing the figurative reference to Jerusalem, the harlot Babylon, in Rev 17ff, believe Peter is using the same name of apostasy, which has brought and will bring ‘fiery trials’ upon the church.

**“This is the true grace of God in which you stand...”** – Here is the reason the letter was written, and we have gone over and over it. You have been given grace. Stand in it – no matter what comes. Read over this letter again with this phrase in mind.

**Christian Kissing and Customs** (v14) – The cultural custom of greeting was a kiss of love, or a ‘holy kiss’. Jesus considered it bad manners not to have received one (Luke 7:45), and there is something important to learn here. The cultural application does not have to be exactly replicated, but the principle of physical affection must, for we are physical creatures. We consider this unimportant, because we think it is OK to come to church and never touch, never greet, never express affection to anyone else. We must think again.

**“Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen”** – You may have stumbled in to the end of a series and a letter. But here it is. There is peace offered. Peace with God. Peace with your fellow man. Peace in the midst of any trial, affliction, suffering, or persecution. It is an eternal peace. But it is an *exclusive* peace. It is *only* to those who are in Christ Jesus, but it is to *all* who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Dave Hatcher – March 24,