

### **Teaching Notes: Our Enemy the Devil**

A few weeks ago we looked at the stark contrast between the Dominion of Darkness and the Kingdom of the Son that the Father loves. In **1 Peter 5:8-9** Peter writes

*Be self-controlled and alert. Your **enemy** the **devil** prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. Before we unpack that and look at what we can do about him, I want to set this in context.*

David Devenish in his article in the latest Nf magazine explains that our purpose is to see the Kingdom of God advance by:

1. Prayer (Your Kingdom come)
2. Evangelism (to enter the Kingdom of God you must be born again)
3. Good example of our lives (salt & light, righteous peace & joy in the HS)
4. Prophetic social action (good news to the poor)

The enemy does not want to see the K of G advance – he wants to maintain his hold on everyone who is in his Dominion of Darkness. He hates seeing people being transferred out of his dominion into God’s Kingdom. So he will do all his power to resist it and so will resist us in our attempts to advance the Kingdom. This is what the passage is about. The suffering he speaks about is the difficulty, persecution, opposition and suffering the early believers had to endure because they kept on spreading the Gospel. (see 1 Thess 2:14-16, 2 Tim 3:10-12) “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” If they had kept quiet, like we tend to, they would not have met such opposition.

So let us recognise that the roaring lion is out to stop us praying, sharing the gospel, living godly lives and meeting the needs of the poor. How well is the lion doing at the moment folk? So as we look at this passage keep this context in mind. It is not about us coping with the ordinary difficulties of life. This is about being deflected from these four things that are essential to Christian living.

### **What can we learn about our Enemy?**

*antidikos* (1) opponent (2) an opponent in a suit of law (3) an adversary, enemy Mt 5:25, Lu 12:58, 18:3 *antidikos*(Gk) = *satan* (Heb) accuser, opponent, enemy Ps 38:20; 71:13; 109:4,20,29

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the **devil** and **Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Rev 20:2

### **The Devil**

The Devil = *diabolos* from *diaballo* to throw against, to accuse, to bring charges against someone with hostile intent.

Matt 4:1-11, 13:39, 25:41, Luke 8:12\* “Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. John 8:44\* Acts 10:38\* “*You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the*

Holy Spirit and with power, and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” Eph 4:27, 6:11, 1Tim 3:6-7, 2Tim 2:26, Tit 2:3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behaviour, not malicious gossips (lit. devils) nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, Heb 2:14, Jas 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 1John 3:8 ‘The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil,’ 3:10, Jude 9, Rev 2:10, 12:9,12, 20:2, 20:10

### **Satan (Adversary, Enemy, Opponent)**

In OT. Zech 3:1-5 Job 1:6 - 2:7

In NT. Mark 1:13, 3:23, 26 4:18, 8:33 Luke 10:18, 11:18, 13:16, 22:3, 22:31, John 13:27, Acts 5:3, **26:18**, Rom 16:20- The God of peace will soon crush **Satan** under your feet.. 1Cor 7:5, **2Cor 2:11** ‘so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, *for we are not ignorant of his schemes*’. 11:14, 12:7 1Thess 2:18, 2Thess 2:9, Rev 2:9, 12:9-10 ‘Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the **accuser** of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.’

- 1. So how does he stop us praying?** What the point of praying? Too busy to pray.
- 2. How does he stop us spreading the Gospel?** Fear of rejection. Intimidation.
- 3. How does he affect the way we live?** Tempts us to be just like everyone else. Nothing distinctly godly about us.
- 4. How does he stop us getting involved in prophetic social action?** Deflects us from true loving acts of care into protesting about issues like homosexuality, abortion. Consequently Christians are seen as being hypocritical, judgmental, anti-gay and indeed anti all sorts of things! How can we convey an image that says what we are for, rather than what we are against? Through genuine social action like Crisis pregnancy centres, Debt relief, feeding the poor, etc.

### **How are we to handle our Enemy?**

#### **1. Be Self-controlled/Sober**

*nepho*; - to be sober, to abstain from wine, self-controlled

1Thess 5:6-8, 2Tim 4:5, 1Pet 1:13, 4:7

#### **2. Be Alert:**

*gregoreo*; to be awake, to watch, to be on the alert-

Matt 26:40-41 “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 1Cor 16:13, Col 4:2, Rev 3:2, Rom 13:11, 13:12, 1Thess 5:6-8

#### **3. Resist him firm in our faith.**

James 4:7 ‘**Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**’ Luke 4:1-13, 22:31,46, 1Cor 10:12-14 ‘God is faithful, **who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able**, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.’ Eph 4:27 ‘and do not give the devil a foothold.’ 6:11-12, 2Tim 4:17, Heb 11:33, 2 Pet 2:9,

### **Our Advocate, The Lion of the Tribe of Judah,**

If the devil is like a roaring lion there is one who is The Lion, Jesus Christ. Rev 5:4-5 “See, **the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed.**” Tit 2:14. who gave Himself for us **to redeem us from every lawless deed**, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds 1Cor 1:30. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our **righteousness, holiness and redemption.** 2Cor 5:17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; **the old has gone, the new has come!**

John 3:16-2, 1John 2:1, ‘My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an **Advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous’. 2:12-14, 4:1-6 **greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.**

An Advocate is a counsel for the defence in a court of law. We know we have a prosecutor, Diabalos who accuses us and throws everything he can against us. He is the counsel for the prosecution. But praise God we have one who stands up for us, our Advocate Jesus the Righteous, who speaks in our defence on our behalf. We also have another Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who comes alongside to encourage and fortify us.

Rom 8:1 Therefore there is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus 8:32-39 ‘But in all these things **we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us**’.

### **Conclusion**

We have an opponent who constantly tries to stop us praying, stop us speaking to people about the Lord, stop us living lives that speak to outsiders, and stop us showing proper care for the needy by accusing us and charging us of wrong doing. He also threatens us with harm and causes people to persecute us in various ways. But this suffering is to be expected, and is common to all who live a godly life and seek to advance God’s Kingdom wherever they live in this world. Ascot is no more difficult than any other country. Everywhere it is difficult to pray, to live a godly life to preach the gospel and help the poor, because we are opposed in all these things. So we can either curl up and not even bother to try, avoiding the challenges, or we can RESIST him firm in our faith.

What is our faith? What do we believe? That if the Devil keeps throwing accusations against us to demoralise us, we have a counsel for the defence, Jesus Christ the Righteous One who has become our righteousness. He always declares us not guilty, because he gave himself as a sacrifice for all our sins.

So we must

1. resist him by making time to pray even when we don’t feel like it.
2. resist him by sharing the Gospel with folk, which includes the message of judgment as well as salvation, even if they might throw it back in our faces or get angry with us.
3. resist him by living godly lives at home and in the work place, honestly with integrity and avoiding being holier-than thou or giving people any cause to accuse us of hypocrisy, being judgmental and anti-everything.

4. resist him by getting involved where we can in social action showing genuine care for outsiders and not fighting the wrong battles that only gives Christians a bad name and hinders the gospel.

So let us be on our guard, watchful and awake and resist all opposition, firm in our faith in God as we give ourselves:

to pray, refusing all condemnation;

to evangelism despite the aggressive reactions we may encounter;

to living a godly life despite all the temptations to be just like everyone else and not be different;

and to do all we can to alleviate the suffering of the needy, despite all the difficulties that will be thrown in our path.