

# Resist the Devil

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon from 1 Peter chapter 5 emphasizes the importance of resisting the devil steadfastly in faith, standing against his schemes with humility and reliance on God's grace. It highlights the need to remember that other believers worldwide are facing similar struggles and to keep our focus on the eternal glory God has called us to. The message encourages believers to seek God's grace, stand firm in faith, and look forward to the eternal reward awaiting those who overcome.*

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 5:5, 1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6:11, Hebrews 4:16, Revelation 2:10, Hebrews 12:2, James 4:6, 2 Peter 2:11, Revelation 3:21

**Topics:** "Resisting the Devil", "Eternal Glory"

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## Description

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## Transcript

And we're in 1 Peter chapter 5, 1 Peter chapter 5, and I thought I was going to finish tonight, but I don't think so. So this is the second last in this series on 1 Peter, and I think it's been about 60 weeks that we've been in Peter thus far. So, 1 Peter chapter 5, and we'll read 5 through 11.

1 Peter 5, verses 5 through 11. Likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility.

For God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever.

Amen. And so we have been speaking about our adversary, the devil, and it's interesting that we had the same, similar passage in Luke on Sunday. And so let's start again in verse 8 and refresh our memories before we move on.

So he says, Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion. And so he is going around and he is roaring, he is intimidating, and he's using his many different tricks and wiles. Paul says we're not ignorant of his devices or of his wiles, and he is seeking whom he may devour.

So that's the way it is. Now our response then is resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. So the word resist him, stand against him, the Greek word is antihistome.

Anti means against, opposed to. Histome means to stand. And so the translation again misses it a little bit because of losing the Greek emphasis.

But stand against, stand against. So in standing against him, it does not mean that we pursue him. It does not mean that we go after him.

But it also doesn't mean that we run away from him. It also doesn't mean that we lie down in front of him. But we need to stand before him, that we may stand against him, that we may resist him.

There are many wrong teachings on our relationship to the devil or to demons. And one of the very popular teachings these days has been for 30 or 40 years now is this whole idea of spiritual warfare. And the idea behind spiritual warfare is that we must attack the devil.

We must go after the devil. And we must pursue him wherever we can find him. And we've got to bind him.

And, of course, that's just a crazy idea because he's been bound so many times, yet he seems to be still loose. So the binding doesn't particularly work very well. People go up into high places.

They'll go up into the hills up top here, and they'll do spiritual warfare there because they're closer to where the demons are in the heavenly places. And, of course, it's all nonsense because there is nothing in Scripture for that kind of thing. We don't go after the devil.

He comes after us. You don't have to go looking for him. He'll be there at the most inconvenient times.

And when that happens, what we need to do is we need to stand. We need to stand against him. We need to stand firm.

And, obviously, we can't speak on this passage without going to Ephesians 6. And I'm not going to speak through the whole armor of God, but I want to just pick up two verses and then make a couple of comments on Ephesians 6 verse 1. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand. The same root word. Stand against the wiles of the devil.

The armor that he gives us is all defensive. Now, I've grown up hearing people speak over and over and over that the armor that we have is all defensive. In other words, it's protective in the sense of the helmet and the breastplate and the loins girt and the feet shod, but that the sword is offensive.

But that is not how Jesus used the sword. And, of course, the sword is the Word of God. And it is not the primary purpose of the sword.

And you say, well, you know, I thought the sword is there to attack. No, the sword is, first of all, a defensive weapon. It's a defensive weapon.

When I was younger, I used to fence, which is the fancy word for sword fighting. And you spend 90% of your time defending, what they call parrying, hitting away the blows of the opponent. And maybe 10% or 5% of the time, you're actually lunging or attacking, trying to score a point.

But most of the time what you're doing is you're deflecting the blows. And you see exactly the same thing when you see short sword fights in the movies and that kind of thing. The sword is, first of all, used as a defensive mechanism.

It's even in the design of the sword. If you see a typical sword, you'll see that it has a guard. Sometimes it is a covered guard to cover the whole hand.

Sometimes it's just like a T-piece. And what's the purpose of that? To protect the hand when you are deflecting the blows, because his sword will slide down on yours and then could hit your hand. So you can see even in the design of the sword that it is defensive to begin with.

How did Jesus use the sword of the Spirit? Does He go after the devil and go and attack him? No, the devil comes to Jesus in Gethsemane, but particularly in the wilderness. And how does Jesus respond? Does Jesus respond to him by attacking him? No, Jesus responds by standing His ground. It is written.

It is written. It is written. At no stage does Jesus go over into the attack.

Of course, that battle would have been fought at Calvary. But the use of the word is simply to defend. The devil will come against us.

And he comes against us with all sorts of means. You see the word here, the wiles, the tricks of the devil. He was more subtle, the Scripture says, than all of the beasts of the field.

He's got more tricks than you can shake a stick at. And so He will use discouragement. He will use slander to break us down against one another.

He will accuse us. He is the accuser of the brethren. He accuses us before God.

He accuses us to ourselves. He will do everything He can. And obviously tempting is one of the big things that He does.

And so when He comes against us, we need to stand our ground. Now one of the ideas, or one of the wrong ideas about this whole theology of spiritual warfare is that we need to conquer some ground, some new area that the devil has control over. But in fact there is no new ground that can be gained.

The ground and the victory was gained at the cross of Calvary. There is nothing more for us to go after. The devil has nothing that we want.

I don't know what people want with him. He wants what we have. He wants to rob and to kill and to destroy.

We don't go after him to try and get anything from him, to try and get some kind of victory. The victory was gained at Calvary. The victory will be consummated at the end of time when he is taken and cast into the

bottomless pit.

In the meantime, all we need to do is defend the ground that was bought for us at the cross of Calvary. So we're not pursuing. We're not in a warfare where there is a pursuing and trying to conquer new territory, trying to conquer new things.

No, no, what we need we have in Jesus Christ. All things that we need are available in Him. And all we need to do is to stand and to defend ourselves against the robber, against the killer, against the destroyer that we might be able to come out standing at the end of the day.

And so put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Then verse 13 says exactly the same thing. Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand.

Now this is interesting because this is the same word that we found in Peter. In Peter it's translated resist. Here it is translated withstand.

In fact, this is a better translation. But it's the same Greek word, antihistamate, to stand against, to withstand. And so, again, the idea of standing against, withstanding in the evil day and having done all to stand.

Having done all to stand. In other words, not to be coward, not to be caused to run away in fear, not to be chasing after Him, but simply to stand on that which was gained for us at the cross of Calvary. And so resist Him, stand against Him, withstand.

Steadfast in the faith. Steadfast in the faith. So resist Him steadfastly.

There are two aspects. This word steadfast goes two ways. The first is that it relates to how we resist.

And secondly, it relates to our faith. We resist Him steadfastly. It's no good resisting Him from time to time.

Many Christians live this up-and-down Christian experience because they'll withstand, they'll stand against, they'll resist the devil sometimes, and then they think, ah, well, you know, I'm cool now, I'm safe, there's no problem. And they let Him walk all over them. Or they give in to His wiles.

We need to be steadfast in our resistance. If you slack off for one moment, He will take that opportunity to overrun you. I don't see that much here in America, but in South Africa, tug-of-war is a popular thing, particularly at church picnics and that kind of thing.

And I think we all understand what that is. You have a long rope and you have two teams, and you pull against one another. And the moment you let go, the moment you slack off, you're going to be pulled off your feet.

You're going to lose. You have to keep tension on that rope all the time, sometimes more tension than other times, but there needs to be tension all the time. The moment you let go, the moment you slack off, the moment you say, well, let's take a break, that's when you lose.

You have to keep tension. You have to be steadfast. Paul uses the word steadfast, immovable.

And so sometimes he deceives us into believing that the fight's over. Don't worry about it. Everything's cool.

And just that moment when we drop our guard, that's the moment that he comes with force and he overruns us. So there's a need for a steadfastness, for a faithfulness, for an immovableness, that we are not allowing him one inch. We're not allowing him to grab hold of us at that moment that we are least expecting it.

Remember, this is a war. While Paul uses the analogy or the picture of war, Peter is using this analogy of the lion. And the lion in hunting, the antelope or the deer need to keep their eyes and ears and their smell open all the time.

The moment they drop their guard, that is when the lion has his breakfast. And so they have to be watching, they're smelling, they're listening all the time for any kind of movement that indicates that there's an attack coming. Unfortunately, as Christians, we're just not alert.

We're just not on guard all the time. Interesting, because in fencing, when the game begins, the command is on guard. In other words, be ready to defend yourself.

Be on guard. And with the devil, you can never not be on guard. Whether it's in the middle of the night, whether it's in the middle of your work day, whether it's Sunday or Monday or Tuesday, whether it's 2 in the morning or 5 o'clock in the afternoon, you need to be on guard, because he is watching for that moment that you're dropping your guard, that you're slacking off, and that is when he will attack steadfast in the face.

Not steadfast in our ability. We have no ability against him. He is far more powerful.

And this is something, too, that Christians forget, and that's also mistaught, if you will, these days, that the devil is just old Nick, you know. He's a defeated foe. He's nothing.

He's got no power. No, he has enormous power. He is far more powerful than any of us, than all of us put together, both physically and spiritually.

Remember, in Hebrews, it speaks about the Lord Jesus. Remember, the devil is an angel, a bad angel, but he's an angel nonetheless. But it speaks about the Lord Jesus, that when he was made a man, he was made a little lower than the angels.

In other words, by definition, angels are higher than us, in power and in authority. And the devil has tremendous authority, and he has tremendous power. And so we cannot stand against him on our own.

In 2 Peter, we'll see that Peter speaks about this idea of speaking evil of dignitaries, speaking lightly, and the dignitaries, they are demons, demon forces. They are not dignitaries in the sense that they are dignified, but they are dignitaries in that they are important things. They are important persons, if you will.

They have power. And so we need to, we cannot stand on our own. We cannot stand in our own skill, in our own ability.

We need to stand steadfast in the face, in the face. Now remember when he speaks about this idea of the face. For those who may have forgotten, the face does not refer to believing in God, but it refers to what we believe, what we believe.

The face refers to the doctrines that we hold, the teaching that we hold to. And so what he is saying then is that we need to be steadfast in what we believe, not who we believe in. Of course, that's important.

Of course, we need to continue to have faith and trust in God. But he is particularly speaking here about the doctrine, that we need to be steadfast in what we believe, not buffeted to and fro, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but standing in the things that we believe. What do we believe? Well, as far as this is concerned, we believe that the victory was gained at Calvary.

We also believe that he has given to us the responsibility to defend and to stand upon the victory that he gained for us at Calvary. We believe that he has all power, that God, that Jesus said, all power, all authority is given unto me. These are the things that we need to hold on to, because the things that he is going to attack is what we believe.

The things that we believe. That's how he attacks Jesus. He doesn't question Jesus' relationship with the Father, but he questions Jesus' faith in the things that he believes and the things that he has come to do, particularly on the cross.

So resist him steadfast in the faith. Sorry, I wanted to pick up something and I forgot. Let's just go back to this word, resist him.

And you'll remember last week or the week before, I said you need to remember that word. And we find that word in verse 5. Likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

That word resists the same word, same Greek word. So he is saying in verse 9, we need to resist the devil. But he is saying in verse 5 that if we are proud, God resists us.

So here's one of the... There are many important things to remember in our spiritual battle against the forces of evil. But one of the things we need to remember is that if God is standing against us, then we cannot stand against the devil. What does that mean in plain English? If you're so busy fighting with God, you have no time and energy left to be fighting the devil.

And Christians are fighting God in their arrogance and in their pride. And so God is standing against them. And folks, I don't think you can win, because you now have two standing against you.

You have God standing against you, and you have the devil standing against you. You have no chance. So I need to get my relationship with God right first.

And how do I get that relationship right? By being humble before Him. And as I'm humble before Him, God is giving me grace instead of standing against me. Now I can focus against the devil and stand against the devil.

But if God is against me, I have no chance. And I don't believe that Peter has used these words, or the Spirit has used these words, just by chance. There is a reason why, in verse 5, he says that God resists the proud, but you need to resist the devil.

You cannot do those two things at the same time. And those who find themselves on the side of the arrogant, on the self-sufficient, they have no chance winning against the devil, because God is not on their

side. God is against them.

And so people who are running around and saying, well, you know, we went and did spiritual warfare over here, and we did this, and we did that, and we did the other thing, but they're puffed up in pride. God is not working with them. God is working against them.

And so their testimony is a lie. All right, so resist Him steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. So you can see that the attacks of the devil, we need to resist him, and then he speaks about sufferings.

So clearly what Peter has in mind here is that the devil is coming with sufferings. That's just one of the many tricks that he has. And of course the purpose of the sufferings is to discourage us, to dishearten us, to get us to a place where we just give up, and we say, well, you know, I can't, you know, I've had enough.

I can't live this Christian life. I can't keep fighting my flesh. I can't do whatever it is that God is expecting me to do.

And we give up. We surrender. And of course in warfare, that is one of the purposes of warfare.

You either want to get the enemy totally killed and annihilated, or you want to get them to surrender, one of the two. The devil doesn't care which one. He doesn't care if he kills you or whether he gets you to surrender, as long as you stop fighting and as long as you give in.

And so the sufferings that he uses, and of course Peter's first, the primary meaning here is the persecution. But remember that he speaks about all kinds of suffering. And so the things that I believe that Christians are going through in the world today, that we are experiencing here as we deal with the virus and with the consequences of that, the loss of income, the loss of communication and of fellowship, the restriction of movement, all of these things, not being able to go where you want to go and do what you want to do, these things are getting people down.

The suicide rate in the world is at an all-time high. Divorces are at an all-time high. And remember we predicted these things way back in March.

I said this is what's going to happen. And that is exactly what is happening. And it's affecting Christians in the same way.

And Christians are giving in. The devil is overrunning them because they are not standing and they're not recognizing what is going on. I'm not going to get into a whole thing as to what the source of the virus is.

But I do believe that the devil is using it. And he is using it to attack us in all sorts of ways. And it's amazing the subtle ways in which he is using this thing to attack us.

And I'm not going to get into that this evening. But he says then that the same sufferings... Now this is interesting because this is very relevant to where we are at right now. The same sufferings are experienced by your brothers or brotherhood in the world.

All right, now let me just deal with this word, the world. You see, the problem is that many of these words, the moment we see that word, we jump to a conclusion. So when we see the word, the world, what do we think about? We think about those outside the church.

Everything outside the church is the world. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, that's the world. No, here he's not using the word world in that sense.

He's using the word world in the sense of the planet, if you will. So we don't have... I mean, this is really simple. We don't have brothers in the world in the sense of those who are outside of the body of Christ.

And I'm not meaning the local assembly. I'm meaning those who are born again. There are no brothers out there.

I know it's customary for different, particularly some ethnic groups, to refer to everybody of your ethnicity as a brother or everyone who is part of your club or of your association as a brother. But in fact, they are not our brothers if we are born again. We are not brothers because we are of the same skin color.

We are brothers because we are born again. We are not brothers because we are all part of the humankind and God is our father. No, he is not the father of those who are not born again.

So in the world, in the unsaved world, there are no brothers. So he's not talking about people in the unsaved world. He's just talking about people on the rest of the earth.

And so he's reminding them that the things that they are suffering, that they are experiencing, is being experienced by other Christians in other parts of the world. Remember where we began in the very beginning of the book. He is writing to those of the dispersion, those who are strangers, who are pilgrims and who are scattered.

And so we are those who are strangers and pilgrims and who are scattered across the world. And so there are Christians who are suffering all over the world, most of them a lot more than we are. Just the virus thing and the lockdown, we think it's pretty tough, and it is pretty tough when one day you open and the next day you're closed.

One day you can have a haircut, the next day you can't have a haircut, then you can get a haircut again, then you can't. I'm glad I'm not a barber. But folks, there are other nations where people don't even have food to eat because they can't go out.

They're not allowed to go out. The army is in the streets to try and keep people locked down. In fact, I just heard yesterday, we've been praying for the Christians in Victoria, the state of Victoria in Australia, Melbourne particularly.

They've been locked down in a hard lockdown since March, since I left there in March. And just yesterday, the government has extended that hard lockdown for another six months. Now, I can't even work that out.

I mean, it's a year. It's probably going to be a year of a hard lockdown where you cannot go anywhere unless you have a letter to say that you're an essential worker or you're going to buy groceries. That's about all you can do.

So we don't have much to complain about. I'm not commenting as to whether these things are fair or right or not. That's got nothing to do with it.

That's not our problem. It's the government's problem. So when we think it's tough, it's harder for others.

When we think that there is persecution, well, you need to go to North Korea. You need to go to China. You need to go to India, parts of Nigeria, even parts of Mexico, to find out what real suffering is like.

So what he is saying is, you're not alone. Don't feel that... And this is, I think, relevant to where we're at right now. I think that sometimes you say, well, you know, why me? Why me? Why do I have to deal with this stuff? And I believe the Spirit is reminding us no, it's not just us who are dealing.

There are many others who are dealing with this stuff. We have to meet outside. Christians in England are meeting outside.

But there's a little difference. The difference is that in England it rains every day. So we have some heat, but we're not wet.

Folks, we have a lot to be grateful for. But let's remember that we're not suffering alone. There are others who are suffering with us.

And of course the COVID thing is one thing. But when real persecution comes, it's easy. And can you imagine our brethren who are locked up in prisons in China and Korea and other places, who've been locked up for years and years, many of them in solitary confinement, never being able to see another human face, their food, a bit of bread and water shoved under the door.

Peter would say to them, there are others outside who are suffering as well. And so we can take comfort that we are not singled out. We're not the only ones who are having to deal with whatever it is we have to deal with.

There are others who are experiencing these things also. Now verse 10, But, there's my favorite word again. But.

So he's been talking about the devil. Verse 8 spoke about the roaring lion. Verse 9 says stand against him.

But may the God of all grace. There's the answer. Remember the plaque that's up in the fellowship hall.

But God. But God. And folk, we can become so, so focused on the devil and on our sufferings and on our problems that we forget that there is someone else in the picture.

And he is the mighty God. He is the God of all grace. Now we've spoken about this in the last couple of weeks in this passage.

Grace. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. The grace is what sees us through.

My grace is sufficient for you. And so Peter is saying when you are fighting or the devil is fighting with you, rather let's put it the right way. When the devil is fighting with you, when you are suffering, remember there are others who are suffering also.

But remember that there is the God of all grace. He doesn't have a little bit of grace. He has all the grace.

And it's at His disposal. And He hands it to those who come to Him. Let's come boldly to the throne of grace, Hebrews says, that we might find grace and mercy to help in a time of need.

We need to come to God for grace. We tend to grit our teeth and we say, well I've just got to see this through. I've just got to deal with my problems.

I've just got to deal with the adversity. I've got to just deal with it. No, let's come to the throne of grace.

Because at the throne of grace is all grace. There is sufficient. There is more than enough.

But you see how this connects back to verse 7, or was it verse 5? God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. How do I get grace? By coming to Him. And saying, Lord I've tried, but I can't fight this battle anymore.

I don't have what it takes. And when we come to Him in brokenness, when we come to Him in humility, it's then that He pours grace upon us. But the problem is that most of the time we don't even come to Him.

Because we think we can handle it. And even if we don't think we can handle it, we think that we have to handle it. No, you don't have to handle it.

You need to go to Him and ask of Him grace to help in a time of need. You see, we don't need grace when things are easy. Because we can cope with things.

But when things get hard, we need grace. And so may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory. And so here He's now moving again forward.

And He's reminding us. So can you see what Peter is doing? He's saying, first of all, you need to stand against the devil. But in standing against him, you need to remember that you have brothers who are also fighting and battling and struggling as you are.

But you also need to remember that there is God who is the source of your grace. But then there's a third thing you need to remember. And that is that He has called us to His eternal glory.

And I'm not going to finish this verse. But He's reminding us of the joy. Remember that Hebrews says, the author and the finisher of the faith, who for the joy that was set before Him because of the end goal, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

There is a goal ahead of us. There is a joy coming. There is eternal glory.

And I'm going to come back to this idea next week. And so what Peter is saying is, get your perspective right. Sometimes we get so obsessed, so fixated by the devil that we forget everything else.

In the Air Force, there is a thing called target fixation. And for those who are not interested, don't worry about it. Target fixation happens when a fighter pilot is either attacking a target on the ground or an enemy in the air.

And he fixes his attention on the target. And he forgets where he is. He loses sight of his airspeed.

He loses sight of everything else around him. And particularly if he is attacking a ground enemy, he can easily fly into the ground because he is so fixated on his enemy that he forgets what else is going on. It's a very real thing.

And folks, this is a very real thing for Christians. We get so fixated on our battle that we forget everything else around us. And Peter is saying, no, remember where you're at.

Remember that you're not alone. There are others who are fighting the same battles. Remember that there is the God of grace.

And remember that there is glory coming. There is a reward for those who overcome. Remember Revelation 2 and 3, seven times, to Him who overcomes, to Him who overcomes, there is a reward to those who overcome.

He has called us to an eternal glory. He has an eternal purpose for us. Let's not get so tied up and so fixated on dealing with our present distress and our present problems and our present temptations and defeats and whatever it is that we forget that in fact we are part of the body of Christ, that there are others who are struggling, there are others who are suffering, there are others who are praying with us and for us, that there is a God of grace and that there is a crown waiting for us.

Father, we thank You for Your Word. We thank You, Lord, that You have not left us to struggle on our own. And yes, Lord, while the fight is real and it's intense, and Lord, the closer we get to You, the more real the battle becomes.

But Lord, we thank You that we are not on our own but that You are with us. You said You will never leave us nor forsake us. We thank You, Lord, that You are the source of all grace and all encouragement and all comfort and everything that we need is to be found in Christ Jesus.

And so, Lord, I pray that You would help us to have our eyes fixed on Him. Lord, help us to have our eyes fixed on the goal and to recognize that what we're dealing with today, what we're dealing, and Lord, we understand that there are brethren who are watching the video who find themselves in very, very difficult times, a very difficult distress. And Lord, we pray that we may all have our eyes fixed on the goal and recognize that there is a crown waiting for those who will overcome.

Help us, Lord, to be overcomers. In Jesus' name I pray.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/38Eb1jWGtsw.mp4>  
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