**Standing Firm in the Faith**

**The Word**

Read together 1 Peter 5:8-14

**The Big Idea**

Peter concludes his letter by reminding us of our ultimate enemy, the devil. Though he is powerful and frightening, Christians can resist him by standing firm in the victory Christ has already achieved on our behalf.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What particular idea about Satan from Sunday’s message is standing out to you most, and why?

2. On Sunday we talked about the false messages Satan tries to speak into our hearts and minds. As you reflect on your recent experience, what specific false messages do you find yourself wrestling with internally?

3. Consider the call to “stand firm in the faith” and regularly take in all that God has done for us in Christ as the antidote to Satan’s attacks. What might it mean for you to “stand firm in the faith” in this season of your life?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

A. A portrait of Satan from v. 9

 1. Our “enemy”

a. None of the other challenges of 1 Peter are described as our enemy: not the trials of life, not the government, not the unjust slave owners, not the pagans who ridicule.

b. None of those are our true enemy, and we need to rember who the true enemy is and who the fight is truly against

 2. The “devil”

a. “Devil” comes from a word meaning “to slander” and that is his central method

 1) He slanders/accuses us before God (see Job 1)

 2) He slanders God before us (see Genesis 3)

 3) He wants to get in between our relationship with God to create distrust, discord, and distance

 b. He primarily works in the realm of ideas/deception

 3. “He prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour”

 a. His ultimate goal is our total ruin

 b. His means are subtle and often seem enticing, but his goal is our destruction

4. He is a defeated foe: Jesus has already won the victory. He is defanged but angry and looking to lash out on Jesus’ followers

 5. Consider this metaphor for Satan’s work from John Mark Comer’s “Live No Lies”

“During the cold war, the Russians coined the term dezinformatsiya to capture their new form of subterfuge, which entered our vocabulary as disinformation. The KGB began to flood the world with lies, half-truths, and propaganda, placing high-level spies in key roles in Western media, journalism, and entertainment, partially to advance their agenda but partially just to throw off the equilibrium of the West . . .So ditch your mental image of Saving Private Ryan or the Lord of the Rings. Instead, imagine a Russian hacker holed up in a room somewhere, programming bots and algorithms based on data harvested from Facebook and Google. These algorithms can work out when you are most emotionally vulnerable and susceptible to manipulation, then inject an emotion-loaded news story, alert, or link into your feed at just the right time to prey on your fear or desire and index you toward their desired behavior, opinion, or view.

B. How do we “resist” him?

1. “Be alert and sober-minded” (v. 8)

a. We need to be awake to Satan’s lies and messages so that we can identify them as they come, and speak against them

b. We need a good defense: watching out for his attacks, seeing them for what they are

2. “you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings”

a. Live in the awareness that we’re not alone in this. Other believers are going through the same challenges (see 4:12)

b. Satan wants to isolate us and separate us from the flock because that’s where he can do his greatest damage

 c. So we need to stick together and rely on each other in this struggle

3. “standing firm” (v. 9 and v. 12)

 a. This is the central point

b. Standing firm/fast is the most common image of resisting Satan (see the repetition of that image in Ephesians 6:11-14)

c. Here’s the idea: Jesus has already won the victory. He has already achieved our forgiveness, adoption, salvation, eternal life, etc. We are simply called to stand firm in the gospel, remain stable in all the good that Christ’s victory has achieved.

d. Our greatest defense is a good offense. Pursue God every day, enjoy your forgiveness, reflect on his promises, reflect on eternal life. Immerse yourself in all the good of the gospel so that when Satan’s messages come your way, they’re just not that enticing.

e. George Mueller: “I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man may be nourished…I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it.”