Sermon Guide

November 22: 1 Peter 5:6-11

What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?

Key Takeaways:

1. Peter wrote to people who were worn down by relentless pressure, not dramatic persecution. That kind of grinding exhaustion is just as real a spiritual threat.
2. Satan's roar is a tool of intimidation designed to make him appear bigger, stronger, and more in control than he actually is.
3. The roar of the lion often sounds like internal lies: you are alone, this will never end, and this failure is who you are now.
4. Humility is not thinking less of yourself. It is handing over what you were never strong enough to carry to the One who can carry it.
5. God himself, not a delegated representative, does the work of restoring, establishing, strengthening, and supporting his people.
6. God's grace is multifaceted. Whatever the color of your trial, he has grace in that same color for you.
7. Elijah's story shows that discouragement can follow even the greatest spiritual victories, and that God's response to exhaustion is often tender care before it is a new assignment.
8. God most often works in whispers, not earthquakes. One quiet act of faithfulness, one day, one person at a time.

Discussion Questions:

1. WhenToto pulled back the curtain in The Wizard of Oz, exposing the Wizard as just a man with levers and buttons, the fear dissolved. Can you think of a time when something that seemed overwhelming turned out to be smaller than it appeared? What changed your perspective?

2. The people Peter was writing to were being "ground down" by constant pressure rather than dramatic, newsworthy persecution. Does that description resonate with where you are right now? What does that kind of grinding pressure feel like in your own life?

3. Some specific ways we hear the roar of the lion: "You have to figure this out yourself," "You are alone in this," "This is never going to end," and "This failure is who you are now." Which of those lies feels most familiar or most dangerous to you personally? Why do you think that one has the most traction in your life?

4. Read 1 Peter 5:6-7. Humility is not thinking less of yourself but rather handing over what you were never strong enough to carry. How does that definition change the way you think about humility? What is something you are currently trying to carry that you were never meant to carry alone?

5. Several internal entry points for the enemy include bitterness, resentment, pride, unjustified anger, and sin we have stopped fighting. How do you think staying alert to internal vulnerabilities differs from staying alert to external ones? Which do you find harder to guard against?

6. In the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18-19, one of the most powerful moments in all of Scripture is followed almost immediately by Elijah hiding under a broom tree and asking God to take his life. What does that tell you about the nature of spiritual discouragement? Have you ever experienced a significant spiritual high followed quickly by a crash?

7. God's first response to Elijah was not a sermon or a rebuke. It was a nap and a meal. What does that tell you about how God views your physical and emotional needs in seasons of exhaustion? Does that surprise you or comfort you?

8. Some of us are waiting for the fire, for the earthquake, for the wind, that one big moment. God can send fire, but most of the time he works in whispers. Where in your life might you be waiting for a dramatic breakthrough when God is already working quietly? What might that quiet work look like?

9. Read 1 Peter 5:10. Note the four verbs, restore, establish, strengthen, and support appear without a conjunction between them, meaning God is doing all of these things at once. Which of those four words means the most to you right now, and why?

Practical Applications:

1. Identify one specific lie you have been believing that sounds like the lion's roar. Write it down, and next to it write a truth from Scripture that directly contradicts it. Refer back to it every time that lie resurfaces this week.
2. Practice the humility described in 1 Peter 5:6-7 by naming one burden you have been carrying on your own and bringing it to God in prayer each morning this week. Each time you pray, say out loud, "I know you care for me, so I am trusting you with this."
3. Reach out this week to one person in your church or small group who you suspect, like Elijah, may be under the broom tree. You do not need a plan or a speech. A simple, honest message that says "I see you and you are not alone" can carry more weight than you know.
4. Reflect on where you may have left a door unlocked, not just in terms of external temptations but in terms of internal ones like bitterness, resentment, or a sin you have stopped fighting. Bring that honestly before God and, if appropriate, before a trusted person in your group.