

My Favorite Thing About 1st Peter

1 Peter 5:8

February 05, 2022

The 1st recorded letter Peter wrote {written before 64 AD} was to believers in the Northern Provinces of Asia in what is now Turkey {Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia}.

There are many “Favorite” things to choose from in this letter:

- A promised inheritance that will never perish, spoil or fade – **1 Peter 1:3-4**
- Our redemption was purchased with something infinitely more valuable than silver or gold - the blood of Jesus – **1 Peter 1:18-19**
- A call to holy and righteous living – **1 Peter 2:9, 21-24**
- A call to love each other and use our spiritual gifts – **1 Peter 4:8-10**
- An invitation to cast all our worries and cares and anxieties on Jesus because He cares about us – **1 Peter 5:6-7**

All excellent and worthy “Favorites”, but none of them made it to the very top of my list.

What is at the top of my list might surprise you.

My Favorite Thing About 1st PETER is this ----- There IS a Villain in the Story.

- **1 Peter 5:8** - Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

The devil would like us to believe that:

- He doesn't exist
- He's harmless
- He's misunderstood
- He's not to be taken seriously

The fact that we don't take him all that seriously fits in well with his plans, but notice some of the words Peter used to describe this “*harmless and misunderstood*” being:

- **Adversary** - one's opponent in a contest, conflict, or dispute.
- **Enemy** - a person who is actively opposed or hostile to someone or something.
 - **Nemesis** - the inescapable agent of someone's or something's downfall.
- **Prowl** - move around restlessly and stealthily, especially in search of prey.
 - **Skulk** - keep out of sight, typically with a sinister or cowardly motive.
- **Devour** - eat hungrily or quickly.
 - **synonyms:** consume · destroy · wipe-out · annihilate · devastate · ravage · ruin · wreck · afflict · torture · plague · overcome · overwhelm

And notice the words of other Bible writers:

- **Ezekiel 28:14-16** - You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. ¹⁶ Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. {see also Isaiah 14:12-14}
- **Zechariah 3:1** - Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.
- **John 8:42-44** - Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. ⁴³ "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. ⁴⁴ "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.

- **2 Corinthians 11:12-15** - But what I am doing, I will continue to do, that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting. ¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.
- **Ephesians 6:11-12** - Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
- **Revelation 12:3, 9** - Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads..... The great dragon was hurled down-- that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

And notice the words of Ellen White:

- . . . What mental anguish Christ passed through! What grief! What torture of mind! He was face-to-face not with a hideous monster, as is represented with bat's wings and cloven feet, but a beautiful angel of light, apparently just from the presence of God. . . . {CTr 208.4}
- Did he not come to Christ with quotations of Scripture when he designed to overthrow him with his specious temptations? This is the way in which he comes to man, as an angel of light disguising his temptations under an appearance of goodness, and making men believe him to be the friend rather than the enemy of humanity. It is in this way that he has deceived and seduced the race -- beguiling them with subtle temptations, bewildering them with specious deceptions. {CE 73.1}
- Satan, clothed in robes of brightness, appearing like an exalted angel, tempted the world's Redeemer without success. But as he comes to man robed as an angel of light, he has better success. He covers his hideous purposes, and succeeds too well in deluding the unwary who are not firmly anchored upon eternal truth. -- Review and Herald, April 1, 1875. {Ev 609.2}

And notice the words of John Eldredge from his book *"Epic"*:

- I am staggered by the level of naivete that most people live with regarding evil. They don't take it seriously. They don't live as though the story has a Villain. Not the devil prancing around in red tights, carrying a pitchfork, but the incarnation of the very worst of every enemy you've met in every other story. Dear God -- the holocaust, child prostitution, terrorist bombings, genocidal governments. What is it going to take for us to take evil seriously? Life is very confusing if you do not take into account that there is a Villain. That you, my friend, have an enemy {pg 39}.

You and I have a powerful enemy – his highest aim is to steal, kill and destroy.

He'll do it in grand ways like through the holocaust or worldwide pandemics, but those are not the only tools in his vast toolbox, he's craftier than that. His plan to destroy also includes you.

If tempting you with sparkly things will work – How easy was that?

If winning the lottery will destroy your life – Yippee!!

If he can use so-called "Christians" to harm or derail you – Even better!!

If he can cause you pain and then get you to turn to drugs or alcohol or food to numb the pain – He's like a pig in slop!

If he can use beauty and popularity and the need to fit in as a way to distract and ruin you – Happy daze!

If he can get you to read "innocent" books about wizards or watch "funny" shows about friendly ghosts – HE. WILL. DO. IT!!

No matter what devices he uses his end goal is ALWAYS the same – your destruction. Both now and for eternity.

And you... by yourself... with your flimsy armor... cannot stand against him. He'll eat your lunch and come back for more.

Remember my favorite slogan, *"Meddle not in the affairs of dragons, for thou art crunchy and taste good with ketchup."*

Praise God, we were not just told the truth about the devil, we were also provided with the only way to be victorious in our fight against him:

- **1 Corinthians 10:13** - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
- **Ephesians 6:13-18** - Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

- **Hebrews 4:15-16** - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are -- yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- **James 4:7** - Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1st Peter 5:8 reminds us that we must always be on our guard because there **IS** a Villain in the story and the conflict is real.

Never forget what his end game is – your destruction.

But also.... Never forget that he's a loser.

- **Revelation 20:2-9** - He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.... ⁷ When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth -- Gog and Magog -- to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. ⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

Amen and amen.