

Enough is Enough: The Pastor is Fed Up

Introduction: I have decided this morning to expose a person who is determined to destroy me, my family and my ministry. I don't think this person has ever really liked me. He awakened me about one thirty in the morning. For at least three hours he berated me. He assaulted my mind with thoughts that were vile and vicious. It took me two or three days to recover from his malicious attack. Finally, I believed that I had the right to be a minister of the Gospel and the pastor of this good church. Although this person does like our church he still comes from time to time just to stir up trouble. He tries to divide our church over trivial matters. I have watched him play games with people's relationships. He pits one member against another. I have watched him put a bad idea in a good person's mind and I have noticed how he can put a good idea in a bad person. He then arouses their pride so that they don't want to lose face. He doesn't care whether he uses me, the pastor, the staff or the board. Whoever is open to his lies will do his dirty work. Well, I've had enough. Regardless of the cost I am unmasking this evil wretched person. The name is (at this point I turn to the right side of the auditorium and then to the center, and the sections of the balcony. His name is Mr. Devil, sometimes called Satan or the Great Dragon.

Now that I have this off my chest, I have another concern. If when I announced the name of the Enemy, any of you breathed a sigh of relief, (whew, wow, I thought he might be talking about me, my husband, my wife) or if any of you are disappointed because you suspect another antagonist in our midst that is hindering the progress of our church and you were hoping that I would identify the suspect, then you have a big problem. Because no contrary member can damage a good church as much as Mr. Devil. Oh, I know some folks don't believe that there is a real Devil, and the Devil likes that. He's always circulating news about his death. Yet every New Testament book mentions him and Jesus spoke of him fifteen times. In the short letter written by the Apostle Peter to his persecuted friends he encouraged them to be faithful to Jesus. He told them that their trials were being used to refine them. If they endure those tests their faith would be as precious as gold. In the fifth chapter he urges them to maintain their faith even if it looks like there is no way to win.

In a prophetic word he fears that they might listen to the viscous lies of Mr. Devil Peter can hear Mr. Devil say, "***It is not worth all the suffering to work for God or to be in God's will.***" In chapter five and verse eight Peter spoke from experience and the guidance of the Holy Spirit: **BE SELF CONTROLLED AND ALERT, YOUR ENEMY THE DEVIL PROWLs AROUND LIKE A ROARING LION LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO DEVOUR.**

His colleague in ministry may have given us a clue to the increased wave of lawlessness, perversion, and utter disregard for life that we are witnessing today. Read Revelation 12:12 Today we have to be careful. We are to check the bottle to see if someone has tampered with the lid. We need to make sure the meat has been cooked with high heat. Add the article. Check out the crib. Make sure a new needle is being used. So Peter who was sifted by Satan which led to three denials of his beloved Savior shouts. Watch Out! There are two survival techniques that we can use to ward off Mr. Devil.

1. The believer should not be easy pickings.

Leaders can be vulnerable, 5:1-4 Here Peter uses three terms that describe the church leader: The word elder speaks of the experience and maturing nature of the leader. The word shepherd describes the gift of teaching and tending the church. The word overseer says that the minister is appointed to direct the congregation.

The devil catches leaders when their motives are wrong. Certainly if money is their main reason they are in danger. The young seminary graduate today may leave the seminary owing a bundle. When I attended seminary \$500 would cover tuition, books and fees for a semester. Today some seminaries charge \$5000.00. Also the leader is in jeopardy when their methods are worldly. See verse 3. Custom made traps are mentioned in vv. 5-6 [transition: There is another survival technique that will keep us from being chewed up by Satan.] It calls for the believer to know their rights and not to be overwhelmed by the growls of the evil hungry hunter.

2. The believer should be armed.

Resist the devil by sticking with your conviction that Jesus is worth standing for. Believe that Jesus did win on the cross and judged

Satan for his evil. Believe that Satan is operating on borrowed time. Believe that your Savior is able to make you stand and withstand. Read I John 4:4 and James 4:7

Rehearse Martin Luther's word in **A Mighty Fortress is Our God**, especially verses one and three.

Remind yourself by thinking of your worldwide family, vv. 9-10
Research the letters of Marie Duran written in 1745 as an example of this practice. Edmund Clowney wrote of this strong French Huguenot. Your Heavenly Father will not let you be utterly destroyed. V. 10 Read Romans 16:20