



## TIME OF GRACE®

### *Keep the Faith: GOD Cares*

#### Study Notes

#### *Summary*

We instinctively hold on to things that God wants to take out of our hands. These burdens are too much for us to carry, at least for long. Thankfully God is humble enough to care about all of our problems, big and small, and strong enough to handle them.

- **1 Peter 5:6-11:** <sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup> Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. <sup>10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Lie #1—I've \_\_\_\_\_ to fix this.

Truth #1—GOD's \_\_\_\_\_ this.

**1 Peter 5:7:** Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Lie #2—No one \_\_\_\_\_ this.

Truth #2—They \_\_\_\_\_ this.

**1 Peter 5:9:** Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Lie #3—I \_\_\_\_\_ do this.

Truth #3—GOD \_\_\_\_\_ do this.

**1 Peter 5:10,11:** <sup>10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

## *Points to Ponder*

1. Agree/Disagree: Nothing in life matters more than what you think about your thoughts.
2. Which of the three lies (“thought shots”) do you most often believe? In light of today’s message, how could this upcoming week be different for your thought life?
3. Read Peter’s introduction to his friends in 1 Peter 1:1-9. Note at least three truths that encourage you in your spiritual life.

## *Homework for Next Week*

Read Matthew 8:1-27.

Time of Grace Ministry  
**Keep the Faith: GOD Cares**  
1 Peter 5:6-11  
August 16, 2020

***Pastor Mike Novotny***

You know, we too often think of the devil in these Hollywood kind of ways; as if his only goal is to make bumps in the night and make you jump in your seat. But that's not at all how the Bible describes him. His work is more deception, lies, misleading, and guiding people from the path of God.

Once upon a time, a man walked into a bar with sadness written all over his face. He slumped into the first barstool he could find and sighed so loud that a few heads turned in his direction. A man a couple barstools down looked over and asked, "Rough day?" And when the sad man didn't say anything in reply, the stranger slid a few seats closer and said, "I'm Devin and this one's on me." "Thanks," the sad man finally said, "I'm Chris." As the bartender brought two shots of whiskey to the two men, Devin asked a question: "So Chris, I don't mean to be a jerk but you look terrible." "That bad, huh?" Chris replied. "Well, I just lost my job. Seven years of working second shift and just like that. Oh, and of course, what happened last week? I just closed on a house, stretched myself financially to do it, and now I just don't know." "Oh man," Devin replied with sympathy, "I'm so sorry to hear that. What are you going to do?" "I honestly don't know. Just trust God, let go?" "No offense," Devin said, "I'm a religious guy, I go to church every single week, but what are you going to do? A few years back I lost my house. It ruined my credit, it was agony, so how are you going to fix it?" "I just don't know where to start," Chris admitted. "How about with that shot," Devin grinned.

So the two men took the first drink and before the shot glasses hit the bar, Chris opened up a little bit more. "You want to hear something crazy? Last night, I caught my girlfriend's son trying to take money out of my wallet." "You're kidding," Devin reacted. "Let me get this straight - you are dating the mother of a klepto and you lost your job and you might lose your house and you could possibly end up with a double-digit credit score. Dude, what did you do to make him mad? You cursed or something? Should I be sitting this close to you?" And Chris sighed one more time, "I never thought I was but who knows?" "Would another drink help?" Devin smiled.

After the men had had their second drink, Devin looked over his shoulder and leaned into Chris. "Can I tell you something? A few years ago, I felt just like you. My marriage didn't make it, the custody battle was brutal, I spent way too much money on lawyers and all I could afford was this dumpy apartment with secondhand furniture. And one day, I just decided I can't. I can't keep doing this; I need a break. So for the first time in a long time, I did what I wanted. I found this dating app - well, it wasn't really a date that I went on, if you know what I mean - and it was fun. It rescued me from the depression, it gave me something to get excited about again, and it got me through it. So I don't know, maybe you?" Chris blushed. And the thought of his ex-girlfriend suddenly popped into his head. "Tell you what, brother, I got to run," Devin said. "I'm going to

raise some hell with a few buddies of mine. But bartender? This last one's on me; this guy's had a rough day."

And as Devin walked out the door, Chris took his third shot of the hour. As he started to feel the effects of the alcohol, he smiled big at the bartender. "How about that guy?" "Oh, that guy?" the bartender answered. "That guy is the devil."

Did you catch that in my story? Devin and Chris; the devil and a Christian. Who else raises hell with his buddies and shows up at church every Sunday? And who else plants those sneaky little thoughts, "What are you going to do? You cursed or something? I'll tell you how to get through it." That's why today, I want to talk to you about getting drunk with the devil. I'm not talking about physically drunk, too much wine, too many beers, a couple extra shots. I want to talk to you about getting thought-drunk with the devil. Because have you ever noticed what thoughts can do to your faith? You know, it only takes a few drinks to kind of mess you up physically and maybe you've noticed that it only takes a few thoughts to kind of mess you up mentally and emotionally and even spiritually. Maybe that's happened to you; your day's going fine, your hope and trust is in God, and then you just have this thought that you think about too much - about this person or that situation - and suddenly your joy, your peace, your fruit of the spirit just disappears and that's exactly how the devil works. You know, we too often think of the devil in these Hollywood kind of ways; as if his only goal is to make bumps in the night and make you jump in your seat. But that's not at all how the Bible describes him. His work is more deception, lies, misleading, and guiding people from the path of God. It's half-truths and subtle thoughts; these little shots that get us spiritually drunk and make us waiver and stumble away from the path that God has for us.

And that's why today, the apostle Peter wants to keep you sober. He wants to talk about how you think and how you can resist the Father of Lies when he wants to buy you a drink. And that's especially true for those of you who are hurting right now. Just like the devil pulled up a chair next to that hurting man who walked into the bar, he does the same thing for you. So if you want to follow along on the screen or grab your Bible, we're going to be in 1 Peter 5 where we find these words: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on God because God cares for you. Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen."

Amazing words! So let's unpack those three lies and the three truths from this section of Scripture. Grab a pen and write down this first one. Here's the lie the devil would love for you to believe: "I've got to fix this." You can do your best at work. You can try to serve those in your relationships. You can budget, you can take care of your body, but do you have any power to control the outcome? You don't. And so if you need for him to stick with you, if your finances have to look like this at this point in your life, if you just need your relationships to be like this perfect family, you are in so much trouble. You will be dizzy and sick with anxiety because you simply can't. I've got to fix this is the thought that will make you drunk. And here's

the truth that will keep you sober: God's got this. My God? He's got it! I'm going to do my best, I'm going to plan, I'm going to pray but in the end, whatever God wants to do, he's got it.

Here's the passage that proves that; 1 Peter 5:7. It says, "Cast all your anxiety on God because he cares for you." I think of it like my pen here. Imagine this is the thing that you're really freaking out about. Peter doesn't say like show this to God. He doesn't say pray about this to God. What does he say to do? Good thing I'm a soccer player because I think that camera is more expensive than my car. He says, "Cast it," right? So where's that pen? Where's that fear right now? It's not with me. I didn't show it to God then put it back in my pocket. Peter says, "Cast your anxiety on God." Which is an amazing picture, isn't it? In fact, in my research, I learned that the verb that Peter chose for cast only shows up two times in the entire New Testament - here and then in Luke 19:35. Luke 19:35 is the story of Palm Sunday and that's the place where the disciples cast or threw their cloaks onto a donkey for Jesus to ride on, which is a great picture, right? Cause where were their cloaks when they cast them? No longer on them. I mean, they didn't keep like one arm in the cloak and, you know, kind of throw the other half on the donkey and shuffle along with Jesus into Jerusalem. No, the whole thing came off of them and it went on to the donkey. It was gone; it was his, it wasn't theirs.

And that's the perfect picture that will keep you sober. God, you're good, you've got it, you care about me. The cross of your son proves that you are for me and not against me so you take care of this, God. You be responsible for what happens with my finances, with my health. You work the painful situations for amazing results so I'm going to trust you. You handle this, I'm letting it go, I'm going to try to sleep well tonight. I'm casting it all on you.

Because Peter knows that God - God is a lot like my wife. Come on, honey, if you're watching this, this has to be like the most brownie points ever. No, it's true. If you've never met my wife, Kim before, she is an immensely responsible woman. Sometimes when I talk to people and I make promises, I forget about it and I have those awkward conversations like, "Oh yeah, I'm sorry, I forgot about that." Not Kim. When Kim says that she will do something, she does it. She remembers it, she writes it down, she puts it on a to-do list, she works, she checks the box, she gets it done and God is just like that. That beautiful part of my wife's character is a glimpse of God because when I ask Kim to do something, I know that I don't have to worry about it; it's going to get done. And it's the same with your God. He's not a forgetful Father. You will never have a conversation where he says, "Oh, I forgot about that!" He's got it. So don't hold onto it; cast it. Yeah, do your best and then leave the rest to God.

So that's the first truth: I don't got to fix this; God's got this. You ready for the second? Here's the second lie the devil would like you to believe: No one gets this. Just like lions love lonely gazelles, the roaring lion, the devil, loves it when you feel like it's just you. Why me, God? No one has to deal with this much, God! None of my friends have to carry burdens like this, God. First, my family's messed up, my parents get divorced, and now I deal with depression. Like what do you have against me? You know, first I struggle and I'm lonely and I asked you for someone and you don't provide them and then I get sick and then I have to go back to the doctor? What did I do to make you mad? I tell people at my church about this but I don't know anyone who has to deal with so much in their life. I mean, the devil would love it for you to believe that; that no one would understand, no one gets it, but friends, that's just not true. Here's the truth of

it: They get this. Brothers and sisters in the faith, they get it and let Peter prove it. Verse 9 he says: "Resist the devil, standing firm in the faith, because," here's his reason, "because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings." You catch that logic? Resist the devil, okay. Stand firm in the faith. I want to but how? Here's how: Because you know that the family of believers is going through the same kind of sufferings. Listen, Christian, you are not under a curse. It's just your cross. You were not under some cloud of judgment. This is common. Yeah, maybe your five closest friends don't go through it but your sample size is just too small because throughout the world there are all kinds of people who get it and you share a common Father who can get you through it.

Do you know what happens when you believe that truth? You end up getting closer to them and you find yourself reaching out to him. You might assume no one gets it and the devil would love for that to continue. But I dare you, I challenge you, to put a stop to your private pity party because the devil loves to pounce and make your pain public. Reach out, tell someone - your Bible study group, your family, reach out to your parents, your pastor - tell people. I can almost guarantee you they will not take a step back. They'll say, "I get it. I've been through that. My son, my friend, so many Christians that I know." And you'll end up with people and encouragement and love and prayer and support and a place to go. A place to get that sin off of your chest and a place to hear about the God whose grace is always enough. And you'll reach out to your Father not in bitterness thinking you're cursed. You'll reach out to him as the heavenly Father who's helped people get through this a million times. You don't have to mope. You don't have to drag your feet. You don't have to lose your joy because all around the world there are Christians in the exact same situation who are dealing with joy and with hope because they know that God's got it. So that's my challenge for you today. If you're stuck in some spiritual situation, if you think that you're cursed, if you wonder if God is mad, make it public. They get it and your Father can help you through it.

So that's the second lie: No one gets this. The truth is, they get it. Which brings us to our final lie and truth for today. Here's the lie the devil would love for you to believe: I can't do this. The devil would love for you to think that, you know what, you just can't. You tried, you worked hard, you did your best but it's time for a little sinful self-care. I've been good for so many nights in a row; no one would blame me if I'm bad on this one. I can't keep loving these people, I can't just deal with this loneliness without crossing some line. I just can't keep giving, keep trusting, keep waiting for God to show me his grand plan. I can't. I've got to give in. Oh, the enemy would love that - for you to give in, to give up, to turn your back on God.

But it's just not true. Here's the truth: God will do this. I'll let Peter say it best, verse 10: "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever." No, this isn't even the end of the letter but Peter has to say, "Amen." Ooh, and I love, love, love that passage so much I don't even know where to start and I don't know how much time you've got so let's go fast. Peter says this is the God of all grace. He's not the God of a little grace or some grace but all of the grace, all of the undeserved love; that's your God. He's there every single day so you can stand in his love. Fear doesn't stand a chance when you stand there with a God by your side who adores you. When he gives you grace, when you fall on your face and get up expecting him to be mad and there's just love. That God, he called

you. I love that line; God called you, Christian. Can you imagine if your favorite athlete, celebrity, called you? You know, if on your caller ID that name showed up, my goodness, but this is God. God called you! The God who knows every sin, every struggle and fear, every time you've been mentally, spiritually drunk, he still called you to his eternal glory in Christ. Oh, man! The word glory means something that makes you go wow! And you've experienced glory. You go to the beach and look at the ocean, you see the stars, you've had an amazing meal - wow. But that glory is always temporary but not this. In Jesus Christ, God called you to eternal glory that forever and ever and ever and ever you're never going to stop saying, "Wow, God! Wow!" And the more you think about that - that forever and ever after this one little line of suffering you have an epic novel of pleasure and interest, excitement, wonder, love, comfort, friendship - when you think about that God, you say he can and I can, too! Peter admits you're going to suffer but God will restore you. He will make you strong. He will keep you firm. He will keep you steadfast. He has power, not just for a moment, but forever and ever and Peter says, "Amen" and I hope you do, too. No, you can't - you can't love people. You can't be strong. But it's not just you. There's God. The God who goes before you. The God who is behind you. The God who is beside you, all around you, the God who is within you, who is with you, who is for you. When you think about that God, fix your eyes on the cross of your Savior. You say I can. I will. I want to." God's got this, he's got me, and with his help, I can do all things through him who gives me strength.

And that, brothers and sisters, is how you stay sober. I've got to fix this! No, God's got this. Nobody gets this! Yeah, they do. I just can't do it. With God's help, you will. So the next time you're suffering and you mope your way into that spiritual bar and the devil smiles and says, "This one's on me," I want you to grin back and say, "Nah, water please." That's how you stay sober. That's how you keep the faith.

Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, today, we try to remember what you're like; that you are a God of all grace and all power. Because of your eternal power, you can do everything and anything. And because of your amazing grace, you want to do great things for us. Help us not to live isolated lives where the devil can peddle his lies. Instead, sanctify us by the truth because your word - it's truth. I pray in the days to come as we read our Bibles, as we sing Christian songs, as we talk about your love, you would fill our hearts with the water of life; that that would satisfy us and get us through. I thank you, God, for hearing this prayer. I know you do because you're not just any god; you are the God of all grace who called us. We pray this in the name of our Savior, your Son, Jesus Christ, Amen.