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## GRACE IN THE FACE OF ANXIETY & ADVERSARY

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**SUMMARY:** Sometimes we only see the real point of a story at the end, when all is revealed. In a way the same is true for Peter's first letter to the churches in Asia Minor. In 5:12 we see just why this letter was written, so that the readers might know that the message of grace that they heard is the truth by which the must stand.


We have seen from the early chapters that this audience were in a period of great trial and struggle. Their faith has cost them dearly and even still it called for more. They were to submit themselves to those in control, they were to humble themselves to their leaders.

It's understandable that people would have been anxious, this life was far from easy. Yet Peter calls for a simple solution, cast it all on God for he cares for you. (v.7)

But before he signs off, he identifies the enemy that they really fighting. It's not their wicked rulers, nor the ignorant, atrocious husbands, it's not even the abusive slave masters, it's the devil. He is described as a roaring lion, seeking prey to devour.

Against him they, and we, have two simple God honoring responses, resistance and faith. We must fight against temptation and cling onto our faith in times of trial. Peter also wanted them to know that they were not alone (v.9)

Then he signs off, pointing them to the God of all grace, who called them (as in ch.1) despite their present struggles. He will make them strong, firm and steadfast, as he will for us still today!

1. What does anxiety look like and why is it so debilitating?
  2. How as Christians should we understand & respond to issues of clinical anxiety?
  3. What do we do with the fact that Paul say don't be anxious about anything (Phil 4:6-7) and yet Peter says give them to God? Is it ok to be anxious?
  4. How can the expectations of following Jesus make us anxious?
  5. Why should we cast all our anxieties on God?
  6. Peter twice calls the churches to be alert and of sober mind (4:7&5:8), why is it so important?
  7. What do you find interesting about the description of the devil in verse 8?
  8. If the devil is the real enemy why do we often treat our religious, social or political opponents as enemies?
  9. What are the devil's key weapons against us and how are we to respond?
  10. How is the conclusion in verse 10 have a comfort to the early church and to us?
  11. Why did the church in Asia Minor need to be reminded that the gospel was true? Why do we need to hear that?
  12. What has stood out in I Peter for you most?
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I PETER 5:6-14

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