

Theme for Sunday, June 5, 2011
The Seventh Sunday of Easter



***Your adversary
the devil
prowls around
like a roaring lion,
seeking someone
to devour.***

1 Peter 5: 8b

“Be Alert, Not Dessert!”

1 Peter 5: 6 – 11

We Christians are reminded by Peter that we have a very real, powerful, and hungry foe who is constantly looking for opportunities to pounce on God's people. Be alert to hear Peter's counsel and encouragement for guarding against the wily foe.

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**Connecting Points:
Our Vision in Action**

Peter tells us to be “sober-minded and watchful” to avoid the snares of the devil. What is one way you could become more watchful in the coming week? Share your decision with one of your Christian friends.

Do you see the adversary “on the prowl” in our community? What is one way you could reach out with those around you to share Jesus with them – the Only One who provides us true protection from the spiritual forces of evil?

Connecting People to Christ Now and Forever

Introit

Selected Verses from Psalm 68

- L: God shall arise, His enemies shall be scattered;
C: And those who hate Him shall flee before Him!
L: As smoke is driven away, so You shall drive them away;
C: As wax melts before fire, so the wicked shall perish before God!
L: But the righteous shall be glad;
C: They shall exult before God; they shall be jubilant with joy!
L: Sing to God, sing praises to His name; lift up a song to Him who rides through the deserts;
C: His name is the LORD; exult before Him!

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- L: Father of the fatherless and protector of widows
C: Is God in His holy habitation.
L: God settles the solitary in a home;
C: He leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.
L: O God, when You went out before Your people,
C: When You marched through the wilderness,
L: The earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain,
C: Before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel.
L: Rain in abundance, O God, You shed abroad;
C: You restored Your inheritance as it languished;
L: Your flock found a dwelling in it;
C: In Your goodness, O God, You provided for the needy.
ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The First Lesson

Acts 1: 12 – 26

(Christ's followers seek His will concerning the future of His Church and who will replace Judas in apostolic leadership. Entrust your future to the Lord in prayer, trusting that He will prepare your path.)

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

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First Lesson cont'd

¹⁵In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, ¹⁶“Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” ¹⁸(Now this man bought a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

²⁰“For it is written in the Book of Psalms, “ ‘May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it’; and “ ‘ Let another take his office.’ ”

²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us – one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” ²³And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”

²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

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Epistle Lesson

1 Peter 5: 6 – 11

(As Christians are confronted with persecution, trials, and temptations to deny God, Peter offers encouragement in the face of Satan's attacks. Take these worries, troubles, and distractions – these attacks of Satan – and lay them upon our God. Cling to His Word, standing firm in faith and trusting in His care for you.)

⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, ⁷casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. ⁸Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. ¹⁰And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Lesson

John 17: 1 – 11

(This is Jesus' prayer the night before He goes to the cross. The Father answers this prayer by glorifying Himself as He saves sinners and gives them eternal life. God is glorified as people know Him by knowing Jesus, the one He sent. God is glorified as His people are united in a hostile world, and kept by His Word.)

¹When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

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Gospel Lesson cont'd

⁶“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. ⁸For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

⁹“I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”

God Bless You!