

PUBLIC ENEMY #1

1 Peter 5:8-9

Introduction:

1. Charles Arthur Floyd, better known as "Pretty Boy Floyd" robbed numerous banks in the Midwest and allegedly killed 10 people, 5 in what was called the Kansas City Massacre in 1933.
 - a. Pretty Boy Floyd was branded by the F.B.I. as : Public Enemy #1
 - b. He was killed by the F.B.I. in 1934
2. Miss Parker was 24 when she died. Mr. Barrow was 25.
 - a. We know them as the notorious "Bonnie & Clyde".
 - b. For two years they held up gas stations, restaurants and banks in the Southwest.
 - c. They killed 12 people, mostly policemen.
 - d. Because of his ruthless nature, Clyde Barrow earned the title: Public Enemy #1 of the Southwest.
 - e. In May of 1934 they were killed by law enforcement officials.
3. John Dillinger, attracted national attention for a series of crimes committed in the Midwest over 13 months in 1933 & '34.
 - a. His gang included "Baby Faced Nelson" and "Pretty Boy" Floyd.
 - b. They robbed a dozen banks and held up 3 police stations to free fellow gang members.
 - c. In July of 1933 the F.B.I. identified John Dillinger as Public Enemy #1
 - d. On July 22, 1934, federal agents shot and killed Dillinger as he exited a movie theater.
4. Never making the list were the likes of : Dutch Shultz, Al Capone, Machine Gun Kelly, Ma Barker, Charles Manson, Son of Sam, Theodore Bundy, Patricia Hearst, Angela Davis, Sirhan Sirhan, & Lee Harvey Oswald.
 - a. However, the title: Public Enemy #1 has always been reserved by the F.B.I. for those criminals so dangerous and notorious, they become "America's Most Wanted".
 - b. Yet, I'm here to tell you they are next to nothing compared to the real PUBLIC ENEMY #1
5. You won't find his name on a list. His picture will never appear on a wanted poster.
 - a. He will never be the case study for "America's Most Wanted".
 - b. He is ruthless. Dangerous. Without a conscience. Vicious.

- c. People refer to him by several different names:
 - i. Lucifer, Satan, the Devil, prince of the Power of the Air,
 - ii. Robber of souls, destroyer of eternities, devastator of families...
 - iii. Public Enemy #1!
- 6. Whether or not he's a fallen angel from heaven is not as important as realizing he wants to keep you from heaven.
 - a. I want to acquaint you with Public Enemy #1...
 - b. By sharing 4 things we need to know about Public Enemy #1
 - c. Text: 1 Peter 5:8-9

I. HE IS "YOUR" ENEMY!

- 1. The Devil is our enemy! Our foe! Our adversary! He is not a friend.
 - a. He does not have our best interests at heart. Not even close.
- 2. The Greek word means = an opponent in a law suit.
 - a. That's not the picture of a friendly confrontation.
 - b. When you go to court with someone, it's not to become the best of friends.
 - c. You are an opponent! An enemy! An adversary!
- 3. Satan is the enemy not only of every Christian, but of every person.
 - a. There's a word in the verse I want you to see, and I would like to think you would underline it.
 - b. You see, the devil is not just an enemy, he is...

Your Enemy!

- 4. The insane gunman in Australia became the enemy for a large crowd of people.
 - a. He killed 34 people. A terrible incident. Yet, for us, it's headlines.
 - b. It's tragic, but he is so far away he cannot harm us.
 - c. He is an enemy no doubt, but his is not our enemy.
- 5. This is not the case with the Devil. He is YOUR Enemy...& he is out to get you...
 - a. Brother Gann, is this just boogey man theology? I wish it were.
 - b. It is all too real folks. He is all too real.
 - c. Whether you believe in him or not is no where near the issue.
 - d. He is real! And he is your enemy!

II. HE IS A "SNEAKY" ENEMY!

1. The Bible says he...."prowls around..."
 - a. There's just something sneaky about a prowler. That's exactly what Satan is SNEAKY!
 - b. Peter, inspired by God's Spirit, alerts us, to the reality Satan is on the prowl.
 - c. He has been and will always be until the Lord shuts him away in Hell forever!.
2. I don't know if any of you remember the old sci-fi, pre-Star Trek series called: Lost in Space!
 - a. One of the things I remember is the robot.
 - b. He always had the same thing to say whenever danger was present: WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!
 - c. Folks, while that was just a show, this is a reality.
 - d. This is a warning. Public Enemy #1 is real. He is on the prowl. He never rests!
3. Two worldly men saw an elderly church goer coming down the street.
 - a. One man pointed toward her. "I'll bet you can't mention anybody that old Miss Thompson can't find something good to say about."
 - b. The other fellow called the bet. "Good morning, Miss Thompson," he said politely.
 - c. "What do you think about the devil?" Miss Thompson cocked her perky little head over to one side, "Well," she answered, "there is one good thing about him. He is always on the job."
 - i. I don't know if we could say it's good
 - ii. but he is always on the job. He is on the prowl.
4. He's there when we are at our best, i.e., when we are flying high spiritually.
 - a. He's there when we are most vulnerable, the weakest, and the most depressed.
 - b. Always there, on the perimeter, prowling about waiting to pounce.
 - c. Waiting for you!
 - d. ***Eph 4:26-27 Be angry, and {yet}do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. (NAS)***
 - e. He's always looking for that opportunity!
5. He's sneaky. No doubt about it!
 - a. One of his greatest tricks, & I'm not really sure how he does it, is to convince people he does not exist.
 - b. That he's a figment of the imagination of the Christian right!

- c. I don't understand how anyone can look at our world and not believe there is a devil anymore than they can look and not believe in our God.

III. HE IS A " DEADLY" ENEMY!

1. Peter tells us "*Like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour...*"
 - a. "Be careful-- watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart." (TLB)
2. Writing in religious journal, author Carl Armerding recounted his experience of watching a wildcat in a zoo.
 - a. "As I stood there," he said, "an attendant entered the cage through a door on the opposite side. He had nothing in his hands but a broom. Carefully closing the door, he proceeded to sweep the floor of the cage."
 - b. He observed that the worker had no weapon to ward off an attack by the beast. In fact, when he got to the corner of the cage where the wildcat was lying, he poked the animal with the broom.
 - c. The wildcat hissed at him and then lay down in another corner of the enclosure.
 - d. Armerding remarked to the attendant, "You certainly are a brave man."
 - i. "No I ain't brave," he replied as he continued to sweep.
 - e. "Well, then, that cat must be tame."
 - i. "No," came the reply, "he ain't tame."
 - f. "If you aren't brave and the wildcat isn't tame, then I can't understand why he doesn't attack you."
 - i. Armerding said the man chuckled, then replied with an air of confidence, "Mister, he's old--and he ain't got no teeth."
3. While that's a good story
 - a. Satan does have teeth! And they are set for you and me!
4. Columnist Herb Caen wrote in the San Francisco Chronicle:
 - a. "Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed.
 - b. Every morning a lion wakes up. It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.
 - c. It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle; when the sun comes up, you'd better be running."
 - d. Spurgeon wrote likewise: "If you are not seeking the Lord, the Devil is seeking you. If you are not seeking the Lord, judgment is at your heels."

5. A couple of thoughts about the lion...

He "ROARS"

- a. **Isaiah 5:29**, *"Their roar is like that of the lion, they roar like young lions; they growl as they seize their prey and carry it off with no one to rescue."* (NIV)

He "DEVOURS"

- b. Greek - "To gulp entirely.". Probably views me as a "big Gulp"
 - c. The Devil is not a "roaring lion", but he is a lot like a roaring lion.
 - d. The truth is we would be better off facing a "roaring Lion" than Satan!
 - e. We would be better equipped! We would know better what to do.
6. Malcolm Collins, a missionary in Africa shared what he told the children to do in case they encountered a hungry lion.
- a. The first thing to remember is that you should never try to flee. That would mean certain death. The lion can run much faster than we can.
 - b. Next, you should try to look very brave and stare right back into the Lion's eyes. If you are successful, he will back down and run away.
 - c. However, if that does not work, you should be prepared for the lion to attack you. Have your spear ready so that when he leaps upon you, he will land on the spear and be killed. [Cedar, Paul A. "The Communicator's Commentary James, 1,2, Peter, Jude" Word Pub, pg 198.
7. This is not only good advice should we encounter a hungry lion, but it is good counsel as we face the roaring lion called the devil!

Don't run

resist!

Verse 9 "Resist him..." Grk Word = To stand against!

- a. **James 4:7** *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* (NIV)
8. This is something we can do! This is active rather than passive!
- a. We can put up quite a fight when we want too.
 - b. Wrestle with him, box him, street fight!
9. Satan is a deadly enemy... Public Enemy #1. He will do all he can to destroy you.
- a. He's Your enemy He's a sneaky enemy He's a deadly enemy
 - b. But the good news is...

IV. HE IS A "DEFEATABLE" ENEMY

1. An elderly preacher is reported to have prayed the following prayer each day:
 - a. "O Lord, give me a backbone as big as a saw log and ribs like the large timbers under the church floor.
 - b. Put iron shoes on my feet and galvanized breeches on my body.
 - c. Give me a rhinoceros hide for skin, and hang up a wagonload of determination in the gable-end of my soul.
 - d. Help me to sign the contract to fight the devil as long as I've got a tooth--and then gum him until I die."
2. Satan is a loser was never meant to be a winner.
 - a. The gold medal is for us, as we turn our lives to Jesus and with His help defeat Public Enemy #1.
 - b. Every person labeled as public enemy #1 was a loser!
 - i. Every one of them was gunned down or spent their lives in prison.
 - ii. They did some damage. They were dangerous!
 - iii. But they were ultimately defeated!
3. Satan will do some damage. He is dangerous!
 - a. He will ultimately be defeated by the victorious Jesus, and can be defeated in your life as well!

Let's look at some key words that will be our weapons to defeat him.

4. #1. Peter suggests we be "alert".
 - a. Joe Lewis was the heavyweight boxing champion of the world.
 - b. He fought, if I recall correctly, 71 times professionally; he lost only once.
 - c. During the decade and a half he held his title, he defended it 25 times.
 - d. Bill Stern, the voice of American sports on radio, decided toward the end of the Brown Bomber's career that he would interview him and find out the technique or the secret that Lewis employed in fighting his opponents and how he could win over people who were at times much larger than he.
 - e. His answer was very simple "I study my opponent, I plan my fight very carefully. The results are always the same. 1) I'm never surprised and 2) I stay on the offensive".
 - f. That's pretty good counsel for dealing with the devil. Satan wins many of his attacks and victories because he surprises us.
 - i. We continually live shocked.
 - ii. The believer has no reason to be shocked, intimidated or surprised by the attack of the enemy -- none whatsoever.

5. #2. We need to exercise "self-control"!

- a. This means we need to be able to just say NO!
- b. Just like Jesus did in Matthew 4 when Satan tempted him in the wilderness!
- c. How do I get it — prayer, accountability, and practice.
- d. So many diseases were virtually eradicated years ago by the marvels of modern medicine.
 - i. However, to our surprise, some of them seem to be returning in our time.
 - ii. Why is that? I suggest it is due to carelessness.
 - iii. American's are not getting vaccinated against these diseases.
 - iv. Once they are given the disease decreases, if we are not, we are susceptible.
 - v. Satan can get a foothold in our life, in fact, he may have one today, because we have become careless, and have not been saying no, but rather, "maybe", "This once", "Why not"
 (1)That's all he needs, don't give him that much!
 - vi. Know when to say no and then say it!

6. #3. Stand firm in your faith!

- a. Get close to God and then get closer!

James 4:8 *Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (NIV)*

Hebrews 10:22 *“let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. (NIV)*

Psalms 73:28 *“But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds. (NIV)*

Zechariah 1:3 *Therefore tell the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Return to me,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty. (NIV)*

7. #4. Realize, we are in this together! [Verse 9b]
 - a. You're not alone. You are not the only one fighting satan.
 - i. You are not the only one who has lost some ground.
 - ii. From time to time, we all have.
 - b. We must be a team! We must be in this together! We might fight hand in hand.
 - i. We need to be together!
 - ii. Don't miss the Lord's Day. Don't miss this fellowship.
8. Public Enemy #1 is notorious... He is frightening He is a destroyer of souls But, he is defeatable! We are meant to win

he is meant to lose! How goes your battle!

V. PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. The lion went up to the rhinoceros and asked, "Who is the king of the jungle?"
 - a. "You are, O Lion," came the answer.
 - b. The lion went up to the hippopotamus and asked, "Who is the king of the jungle?" The hippo said, "You are, O Lion."
 - c. Finally, the lion went to the elephant and asked the same question.
 - i. For an answer the elephant seized the lion with his trunk, threw him high in the air, caught him on the way down, and slammed him hard against a tree.
 - ii. The lion got up, half-dazed, shook himself.
 - iii. He turned to the elephant and said weakly, "Just because you don't know the right answer, you don't have to get sore."
2. Be an Elephant in our fight with Satan!

I John 4:4 "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (NAS)
3. Public Enemy #1 is real even if we don't believe it!
4. Public Enemy #1 is out to devour (gulp) you, your family, your children, your grandchildren, your spouse, your parents, your preacher, your elders, your deacons, your teachers, the youth, the young marrieds, the seniors, the single parents, the employed, unemployed, and retired!
5. Public Enemy #1 is defeatable if we are determined!

- a. If we are alert, if we resist, if we can just say "no"! If we will stand firm!
 - b. It's possible Satan has found a toe-hold in your life. You may be feeling as if you have been losing ground, hurting, defeated, and wondering how could God really even love you after what's been happening...
 - c. You're not alone! And you can again be victorious, as you allow Jesus to again be the Lord of your life. For the first time or recommitting and renewing your life to him.
6. A man was riding on a train. Seated next to him was an obviously troubled and anxious boy.
- a. The boy told the man he was a convict returning from prison. His crime had brought shame on his poor but proud family, and even though they had written to him, he had refused to see them. He was too ashamed for what he had done. The boy explained that he wanted to make it easy for his family. So he had written them to put up a signal when the train passed their little farm on the outskirts of town. If they wanted him to return home, they were to tie a yellow ribbon on the apple tree near the tracks. If they didn't want him back, they were to do nothing, and he would stay on the train, go east and lose himself forever. Nearing his hometown, the youth's suspense grew to where he couldn't even look.
 - b. The man offered to watch out the window for him and the two exchanged seats. After a long few minutes, the man laid his hand on the boy's shoulder, who by now had his eyes shut and his head buried in his lap.
 - c. The man whispered in a broken voice, "It's all right! You can look now...The whole tree is yellow with ribbons!"