



ESCAPE FROM ENTANGLEMENT

This week we are discussing the Church as a Sober-Minded people (1 Peter 5:8).

After watching Pastor Dustin introduce the topic of sober-mindedness and the pastors discussion, please pause the video and take time to discuss these questions among your group.

1) Chapter five of 1 Peter highlights the instructions and need for correct behavior (orthopraxy) while the Church is under suffering and trials. The Apostle first encourages the overseers of the Church, and then encourages all Christians. As this section concludes, Peter exhorts the Church to resist the temptation of the Devil.

One way for the Church to resist temptation is through the act of being sober-minded. This essentially means to be self-disciplined, to think rationally, to not be foolish, and to not be under the control of an outside (and wrong) influence.

- Consider bad influences in people's lives. What are some of those bad influences? Why is it important to identify what the bad influences are?
- What are some good influences? Who or what has been a good influence in your life? How so?
- Consider the text that Pastor Dustin read, what are some of the ways you have seen the Devil tempt you? What about other Christians?
- How have you or others sought to practically battle against these temptations?

2) As one commentator on 1 Peter 5:8 states - "Peter's readers were in danger from the Devil if they gave in to his temptation to doubt God's goodness, and to regard their sufferings as an indication of God's disinterest or ill will. Satan not only seeks to deceive us as the serpent deceived Eve, but he also seeks to "devour" us as a "lion."

- Where in the last 6-12 months have you felt like God was disinterested in your life? How do you think the lies of the Enemy caused you to believe this?
- If you haven't felt that God was disinterested in your life, how have you cultivated a belief and understanding that God is intimately involved in your life and cares for you?
- Peter uses the imagery of Satan as a roaring lion that seeks someone to devour. This essentially means that he is both cunning and cruel. He attacks when it is least expected. How are you keeping on guard against the attack of our Enemy each day? What practical steps do you take?
- How can we encourage one another in resisting temptation and being free from outside influences that are detrimental?

3) Read Ephesians 5:1-21. The Apostle Paul lists behaviors that are opposed to sober-minded living in the first part of this reading. He then helps Christians understand how they can be sober-minded and live in a God-Honoring way in the rest of this section.

- How do we as Christians expose the "unfruitful works of darkness" (v11)?
- Paul encourages the Ephesians to be filled with the Spirit, to address one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Have you ever done that? If so, how did it feel? If not, how are ways that you address other Christians to encourage them and to exhort them to right living?
- Sober-mindedness is not absent of joy, fun, or excitement, it is absent of harmful, ungodly influences. Spend a moment praying for your group to grow in sober-mindedness and to help others grow in their understanding of God's will for their lives (v17).

Now turn back to the video for a final word and challenge from Pastor Dustin. Afterwards, take a moment to discuss his challenge among your group members as well.