

# 1 Peter

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## 1 Peter 1:1-12

### Vss. 1-2

- Peter, an apostle: as we stated last week, Peter is writing to a Gentile, Greek audience, so he uses his Greek name, Peter, The Rock; and he is an apostle, one who was actually with Jesus, who walked with Him, was instructed by Him; this is how the early church differentiated between people like Peter, an apostle, and people like Timothy, a disciple; Paul was able to call himself an apostle because of his encounter with the risen Christ on the Damascus Road where he received his calling from Christ.
- to those who reside as aliens: As Christians we are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, of "God's household" (Eph. 2:19) and as such are "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20); so no matter where on earth Christians finds themselves, they are "aliens"; a resident alien is one who lives here, works here, raises their family here, but their citizenship is elsewhere; so perhaps just like the original recipients of Peter's letter who likely were living in the same country where they were born, in what is now central and northern Turkey, we too, though perhaps living in our native land, live as aliens, Christians living in a world very foreign to us.
- who are chosen: we saw in our study of the Revelation that with the failure of the Jews to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and with the birth of the church, God's "chosen people" had shifted away from Israel and to the church; because of Israel's failure Jesus tells the Jews in the Parable of the Landowner in Matthew 21:33-44 that "the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it"; so like Peter, just as Christ chose him, Christ has chosen us as well, and as The Chosen we are aliens wherever we go; "For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come" (Hebrews 13:14)

- three things about being The Chosen: 1) the church is not a human entity, not merely a “community helping organization”; the church has its origins in the heart and mind of God; we have been a part of God’s plan from before Creation and as such, the church will never fail 2) we are here only by the work of the Spirit; we didn’t start it and we did nothing to qualify for it; the father of the Protestant Reformation , Martin Luther, is quoted as saying “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him”; it was the Holy Spirit who convicted us of our sin and who drew us to Christ, it is the Holy Spirit who empowers us and gives us the “fruit” we need to fulfill our purpose, and it is the Holy Spirit who grants us the power of *knowing* our salvation is secure and that death holds no power over us 3) that our sole purpose in life is to be obedient to Christ in all ways and in all things and by so doing we are “sprinkled with Christ’s blood”, proving our salvation; in the Old Testament a leper who had been healed was sprinkled with blood, a candidate to be a priest was sprinkled with blood to signify being *set apart* for the service of God, and Moses in Exodus, after giving the people God’s Law, sprinkled them with blood to signify their commitment to being obedient to God; through Christ then we are healed, we are set apart for service to Him, and we are obedient to Him in all ways and in all things.
- The benefit to us in all of this is that as we live out our lives in this way, grace and peace are ours, grace and peace in their fullest measure, which is so much that it is beyond human understanding.

#### Vss. 3-5

- In the single sentence that make up these three verses are all of the key components of the faith, pulled together in a single thought.
- A common doxology in the Old Testament is “Blessed be God” or “Blessed be the Lord”. Here Peter adds “Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” making the old doxology uniquely Christian.
- After affirming the deity of Christ, Peter goes straight to rebirth; Christ has caused us to be born again (John 3:1-15; James 1:18); this is on Christ’s

initiative and by His power; being born again is purely the work of the Holy Spirit and not ourselves; we love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

- As we are reborn we are given a “living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”; hope has always been THE Christian quality that the world is missing; the ancient Greek writer Sophocles wrote that “Not to be born at all – that is by far the best fortune. The second best is as soon as one is born with all speed to return to where one has come.”; Through Christ, the Christian is able to say to the world that they have taken off the corrupted and hopeless old life and put on a new life that is incorruptible, imperishable and filled overflowing with hope
- That which is hoped for is already reserved for us in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust can destroy, which does not fade, and is protected by the power of God
- We have an **inheritance** from Christ – this is the same word used in the Old Testament to describe the promised land waiting for the Children of Israel to take after they have left Egypt; our inheritance is different because it is imperishable, which means it cannot be destroyed from either inside or out; it is undefilable meaning it cannot be polluted or altered from the outside; and it will not fade away as all material things eventually do over time; but this is not a material thing, nor even an earthly thing, but comes from that who is everlasting to everlasting.
- All of this is ready to be revealed in the last time – the church has always believed that it lives on the front edge of the last time; “It is the last hour” (1 John 2:18); this is of course what we saw in depth as we looked at the Revelation, where the salvation of the church was all the things Peter here offers.

Vss. 6-7

- Peter says all this to get to the point of his letter, the suffering of the churches through persecution. Life in Christ then enables the church to rejoice, even in the most difficult of times. The troubles of today are not the end. God has the last word and it is a word *FOR* those who are His.

There are no trials that God's grace cannot overcome. And in the end, death is not last word either. God still has the last word and for those who are His faithful servants, faithful even to the end, even to death, the word is "Well done!"

- So even if our faith is to go through the fire, it is being refined by the fire like gold; yet our faith is more precious than gold and the end result of such faith is "praise, glory, and honor", what Paul spoke of in Philippians and John in Revelation, that victory crown being given to us by Christ Himself.

Vss. 8-9

- Again, the difference between a disciple and an apostle is that the apostle has actually **SEEN** Jesus; in John 20:29, the risen Jesus, in response to Thomas, says, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed"; so Peter's readers have not seen Jesus but they love Him and they believe in Him; the presence of the risen Christ is so powerful that we are able to love Him and believe in Him, to the point that in the face of various trials we can "greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and be full of glory"
- Again, as we saw in the Revelation, salvation is the outcome of faithfulness to the very end (Rev. 2:10-11).

Vss. 10-12

- Despite writing to a Gentile audience, Peter cannot keep from referring to the Old Testament. This is not a bad idea, as even Gentile converts by the time he wrote had had pretty good dose of the Old Testament as seen through the lens of Christ.
- He tells them that the prophets of old "made careful search and inquiry" into the salvation which was to come. In this search, the Spirit of Christ was within them, guiding their search and revealing things to them about the Christ who was yet to come. How else do you explain Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 and so much of the rest? Further, the Spirit told them that it was not for

their eyes or their generation, but that they were writing for us! We are the post-resurrection church, just like Peter's readers.

- We are told that the message of the prophets and the message of those who preached the pure gospel to Peter's readers were writing and preaching a message that was not their own, but was in fact sent down from Heaven.
- We are told that more than just being celebrated at the end, in Heaven when our battle is over, that we are highly, highly valued by God now, that the message we have received from the prophets and from the preachers of the true gospel are sharing things with us that the angels themselves long to just gain a clear glimpse!