

A LIVING HOPE FOR HOLY LIVING

A STUDY OF FIRST PETER

- I. SALUTATION (Peter to chosen exiles) 1:1-2
- II. LIVING HOPE (Fullness of salvation) 1:3-9
- III. PROPHECY (Details of salvation) 1:10-12
- IV. CALL TO HOLINESS (Christ as an example) 1:13-21
- V. APPLICATION (New birth produces a new life) 1:22-25
- VI. DESIRE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH (Moving toward maturity) 2:1-3
- VII. CHRIST THE BASE FOR GROWTH (Corner/living stone) 2:4-8
- VIII. WORKING FOR GROWTH (Praise as a motive) 2:9-10
- IX. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIAN AS ALIENS 2:11-12
- X. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AS CITIZENS 2:13-17
- XI. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AS SERVANTS 2:18-25
- XII. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AS WIVES 3:1-6
- XIII. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AS HUSBANDS AND BRETHREN 3:7-12
- XIV. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AND THEIR CONSCIENCES 3:13-22
- XV. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AND CHRIST'S MIND 4:1-6
- XVI. TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AND LOVE 4:7-11
- XVII. TESTIMONY: SUMMARY PURPOSE- GOOD NOT EVIL 4:12-19
- XVIII. HUMILITY THROUGH SERVING 5:1-5
- XIX. HUMILITY AND REWARD 5:6-11
- XX. HUMILITY IN DEMONSTRATION 5:12-14

GLENN A. ARMSTRONG, D.D.

EXPOSITION OF FIRST PETER: INTRODUCTION

I. THE REASON FOR FIRST PETER

First Peter is in the Bible to encourage the early Christians during times of persecution. They are encouraged to maintain a living hope (confident expectation) in order to maintain a holy living. This hope was vital during times of trials and testings. Peter wanted the believers to keep their eyes on eternity and the rewards from God for their faithfulness.

All believers will profit from this book. Those who will profit most will be believers who may go through hard times of pressure and persecution.

The theme of First Peter assures us that we need a "Living Hope for Holy Living."

II. THE RESPONSE FROM FIRST PETER

How should Christians respond to persecution? Simon Peter writes an epistle to Jewish Christians, many of whom had already been driven from Jerusalem and Judea by persecution, and who were now "strangers, scattered abroad" throughout five provinces of Asia Minor. The epistle has been dated by scholars as being written about 64 A.D., near the height of the persecution of emperor Nero and the burning of Rome.

III. THE RECOGNITION OF FIRST PETER

The early church recognized Peter as the author. Eusebius, Polycarp, Tertullian, Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria each testify of the book's canonicity and Petrine authorship. The book lists Peter as the author, who is an apostle (1:1), and a witness of Christ's sufferings and glory (5:1). Many similarities of style exist between Peter's epistles and the sermons which are recorded in the Book of Acts. Peter dictated the epistle to Silas (the "Silvanus" of 5:12), who put pen to paper. Also with

him was Mark (Marcus, v. 13).

IV. THE REGION OF FIRST PETER

Peter states in his epistle that he was writing from Babylon (5:13). The Mesopotamian region had a significant Jewish population, and they had heard Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:9). Even the Magi had come from the east (Matthew 2:2), so a literal view of the term "Babylon" is credible. However, some have argued that Babylon is actually a reference to Rome.

V. THE REASONING OF FIRST PETER

The two key words in the epistle of First Peter are "suffering", and "grace". The central problem in First Peter is the persecutions that believers endure because of their faith in Christ. The world caused the Lord to suffer, and it treats His followers no differently. Christ's response to persecution is grace. His example is there for us to follow.

3:13-22 TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AND THEIR CONSCIENCES

4:1-6 TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AND CHRIST'S MIND

4:7-11 TESTIMONY: CHRISTIANS AND LOVE

4:12-19 TESTIMONY: SUMMARY PURPOSE- GOOD NOT EVIL

5:1-5 HUMILITY THROUGH SERVING

5:6-11 HUMILITY AND REWARD

5:12-14 HUMILITY IN DEMONSTRATION

BOOK OUTLINE:

I. A LIVING HOPE FOR HOLY LIVING, 1:1-2:10
(Our Position)

II. HOLY LIVING DURING PERSECUTION, 2:11-4:19
(Our Practice)

III. GOD REWARDS HOLY LIVING, 5:1-5:14
(Our Promise)

THEME:

A LIVING HOPE FOR HOLY LIVING

EXPOSITION OF FIRST PETER 1:1-2 SALUTATION

I. PETER: THE WRITER, 1:1 A

1. "Peter" appears 210 times in the New Testament.
2. "Paul" appears 162 times and the other apostles 142 times.
3. Peter is the predominant personality of the New Testament and is clearly the leader through the gospels and the first half of the book of Acts.
4. You do not expect Peter to be a literary man, but he is chosen to write two books of the New Testament, Acts 4:13
cf. I Corinthians 4:13.
5. "Knowledge" appears 12 times in II Peter and indicates the importance of believers knowing details about God's will and His works. Ignorance is always dangerous and misleading.
6. A living hope for holy living will only grow out of revelation rather than rationalization.
7. Peter is writing a letter of encouragement. Where Christ is, there is always hope (confident expectation). Faith is only as valuable as its source.
8. Peter is the addressor. The name Jesus gave him was Cephas (a stone), when Andrew, his brother, brought him to Jesus, John 1:40-42. Jesus called Peter a stone before he became one. He stood solid only following failures and after the resurrection of Christ, cf. Acts 2:14-47. Cephas is Aramaic for Peter.
9. Peter identifies himself as an apostle, one who was called to be the foundation of the church and who had to be an eyewitness of the earthly ministry of Jesus, Acts. 1:21, 22. Any claim to apostleship today is fraudulent.

II. PERSECUTED BELIEVERS: THE ADDRESSEE, 1:1B

1. The recipients of this letter were early believers who were part of the dispersion which came from the persecution of Christians by Jewish leaders.

2. They were strangers in that they were living in foreign lands as resident aliens.
3. They were scattered in that they were, "sown like grain" thrown by a farmer as a result of the diaspora.
4. They were suffering, a term used 15 times in I Peter, and going through, "trying fires", 1:7, a term which later may have been associated with Nero's burning of Rome in July of 64. Deranged Nero may have been the one who had Peter killed.
5. The believers who received this letter were primarily relocated in Asia Minor, now Turkey.

III. ELECT: THE SPIRITUAL STATE, 1:2

1. Peter is writing to chosen exiles.
2. Election is a work of God preceding our salvation and results in the Holy Spirit's work of conviction and conversion.
3. While any attempt to explain the why and how of election will fall short, it is still clear that this work of God takes place in ways answerable only to Himself. Peter does not attempt to explain this subject, but he immediately uses it to encourage the suffering Christians. God had not forsaken them!
4. Foreknowledge is a part of God's omniscience, but using this alone as the basis for election is not sufficient. God could not foreknow what He did not predetermine. Election, like many of the works of God, precludes human understanding, and all explanations will be attempts to rationalize God by man's logic.
5. However election works, Peter connects it with three actions of God:
 1. Foreknowledge
 2. Separation by the Holy spirit (sanctification)
 3. Application of the blood of Christ as payment for sin.
 Paul adds another element in election:
 4. Belief of the truth, II Thessalonians 2:13. Whatever this doctrine teaches, it also includes a human response to a divine action.
6. The standard Greek greeting, "grace", is added to the standard Hebrew greeting, "peace". Together Peter wishes the believers multiplied, "unmerited favor from God", (grace) and personal comfort based on "God's sufficient supply" (peace).

EXPOSITION OF FIRST PETER 1:3-9
LIVING HOPE (FULLNESS OF SALVATION)

I. THE SOURCE OF OUR HOPE, 1:3

1. God the Father is the title given to the provider of our Christian faith.
2. He is to be blessed (greek, eulogy = to speak well of). Our beginning is in God through Christ. Our task is to represent Him well.
3. According to = is impelled by. Our hope is the result of the compelling nature of God whose heart constrains Him to extend kindness and benevolent actions to sinners.
4. Hope is subjective hope, confident expectation based on God's promise. It is not blind, wishful thinking as in the world.
5. Living = actively alive, energized by the principle of a divine life.
6. The resurrection of Christ is the demonstration of the source of power provided by God for our faith, (hope, confidence). The resurrection is from (out of) among the dead.

II. THE SECURITY OF OUR HOPE, 1:4-5

1. The security of our hope is based on an inheritance which is as sure as the incorruptible character of God.
2. Our inheritance is not by chance, but by choice.
3. The inheritance is undefiled (unstained by sin), will not fade, (won't wither with time), reserved, (kept locked up) and our reservation is already made in heaven.
4. Our inheritance is as secure as Christ's (the Son) because we are "joint heirs" with Him, Romans 8:17.
5. The surety of our inheritance is based on our undefiled High Priest, Hebrews 7:26.
6. Kept = guaranteed by a down payment, the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 1:14, Who guards believers will all the power of God.
7. The guard is never changed and we are always under His watchful eye.

8. The guard guarantees the preservation of the saints until we arrive safely in heaven.
9. Ready = about to be revealed, at the end time.

III. THE SUFFERING OF OUR HOPE, 1:6,7

1. Suffering for the believer is not without purpose, II Corinthians 1:3-7.
2. We will rejoice in the "last times". All suffering will be worth it when we receive glorified bodies at the rapture and are equipped for eternity in heaven.
3. Rejoice is "exuberant, triumph joy". This is not possible now. We will have to wait for eternity to justify all the injustice of this life. For God to be just and for the concept of justice to have meaning, right has to be rewarded and evil has to be punished.
4. All evil must either be pardoned or punished.
5. Season = a little while. It is hypothetical and implies that suffering may not be required for all believers.
6. Believers are not immune from diversified trials (testing) which fix character, but they will never be tempted (solicited to do evil) by God.
7. The purpose of trials is to test to see if one is worthy, and determines our usability. We learn from them in order to teach others by sharing our experiences.
8. All trials can redound to God's glory.
9. Trials are precious, (valuable) by bringing the approval of God.
10. Fire determines quality as impurities are skimmed off.
11. Gold is really lasting material, yet in comparison to the christian's salvation it will perish, 1:18. Blood, on the other hand, spoils quickly, but not the effect of the blood of Christ! Its effect is incorruptible.
12. Our trials produce praise and glory to the Lord at His appearing.

IV. THE SEEING OF OUR HOPE, 1:8

1. The christian hope is based on a person, Christ, whom we have not seen, (not even a glimpse), yet we love!
2. Love is agape = God's love. It is put into our lives by Him and He expects it to flow out to others.
3. To believe is to see into the future as revealed in Holy Scriptures.

4. The result of our hope is joy, which has no language to use in explanation. Like the peace of God, it passes understanding. It can be experienced and must be experienced to be shared.

V. THE SALVATION OF OUR HOPE, 1:9

1. The completeness of our hope is to see Christ.
2. Faith has an end object, Christ.
3. The rapture is the consummation of our hope.
4. The salvation of our souls and deliverance from our sinful bodies is the context and completion of our salvation.

EXPOSITION OF FIRST PETER 1:9-12
PROPHECY (Details of Salvation)

I. THE PRESENT ATTITUDE 1:9

Receiving- present tense, from Christ, to receive as a reward something promised earlier, being received each day, what turns trials into triumphs.

End- contrast between present sorrows 1:6 with future joy, rapture, this is a balance needed in every believer's life.

End- consummation, namely the deliverance of our souls from the presence of sin and its consequences by the glorification of our bodies, at the return of Christ.

Salvation, final act of deliverance, the goal of redemption.

Salvation, explained the inexpressible joy of vs. 8.

Great faith brings heaven down to the troubled soul.

All of this is part of God's eternal plans.

II. THE PAST DESIRE 1:10

Of which salvation-the details, end results.

Prophets, O.T. prophets to whom more was revealed than they were permitted by God to understand or experience.

Inquired- with the greatest care, as a class of prophets, wanted to know how the gospel would produce a living hope in difficult situations.

Searched- with a boiling desire to be able to participate.

Diligently- with a fixed intensity, to look carefully into, to inspect curiously.

Who prophesied- spoke and wrote about a grace from God which they were not permitted to experience, but which was a particular grace for you.

III. THE PAST MYSTERY 1:11

Searching- everything prophesied, revealed, inspired which was