

1 Peter

The True Grace of God

1) Introduction:

- a) Author: Peter, Apostle of Jesus Christ—What is your favorite Peter story?
- b) Date: Before 67 AD
- c) Where Written: From Rome
- d) To Whom is Letter Written?
 - i) ii) Christians in northern Turkey
 - ii) See Map
- e) Themes:



The main purpose of this epistle was to **strengthen** the readers so they would persevere through their persecution with the right attitude. Peter did this by showing that God's grace provided all that they needed for strength. In a larger sense, the purpose is to help Christians know how to live as "aliens" in the world.

Peter makes several bold claims:

- i) Christians are God's holy and chosen people in direct continuity with Old Testament concepts
- ii) Christians are to live as a holy people within a hostile society. This provides a witness to the gospel and a contrast to society's norms
- iii) When Christians are persecuted, they identify with Christ who also suffered
- iv) These themes are relevant for Christians living in a post-modern culture.
- v) Above all, the epistle is written to show that God's *grace* is sufficient for *all* our needs.
 - (1) First *grace proceeds* from God
 - (2) Second, *grace produces confidence*.
 - (3) Third, what *proclaims* God's *grace* is *our conduct*.
 - (4) Fourth, *grace perfects character*.
 - (5) Fifth, *grace promotes courage*.
- vi) More Megathemes:

Theme	Explanation	Importance
Salvation	Our salvation is a gracious gift from God. God chose us out of his love for us, Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin, and the Holy Spirit cleansed us from sin when we believed. Eternal life is a wonderful gift for those who trust in Christ.	Our safety and security are in God. If we experience joy in relationship with Christ now, how much greater will our joy be when he returns and we see him face to face. Such a hope should motivate us to serve Christ with greater commitment.
Persecution	Peter offers faithful believers comfort and hope. We should expect ridicule, rejection, and suffering because we are Christians. Persecution makes us stronger because it refines our faith. We can face persecution victoriously, as Christ did, if we rely on him.	Christians still suffer for what they believe. We should expect persecution, but we don't have to be terrified by it. The fact that we will live eternally with Christ should give us the confidence, patience, and hope to stand firm even when we are persecuted.
God's Family	We are privileged to belong to God's family, a community with Christ as the founder and foundation. Everyone in this community is related—we are all brothers and sisters, loved equally by God.	Because Christ is the foundation of our family, we must be devoted, loyal, and faithful to him. By obeying him, we show that we are his children. We must accept the challenge to live differently from the society around us.
Family Life	Peter encouraged the wives of nonbelievers to submit to their husbands' authority as a means of winning them to Christ. He urged all family members to treat others with sympathy, love, compassion, and humility.	We must treat our families lovingly. Though it's never easy, willing service is the best way to influence loved ones. To gain the strength we need for selfdiscipline and submission, we need to pray for God's help.
Judgment	God will judge everyone with perfect justice. We all will face God. He will punish evildoers and those who persecute God's people. Those who love him will be rewarded with life forever in his presence.	Because all are accountable to God, we can leave judgment of others to him. We must not hate or resent those who persecute us. We should realize that we will be held responsible for how we live each day.

f) Outline:

- I. Apostolic Salutation (1:1-2)
- II. Introductory Thanksgiving (1:3-12).
 - A. God to be Praised for New Life in Christ (1:3-5)

- B. Christians Are Strengthened and Sustained in Their Suffering by Joy and Hope (1:6-9)
- C. Salvation was Foretold by the Prophets (1:10-12)
- II. Christians are to Lead Holy Lives (1:13-2:10)
 - A. Newfound Status Demands That Christians be Holy, as God Is (1:13-16)
 - B. Believers Are Mindful of the Price of Their Redemption (1:17-21)
 - C. Christians Turn Away from Malice as They Mature in Faith and Love (1:22-2:3)
 - D. As Living Stones in God’s Temple, His Royal Priesthood and Chosen People, Christians Proclaim His Excellencies (2:4-10)
- III. Specific Instruction and Encouragement for Holy Living (2:11-4:11)
 - A. The Purpose of Holiness (2:11-12)
 - B. Christians Submit to Civil Authorities (2:13-17)
 - C. Household Slaves Submit to the Authority of Their Masters (2:18-25)
 - D. A Wife Yields to Her Husband’s Authority as Head of the Household (3:1-6)
 - E. A Husband Demonstrates Godliness by Respecting His Wife (3:7)
 - F. Humility, Unity, a Tender Heart, and Brotherly Love Characterize Christian Brotherhood (3:8-12)
 - G. Christian Virtue Sends a Powerful Message to Outsiders and Gives Opportunity for Witnessing (3:13-17)
 - H. Jesus was Treated Unjustly and Then Gloriously Vindicated (3:18-22)
 - I. Jesus Example Inspires His People to Overcome Surrounding Evil (4:1-6)
 - J. Nearness of the End Stimulates Christians to Faithfulness (4:7-11)
- IV. Joy Amid Suffering and Further Clarifications about What is Expected of the Community (4:12-5:11)
 - A. Suffering for the Sake of Christ is Sharing in Him (4:12-19)
 - B. Elders Have Special Responsibilities and Promises (5:1-4)
 - C. Younger Men are to Submit Humbly to the Community’s Elders (5:5)
 - D. Concluding Exhortation to Humility and Trust (5:6-11)
- V. Final Greetings (5:12-14)
 - A. Silvanus’s Help (5:12)
 - B. Other Brothers from the Church in “Babylon” (Rome) Send Greetings (5:13)
 - C. The Holy Kiss and the Peace of Christ (5:14)

I. Apostolic Salutation (1:1-2)

- A. Peter is writing to Christians who struggle because they live in this world but are really citizens of heaven. He reminds them of their election in Christ and of His gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation.

¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. - 1 Peter 1:1-2 ESV

- B. Note the descriptions Peter of the people that he is writing to in v. 1:

1. Elect (NIV—"God's Elect", NASB "chosen"): Those who are chosen by God's grace to belong to Him. Consistent with Old Testament concept of God choosing His people—Abraham and the Children of Israel. See Psalm 135:4. The Christians receiving this letter (like those today) receive comfort knowing who is chosen and who does the choosing (God alone).
2. Exiles (or "strangers" KJV, "aliens" NASB). The Greek word means a temporary resident without being bound to make any investment or seek citizenship in that place, not putting down roots. Gives a concept of being on a journey to a distant home.
3. Dispersion/Diaspora or Scattered: A reference to the scattering of the Hebrews/Jews starting with the Babylonian Captivity of 500 B.C. Here, Peter uses the term to indicate Christian believers "scattered" among other (non-Christian) people—both Jews and Gentiles. Their true homeland is found in heaven, not here on earth. The Christians are pilgrims moving towards their true homeland.
4. What is important about these terms?
 - a) The term elect is a description of their theological relationship with God.
 - b) The term exile underlines the transparent nature of this earthly reality.
 - c) The term dispersion speaks of their unity as a people of God (including OT connotations of being God's people).

- C. Verse 2 continues the greeting that includes the works by the different persons of the Trinity (**Notice who is doing the action!**):

1. Everything proceeds from God the Father who has foreknowledge of our being chosen.
 - a) Instead of waiting for us to make a decision, it is God who acts!
 - b) Isn't there a comfort in knowing that God has chosen us from outside of time? God has always known us and know how He would bless us.
2. The Holy Spirit works to sanctify us—again it is God's work in our sanctification process—not us working to earn our sanctification to be good enough for heaven. The Holy Spirit is working to call us out from the word.
3. The Son, Jesus Christ, has saved us through the sprinkling of His blood—i.e. we are justified through Christ's sacrifice.
 - a) It is best to think of justification and sanctification as two sides of the same coin—the coin being what God works on behalf of the believer for the sake of Christ.
 - b) On the one hand, God effects our salvation, purchasing and winning salvation, not with gold or silver, but with the precious blood and innocent suffering and death of Christ on the cross.
 - c) On the other hand, God effects our being made holy by calling us by the Gospel, enlightening us with His gifts, sanctifying (setting us aside) and keeping us in the one true faith.
 - d) Peter is reminding us of God's calling us from sin to faith, holiness and good works that He has prepared in advance.
4. Obedience and sprinkling are themes that are paired at various times in the Bible:
 - a) It offers a picture of salvation that depends on Christ's active fulfillment of the Law on behalf of us sinners and passive, obedient, sacrificial death.
 - b) See Exodus 24:4-8 (Moses sprinkling blood and water for cleansing and sacrifice); Isaiah 52:13-15 (Suffering Servant); Hebrews 9:13-14 (Jesus cleanse us from dead works).
 - c) Luther quote: ***“It would be the greatest slander and blasphemy of the name of Christ if we refused to honor Christ's blood for washing away our sin or refused to believe that this blood makes us holy. Hence you must believe and confess that you are holy, but by this blood and not by reason of your own piety.”***

- II. Introductory Thanksgiving (1:3-12): Through Jesus Christ, we now have a living hope and know the promise of God that we live in Him forever. We can face any trial or challenge, knowing that we are safe in His care.
1. Read vv. 3-12.
 2. Peter is establishing the OT foundation for the salvation he claims is **CERTAIN** for his reader. By ourselves, we have no hope of salvation or blessings. But God foretold His gracious plans through the prophets.
 3. He points out that we are born in sin and continue to commit sins in this fallen world. In the fullness of time (to borrow a phrase from Paul) He sent His Son to be our Redeemer.
 4. Through Jesus, who we don't see but love anyway, we now have a living hope and inheritance. We know the promise of God that we will live with Him forever.
- B. God to be Praised for New Life in Christ (1:3-5)
1. V. 3 Peter starts with praising God—for what?
 - a) For planning a magnificent salvation!
 - b) Why—because of His great mercy. This is a sure thing—coming from God and not some frail human promise or earthly thing.
 - c) We are born again—a new birth is reminiscent of John 3:1-7.
 2. What saves us?
 - a) We are saved because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ—from the dead!
 - b) What a positive, wonderful statement of why we are saved.
 3. What does this salvation give us?
 - a) We have a living hope! In what—the future? Now, the tense is present tense—**we have a hope now!**
 4. V. 4 Peter now elaborates on this living hope. In vv. 4 and 5
 - a) New birth implies being born into a new family—we receive an inheritance in this family.
 - b) Where is this inheritance? In heaven! **It is “kept” for us.**
 - (1) Not an accident, not what is left over, not spent by our forbearers! It is kept there waiting for us to go home. We can't see it, but **we know it is waiting for us.** What **hope** this gives us!

- (2) The Greek word for kept is the same word used for the word obey, as in we are to obey God's commands—See Exodus 23:22. When obey is used in Exodus **it means more than simple obedience—it also means that the Children of Israel were to hold dear, consider precious, guard, observe, esteem and revere the Law.** A translation that we can use for 1 Peter is **to treasure**
- c) How does Peter describes this inheritance?
- (1) **Imperishable**—what is imperishable? What can we take with us to heaven when our life is through? Noting!
 - (2) **Undefiled**—pure. Is there anything pure on earth?
 - (3) **Unfading**—like a photograph or a quilt
 - (4) Better than anything on earth!
5. V. 5—What is happening to this inheritance now?
- a) It is being guarded?
 - b) How? It is not guarded by human or even angelic power. It is guarded by God's power through faith.
 - c) Is this faith that we supply? No, **it is God's power**, it is His strength.
 - d) Note the word “ready”—it has the sense of inevitably.
 - e) When will the inheritance will be revealed? In the last time, on Judgment Day!
- B. Christians Are Strengthened and Sustained in Their Suffering by Joy and Hope (1:6-9)
1. Vv. 6-7—We now start looking at **how God strengthens Christians in their suffering.** These verses form one complete thought.
 2. V. 6 points out that the suffering is not permanent, it is temporary.
 3. **Rejoice in our sufferings?** Huh? Why rejoice?
 - a) See Mary's response in Luke 1:47 when she was told she, a young, unmarried but betrothed girl going to have a baby! What kind of suffering do you think she went through?
 - b) Those who have no claim to God's love can all of a sudden rejoice in their inheritance as children of God.
 4. What about trials—What role do they play in our lives?
 - a) First off, **God allows them to happen for our own good.** See Romans 8:28-39.

- b) Second, these trials are tests of faith which Christians can face in faith with God's power. See James 1:2-4.
5. V. 7 compares trials to the purification of gold—burning off the dross (impurities) in the gold to get pure gold is like testing that shows the genuine faith.
- a) Gold (things of this world) perish, but our faith does not! It is preserved by God's power.
 - b) Our faith is infinitely more valuable than gold.
 - c) **What does our trials show?** That we are so good and great? No! **They show that we are refined, we have born the cross of Christ to show the genuineness of our faith.** This faith results in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. See Rev. 5:11-14.
6. Vv. 8-9 are also one complete thought and sentence. They play on our senses and the love of Christ.
- a) Let's start with Thomas. Read John 20:19-29.
 - b) On the one hand, we do not see Jesus. Peter had the privilege of being a disciple under Jesus and seeing Jesus after the resurrection.
 - (1) **We have faith in what is unseen, but our faith and love and joy is just as authentic as Peter's and Thomas's.**
 - c) On the other hand, **do we see Jesus today?**
 - (1) We see him in the holy sacraments. Christ comes to us in the water and Word and through the bread and wine.
 - (2) Christ comes to us by the preached Word of God.
 - (3) We see Christ in the love of our fellow Christians.
 - d) I like the phrase "obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."
 - (1) This phrase tells us that right now we have faith, we have salvation.
 - (2) But it is also not yet, we are not yet in heaven after the Second Coming of Jesus with our resurrected bodies.
 - (3) Salvation is both a present reality and an eternal promise of God.
 - (4) This promise leads to the inexpressible joy that Peter talks about in this verse. Again, we can see the hope that Peter is stressing again and again in his book.

- C. Salvation was Foretold by the Prophets (1:10-12)
1. The bridge thought between the last several verses and these verses is salvation. In verses 10-12 we see how the promise of salvation, this **union with Christ**, was told about in the Old Testament.
 2. How was this salvation “earned” in the Old Testament?
 - a) By the temple sacrifices? Or by circumcision?
 - b) By being a descendant of Abraham?
 - c) Trick question—it was not earned by the people in the OT! Salvation by the grace of God, just like in the New Testament.
 - d) Remember, **the Old Testament is about Jesus**. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus taught that “beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:27.
 3. V. 10—What were the OT Prophets searching for? **The grace that God has given to us**—isn’t this an accurate summary of the words of the prophets in the OT?
 - a) Did the prophets understand the grace of God? Certainly not?
 - b) Read Hebrews 11:13-16. Abraham and Sarah and the other patriarchs knew the promise, but they did not know when they would inherit the promise. They had a life in the land, but did not possess it. We too have a life in this land, but we do not possess it. Our land is in heaven.
 - c) **Unlike the prophets of old we are privileged to see the fulfillment of God’s gracious plan, to understand (in our limited way) of Jesus atoning sacrifice for us, His chosen children.**
 4. V. 11 continues this thought of the Prophets mission—for us!
 - a) What did the prophets want to know? Who and when? In other words, who would be the Messiah, the “Anointed One” of God?
 - b) Who gave the answers that they had (such as they were)? The Spirit of Christ.
 - c) What were the prophets predicting?
 - (1) The suffering of the Christ
 - (2) The glories to follow
 - (3) What does the Article II of the Apostles Creed teach about this subject?

Article II Apostles Creed:

I believe . . .

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

5. V. 12

- a) Who are the people that the prophets served? The readers of this letter and us, too.
- b) And **who announced the good news**? Apostles and pastors.
- c) And how do the apostles and pastors know what to say? By the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.
 - (1) This is not a teaching of human origin—it is from God.
 - (2) Think of it—**we have this divine message that is truth for all human beings. This is a special treasure that is more important than all our sufferings and trials.**
 - (3) So how should we regard this teaching? With contempt? Indifference? With intellectual assent, but apathy in application? Or with a humble heart and grateful joy of the salvation that has been announced? See Luke 2:8-20.
- d) And speaking of angels, what does Peter say that the angels longed to know? “Things”. What things? How God would accomplish His salvation. Note—the angels are not all knowing. This would include Satan.

D. **SUMMARY:** “Faith is so much more than a feeling—it is a fact that has consequences. Whatever mood happens to color the surface of our character, whatever trial or circumstance happens to engage our attention, the faith we have been given in Christ is a matter of receiving the resurrection of Christ as a sure thing. And it has consequences: most remarkably in our resurrection. This means that **faith has a goal, and that goal is ultimately the salvation of our souls** (v. 9). Our faith is a living hope in God’s promise, that soon the trials will be over, but until then, we are guarded by Him until we inherit the kingdom.” Clinton J. Armstrong, General Epistles, Reformation Heritage Bible Commentary Series, at 121.

- II. Christians are to Lead Holy Lives (1:13-2:10) Even before creation, God knew that mankind would fall into sin, reject His ways, live only for themselves, and lead lives that result in death and alienation from Him. God shows us our valued: He was willing to send His Son for us. Now He calls us to share the Savior with others.
1. In this section Peter is encouraging Christians (including us) to **proclaim their new identity in Christ.**
 2. If they are exiles (v. 1), then who are they?
 - a) They are Gospel people, God's specially chosen people. This is reminiscent of the descriptions in the OT of God's chosen people, Israel. **Peter exhorts them to a deliberate self-identity and action based on grace revealed in Christ.**
 3. **Read 1:13-2:10.** Read for context—not proof verses!
- A. Newfound Status Demands That Christians be Holy, as God Is (1:13-16)
1. Read verses 13-16.
 2. V. 13 Peter invites his readers to **put their present hope in the future fulfillment** of their “now” and not “yet” salvation.
 - a) KJV—“Gird up the loins of your mind.” Spiritual and mental preparation for what faces the Christian in the world begins and starts with their place as a child of God, secure in the salvation won for them by Christ.
 - (1) **We are to put away those distractions which come between us and Christ.**
 - (2) We are to be ready for the Lord's timing, the Lord's work—see Exodus 12:11.
 - b) Being sober minded—does this mean not being drunk?
 - (1) The disciplined life that Christians are called to means that we are to have a **steady, balanced attitude.**
 - (2) Paul had a similar thought with 1 Timothy 4:7-8. Training, self-control, has benefit for both this life and for the life to come.
 - (3) Prosper of Aquitaine--Lex orandi, lex credendi (Latin loosely translated as "the law of praying [is] the law of believing") refers to the relationship between worship and belief. This is an important tool to remember for the church! How we worship influences our doctrine and vice versa. Changing worship affects latter generations.

- c) Set your hope— On what? On the grace of God. A sure promise!
 - d) “Will be brought”—more accurate is “is being brought”—in Greek this is an active tense that speaks to both now and in the future. The revelation of the grace that is both revealed now and in the future at His Second Coming.
3. V. 14:
- a) The first phrase is “as obedient children.”
 - (1) Obedience is one of this themes of Peter in this book.
 - (2) This phrase reminds us of the concept of familial ties used in 1 Peter 1:3 and 4. The family was the key social unit in ancient Jewish and Roman society—the family was the basic building block of all social interactions.
 - (3) The thought behind the term obedience is that the obedience is (ideally) ingrained into the child by the parents.
 - (4) Obedience to God is possible only through the actions of God. (This concept echoes the phrase from v. 13 about “girding your loins.”) But it is to be the motivation behind our actions. See Deuteronomy 6:4-9—the Great Shema.
 - b) Next, let’s figure out Peter means when he says: “Do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance”:
 - (1) Paul expresses has a similar thought in Romans 12:1-2.
 - (2) What were we like before our conversion? See Romans 1:18-23.
 - (3) But what happens to us at conversion? See Titus 3:3-7; Romans 6:1-14. We have been transformed!
 - (4) Does it help to know that the Greek word for transformed is the same root as the English word “metamorphosis?” What do you think of when we talk about metamorphosis? Complete change—butterflies and frogs!
 - (5) Note the term passion in 1 Peter. How does our passions affect our sin, even today? Remember, one of our spiritual enemies is our flesh which is built on passions.

- (6) On a spiritual level, the Law/Gospel thinking that we have has Christians replaces our old passions—we are now conformed to God’s thinking, not through our power, but through the metamorphosis that our faith and baptism brings to us. Do we have God’s passions?
 - (7) Do you think Peter is concerned with some of his readers slipping back into their old ways, and that amounts to leaving God out of our lives! How are we faced with this same challenge today?
4. Verse 15 and 16—these verses shows the results of the actions described in verses 13 and 14:
- a) If we are prepared, sober minded, set on the grace of God, obedient and not slipping into our former ignorance, then we are called to be holy, as God is holy.
 - b) Peter is very blunt here—we ARE holy. Not maybe, not if you do certain actions, not if you are a Lutheran you are holy.
 - c) First off, how is God holy?
 - (1) God is holy because He is set apart from us, he is transcendent since He created all things. Exodus 15:11.
 - (2) He is absolutely pure and hates sin. Psalm 5:4-6. Psalm 92:15
 - d) Second, what does it mean to be holy like God is holy? Lev. 11:44.
 - (1) We are not God, we are not transcendent; we are NOT pure. So, how are we holy like God is holy?
 - (2) God makes us holy! It is not our work, it is not our effort or anything we have done. 1 Thessalonians 4:7.
 - (3) Holiness essentially defines the Christian’s new nature and our new conduct in contrast with our pre-salvation lifestyle. This new nature is given to us through the Spirit. See Titus 3:1-7. See also Jeremiah 31:31-34.
 - (4) Sin’s power has been broken by Jesus sacrifice on the cross. Not only has Jesus broken the power of the guilt of sin and redeemed us, but due to Jesus’s death on the cross believers are no longer slaves to sins power; in faith and through the power of the Spirit we can choose not to live in sins power!

B. Believers Are Mindful of the Price of Their Redemption (1:17-21)—The thought in the next verses turns us to Jesus and His saving work. In the Greek, verses 17 through 21 make one sentence that gives us some great Christological truths.

1. Verse 17—**this verse contains the central then of this section:**
 - a) The key phrase for this passage is “conduct yourselves with fear”:
 - b) Peter has already talked about how our conduct as Christians has been changed, but what does fear mean in this verse?
 - c) The Lutheran Study Bible footnote says “**Not terror but reverence; humble awareness of our place before God.**”
 - d) In English fear has a negative connotation, but this was not true in Hebrew or Greek. The Hebrew word used in Proverbs 1:7 for example, not only means to fear a person, but also to hold in awe or reverence. Like being in the present of the Queen of England or other great person. God is our creator and redeemer, how can we think of God with indifference or treat Him lightly?
 - e) Fear in this context is closely related to **the concept of trust**—because we can only truly respect and revere God only when we have proper faith. See Proverbs 1:7 and 16:6 and Ecc. 12:13-14.
 - f) “If you call on Him”—what power does this have? See Romans 10:13. It is the power of salvation.
 - (1) God judges impartially—as believers we know that God does not see our sins, but Christ’s righteousness. Hebrews 10:11-18.
 - (2) But God judges’ sinners based on their works. Romans 2:12 and 3:19-20.
 - g) “Throughout the time of your exile”—we have already talked about this concept of exile. Like the Children of Israel in the wilderness, **we are moving towards the Promised Land, trusting and believing in God’s promises** to bring us home to Him.
2. Verses 18-19: In v. 17 we were told by Peter to conduct lives with holy reverence, now we are being told how—*we are ransomed people!*

- a) Redemption or buying back, has a price. Peter sums up the purchase price with two powerful parallels comparing the purchase price with gold and silver and the perfect Passover lamb.
- (1) The gold is perishable, when God brings forth the new Heavens and Earth those physical things we hold precious will be gone and worth nothing.
 - (2) Luther echoes this verse in his explanation of the Apostles Creed in the Small Catechism: **Jesus Christ “has redeemed me, a lost condemned person, purchase and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own.”**
- b) The second image is that of the Passover lamb.
- (1) What was the purpose of the original Passover Lamb? It brought salvation!
 - (2) Exodus 12:5. God commanded that the Passover lamb be pure and unblemished.
 - (3) How is Jesus pure and unblemished? See Hebrews 9:11-14 and 22.
 - (4) Jesus is the Lamb of God—John the Baptist called him this and Jesus is called Lamb 28 times in Revelation.
 - (5) **How does Jesus the Lamb of God bring salvation unto us?** Instead of the Angel of Death passing over like in Egypt at the first Passover, it is God’s judgment for our sin, both our actual sin and our sinful nature, is passed over on behalf of the work of Jesus the Messiah.
 - (6) A quote from Luther: Just one drop of this innocent blood would have been more than enough for the sin of the whole world. Yet the Father wanted to pour out His grace on us so abundantly and to spend so much that He let his Son Christ shed all His blood and gave us the entire treasure.
- c) This ransom buys us back from the “futile ways inherited from your forefathers.”
- (1) “Futile ways inherited from forefathers” is referring to

how mankind is lost without the true God. Man searches, but never finds the True God without God's revelation through Jesus Christ!

(a) Think of the First Commandment—what happens if we fail to follow the First Commandment? Death!

(b) If people do not know the true God, what do they end up doing? Making idols, whether they are physical idols like the Canaanites in the Old Testament, or things like we do in our society.

(2) Note that we learn this from our forefathers, namely Adam and Eve!

(3) Futile—the Greek word is literally means “empty”. This term highlights the vain and useless idolatry all mankind has without a saving faith in Christ.

3. Verses 20-21: In v. 17 we were told by Peter to conduct lives with holy reverence, now we are being told why—we are end-times people!

a) Peter is telling his readers (and us) to be faithful because they are the ones to receive the gift of faith in Christ's resurrection. Their faith and their hope is to be in God!

b) The focus in this closing confession is not the eternal election of the faithful, but rather the eternal plan of salvation whose subject is Christ.

(1) The need for Christ's sacrifice, our ransom, was not a Plan B for God after Adam and Eve rebelled against Him and the Law.

(2) Instead we are told that even before the Creation God had determined the plan of salvation and chose to send His Son to be our Redeemer.

c) “Made manifest in the last times”: What does Peter mean when he talks about the last times? Is it the rapture and all that jazz so many people believe in like from the Left Behind series?

(1) No, the last time is a short-hand reference to the human event of the incarnation, through Jesus life, death and resurrection and eventually, His second coming. In other words, the age in which we live now.

- (2) Unlike the Old Testament people, we see and understand God’s completed plan. How much easier, in some ways, is our faith than theirs!
- d) “For the sake of you, who through him are believers in God.”
 - (1) The Him in this phrase relates back to the He at the beginning of the v. 20—He is Jesus Christ from v. 19.
 - (2) We have here a statement about the grace of God—**God has given us faith in God’s promises through Jesus,** through his life, death and resurrection. He did this for us!
- e) Closing Doxology—Peter closes with a nice little **doxological** phrase: “God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” Doxology means praise words.
 - (1) We learn more about Christ’s work in this verse.
 - (2) God raised Jesus from the dead, (**This is important! This fact is cited over 30 times in the NT. We have a God who acts in history. Our faith is grounded in what really has happened. History is important!**)
 - (3) God gave Jesus glory—how? Read Philippians 2:5-11

Philippians 2:5-11 NIV - In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

- (4) And what is the result of the actions of Christ? That we may have “faith and hope in God.” Again, Peter is the apostle of hope!
- C. Christians Turn Away from Malice as They Mature in Faith and Love (1:22-2:3): Like all people, we were born in sin and lived in the darkness of the world. Now that the same Savior calls us to tell others of His love. Through words and actions, we proclaim the life of salvation that is ours in Jesus.
1. V. 22-23
 - a) “Having purified your souls”—is this an action we took? No! This is a reference back to the previous verses talking about Jesus’ action through whom we are believers.
 - b) Believers in what? “The truth.” We are obedient to the truth of what God has revealed in these last times through and about Jesus, the Messiah.
 - c) “Obedience to the truth” is what consecrates God’s people for holy actions because:
 - (1) The action of obedience depends on its object—the truth. This truth is outside of us—we can’t control it, we can’t make it, we don’t have to depend on what we do or how we feel. Instead it is outside of us given to us by God.
 - (2) The holy action to which we are called leads us to have a sincere brotherly love.
 - (3) God does not need our good works—but who does? Our neighbor! We are called to a vocation to love our neighbor. We thereby grow in our sanctification, our consecration to lead holy lives.
 - d) Think about what it means to have sincere or genuine love:
 - (1) First off, this love is for one another.
 - (2) Second, it is earnest.
 - (3) Third it comes from a pure heart—no false motives.
 - (4) Note that there are two words for love in v. 22:
 - (a) The first instance is a *philadelphia* or brotherly love that results from obedience to the truth.
 - (b) The second instance is *agape* love marked by self-sacrifice from a pure heart.

- e) The source of the loving community of Christ’s church is that we are in fact brothers and sisters because we share a common birth—a birth that comes from above.
 - (1) We are born again in Christ’s resurrection at our baptism.
 - (2) This is a new birth that leads to another death, because the source of the see of this new life is not perishable, but is imperishable.
 - (3) This life has its source in the “word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (KJV).” See John 1:12-14.

- 2. V. 24-25:
 - a) What does Peter mean when he says *word* at the end of v. 23?
 - (1) Remember who is the writer of this book—an eyewitness to Jesus teachings and miracles during Jesus’s ministry—he knows the words that Christ taught during his earthly ministry and the words Jesus said at each and every miracle performed by Christ.
 - (2) As a witness to the resurrection Peter knows that the promise of Christ’s *words* about new life is confirmed by His resurrection from the dead.
 - (3) He knows that the Word of God makes one live! Romans 10:17.
 - (4) This Word of God is sown in the hearts of hearers, guaranteeing their resurrection.
 - (5) The Word of God is also the Old Testament promise that is fulfilled in Christ (see John 5:39; Matthew 5:17).
 - (6) The recorded teaching of the apostles in the New Testament are also the Word of God—the inspired Word of God!
 - (7) The Word of God is tangible, not just on paper, not just a what, but a “Who”; Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh (John 1:14).
 - b) Peter then proceeds to quote from Isaiah 40:6 and 8 to underline this truth about the truth of God’s enduring and living Word.
 - (1) This word is imperishable.
 - (2) It was proclaimed to Peter’s readers.
 - c) Note the contrast between Law and Gospel in these verses:

- (1) Law is shown by how it kills (*all flesh is grass . . . grass withers . . . the flower falls.*)
 - (2) But the Gospel makes alive. The Word is permanent and enduring.
 - (3) The Word of God is living and lasts forever!
 - (4) This is the imperishable seed that Peter is talking about in v. 23 which was preached to his readers.
3. Vv. 1-2: Sin and Milk
- a) The Christian is now called to put away all manners of sinful behavior.
 - (1) Why? Because a Christian can't grow without putting away these behaviors.
 - (2) How? Through daily contrition and repentance! This calls to mind the constant state of grace that we are in.
 - (3) Peter punctuates this call with a litany of sins that are all in the plural, emphasizing the word **all**.
 - (4) All of the sins come straight from the heart and are fruits of a sinful heart. Contrast Matthew 5:8 and Matthew 15:19.
 - (5) How is the heart changed? See Ezekiel 11:19-21. God gives it!
 - b) Peter now gives us encouragement to seek the Lord through a common image in any town and home: The desire of an infant for milk.
 - (1) This is a tender image, designed to comfort and encourage Peter's readers.
 - (2) Peter says we are to long for spiritual milk. The Greek word "to long for"—means to desire, to pursue with love. How do we pursue God or a Godly life with love?
 - (3) Note that this is the pure spiritual milk—the Greek word means unadulterated and is the opposite of the word for deceit, literally "untricky".
 - (4) The result is that we are growing up in salvation.
 - (5) "The milk is nothing but the Gospel, which is also the very seed by which we were conceived and born This is also the food that nourishes us when we grow up;

it is the armor which we put on and with which we equip ourselves. Yes, it is everything put together.” Luther.

- (6) Peter now extends the metaphor to indicate that we are growing into salvation. WHAT!!!!
 - (a) Don’t we get salvation by faith?
 - (b) Aren’t we saved when we are baptized?
 - (c) So how do we “grow” into salvation?
 - (d) The new converts Peter was writing to may have had minimal knowledge of Christian teachings, but all Christians should strive to mature in their faith, which leads to the full blessings of salvation.
 - (e) This is sanctification or Christian living, not justification.
 - (f) See Hebrews 5:11-14—Spiritual maturity includes being wise enough to be teachers, knowing the basic principles, skilled in righteousness, discerning, trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.
4. V. 3—Peter carries on the milk metaphor but speaking of tasting that the Lord is good.
 - a) Like an infant being satisfied with milk, Christians find God’s Word satisfying their deepest needs.
 - b) This is a reference to Psalm 34:8-10.
 - c) The Psalter was probably used in the early church, so perhaps Peter is citing a phrase from a favorite hymn.
 - d) What is tasting that the Lord is good?
 - (1) “What extraordinarily palpable, tactile, material language to use for receiving the Word of God!”
 - (2) It is tasting and hearing His word—in sacraments, the readings and in the preached Word of God—the receiving of His Word shows us how good He is. His good food is so wholesome and pleasant—it saves us!
 - (3) In other words, God’s Word satisfies our deepest needs—it addresses our need for a Savior and reconciliation with God.
 - (4) There is a play on words in the Greek—the Greek for good is *chrestos* and the Greek for Messiah is *Christos*.

Peter is using this play on words Peter layers on the meaning—taste the Lord for He is [the] Christ—again imagery that takes us back to the Lord’s supper.

- D. As Living Stones in God’s Temple, His Royal Priesthood and Chosen People, Christians Proclaim His Excellencies (2:4-10): From verses 4 through 10, Peter talks about a Christian’s relationship with Christ, the way in which are living stones are built onto THE living stone.
1. Vv. 4-5: Isn’t ironic that “Rocky” (Petra) Johnson (Simon Bar-Jonah) is talking about building with rocks and cornerstones? See Matthew 16:17-18.
 - a) These metaphors of stones being applied to Jesus where He is rejected by men, He is the cornerstone and He is a stumbling stone. These examples are metaphors drawn from the OT as well:
 - (1) All three Synoptic Gospels record Jesus applying the OT verses of the stone being rejected to Himself (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10 and Luke 20:17) and Peter applies it to Jesus in Acts 4:11.
 - (2) The foundational cornerstone comes from Isaiah 28:16 and is also used by Paul in Corinthians, Ephesians and Romans.
 - b) To call Christ a “stone that is living” and to call his followers as being “like living stones” is startling. Whoever thinks of stones as being living?
 - c) Not only that, but we are being mortared together by God to make a spiritual house.
 - (1) Where was God worshipped in the Old Testament starting with Exodus?
 - (2) Who was promised a special house? David!
 - (3) Who built that house? Solomon, David’s son.
 - (4) Who lived in that house? God—See 1 Kings 8:1-13
 - (5) The temple is long gone, so who lives in this spiritual house today?
 - (6) What is the significance of this residence by Christ in us?
 - d) It also highlights that we are stones (created by God) as compared to bricks (made by men).

- (1) Reminds me of Paul talking about what can separate us from God? Nothing! Who can build us poor sinful human beings into something holy? Only God can build us into a holy temple!
 - (2) When you build with stone, what sizes do the stones come in? All different sizes and shapes. What about bricks? All uniform sizes. We sinners who are redeemed don't have to all look alike. God uses a mosaic of people to build His living church. There is a place for all of us in His church. How beautiful!
 - (3) We are going from multiple stones (plural) into a singular temple—unified in our worship of God.
- e) Not only are we the stones, but we are the holy priests in that holy temple. We are made holy through the blood of Christ. Again, not our work but God's work.
- (1) Being a priest gives us direct access to God. Praise the Lord!
 - (2) And what is our ministry as priests in God's living temple? We are to give living sacrifices to God.
 - (3) These sacrifices have nothing to do with the sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats—that was all done away with by Jesus, our high priest. See Hebrews 10:11-14—Jesus blood given was once for all.
 - (4) Now (and in the OT too!) God wants sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart. Psalm 51:15-19.
 - (5) Another way to look at this is through the NT lense of our response to God's love to us—Hebrews 13:15-We love others because He loved us first.
 - (6) What is the goal of our sacrifices? Like Jesus, the goal of our sacrifices (mercy, loving acts) are intended to draw others to God, to Jesus and unto salvation.
 - (7) One last important detail—why are our sacrifices acceptable to God? Is it because we are so good and perfect? No! It is only through Jesus are our works acceptable to God. Our sinful motives and desires corrupt our actions, but it is through Christ's redeeming work that our works are acceptable to God.

2. In vv. 6 through 8 Peter fills out his stone analogy using three different OT prophecies.
3. In v. 6 he quotes Isaiah 28:16.
 - a) “It stands in scripture”—Peter is utilizing scripture to support his arguments. Scripture interprets scripture.
 - b) God has laid a stone in Zion—not man, not our work, not our effort, but God’s effort alone.
 - c) The cornerstone—a cornerstone is traditionally the most important stone in the building above grade. It has be laid with care to be level, strong, at the right elevation etc. If it is not placed correctly the building is weak and will eventually fall.
 - d) “In Zion”—who is Zion in the OT? God’s holy, chosen people, Israel. And who is the new Israel? Us! The Church!
 - e) “Whoever believes in him”: Notice that this cornerstone is not an “it” but is a “he”—Jesus. Jesus is the cornerstone upon which the holy living temple is built.
 - (1) Note the descriptors:
 - (a) Chosen: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7; Isaiah 43:8-13.
 - (b) Precious—Isaiah 43:4. See also, think John 3:16—God’s one and only Son was given to take away the sins of the world.
 - f) “Not be put to shame”: Jesus is the cornerstone that is the standard of our life.
 - (1) He is true, square and right. If our life is built on him we will not be put to shame—we build for something that is permanent. See Matthew 7:24-29.
 - (2) In a world full of Satan’s lies and deceptions, the Word of the Lord remains true and accurate.
 - (3) We have so many rationalizations, excuses and compromises that tries to change God’s Word and unchanging standards.
 - (4) We hear the Word and through faith understand God’s salvation and His righteousness and how we come short of His righteous standards. But it is through faith in God’s actions that we can be one of those who are not put to shame.

4. V. 7—A quote from Psalm 118:22. This is the same Psalm that the crowds chanted on Palm Sunday—see Psalm 118:25-26.
 - a) There is a contrast in this verse between those who honor (i.e. those who believe) and those who do not.
 - b) Where does this honor come from? From God—we are the citizens of the New Jerusalem
 - c) The stone the builders rejected—who rejected Christ? The leaders of the Jews, and ultimately the crowds in Jerusalem on Good Friday.
 - d) But, who planned this—see Psalm 118:23 (also quoted by Jesus in Matthew 21:42). It is God’s doing!
 - e) What is a capstone or keystone? See pictures—it is the stone that holds an arch together. Jesus holds our lives, the temple built of living stones is held together by Jesus! If he is knocked out of position our lives collapse.
5. V. 8—quote from Isaiah 8:14.
 - a) Isn’t this verse rather scary? To reject Jesus is to have a life that falls to pieces, has no hope and ultimately is futile. And worse, they are subject to God’s condemnation and are consigned to damnation for eternity—an eternal separation from God!
 - b) Jesus is God’s truth—it is over Him that people who believe they are wise, they are self-sufficient, the proud, the idolaters trip and ultimately find the truth of the Lord’s righteousness, wrath and mercy.
 - c) What sort of comfort do you think this verse would bring to the people that Peter was writing to?
 - (1) Wouldn’t it bring some comfort to know that the person that they worshiped would ultimately be the person that these tormentors would trip over? That God ultimately was in control even though it may not seem like it at times!
 - (2) By faith the believers could see that they were part of this living building that was glorifying God each and every day. Someday these first century believers—and us—will see this living building completed in eternity.

6. We next come to vv. 9. This verse is the first of three “purpose statements” for writing this book. And in this purpose statement, Christians are described in four different ways:
- a) After Moses had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and was in front of Mt. Sinai in Exodus 19, God called Israel a “treasured possession.” See Exodus 19:4-6.
 - b) Peter seems to be channeling Moses here when he describes the new believers in glowing and encouraging terms.
 - c) First we are a chosen race.
 - (1) Does this remind you of anyone else in the Bible? Think Abraham and Jacob.
 - (2) It also is a reflection of the one who was chosen in vv. 4 and 6 of 1 Peter 2—Jesus! The election of Jesus as God’s chosen one is matched by the election of God’s people—us!
 - d) Second, we are a royal priesthood!
 - (1) Go back to Exodus 19:6. God describes His people as a kingdom of priests. This is also reflected by earlier terminology used by Peter in 1 Peter 2:5—there we are described as a holy priesthood.
 - (2) Peter fills this out and says we are a royal priesthood.
 - (3) This doesn’t mean we are kings, but we are of the royal household.
 - (4) The combination of king and priest is a mixing of offices that was forbidden in the Old Testament. See 2 Chronicles 26:16-21. King Uzziah tried to be a priest and was stricken with leprosy—this meant a separation from society AND God—as a result of his sin.
 - (5) But now, we have a king priest—Jesus—who comes before the Lord as a sacrifice on our behalf and yet He rules with God at His right hand.
 - (6) We follow in the line of King Jesus and we are also priests and able to come before God.
 - (7) How do we become these royal priests—it is God’s work in giving us faith and adopting us into His family as his children.
 - e) Next we are described as a holy nation.

- (1) This comes straight out of Exodus 19:6—God choose the Children of Israel to be His people in the world. Now, in the New Testament the new believers are gathered together as God’s people in the world.
- (2) We are His nation not because we are blood descendants of Abraham, but because He has adopted us into His nation.
- (3) Why are we holy—because He is holy. Again, not our work!
- f) The last description is that we are now a people for His own possession.
 - (1) This is a quote from the Septuagint version of Exodus 19:6.
 - (2) This same concept is used in Malachi 3:16-18 where the Lord lays claim to the righteous who are written in the Book of Life.
 - (3) Note in Malachi that these people, those who fear him are made righteous
- g) So what is important about these descriptions? God’s people, both individually and collectively are set apart to do His will, because God’s people are valued by Him, loved by Him, more than any other thing.
- h) We are called—from where? Darkness? To where? Light. A marvelous light! Do we live like it is marvelous? Of course not! We are German Lutherans!!!!
- i) And what are the consequences of being chosen and consecrated as God’s Gospel people?
 - (1) We proclaim His Excellencies. What Excellencies is Peter thinking of?
 - (2) It is the wonderful action that won us our salvation—Christ who gave that perfect sacrifice in His life, death and resurrection.
- 7. In v. 10 Peter turns to imagery from that great OT prophet, Hosea.
 - a) Anyone remember who Hosea married? Gomer the prostitute.
 - b) And do remember the name of their children? See Hosea 1:8-11.
 - (1) Lo-am-mi—Not my people.

- (a) By biological family. by culture before Christianity, and through our nature, we are not God's children.
- (b) But Hosea talks at the end of v. 10 and into v. 11 that the people who are not God's people will **BE** the sons of the living God and will appoint one leader and they will be gathered together.
- (2) Compare Hosea to 1 Peter 2:10a—Look how God has taken us who were not a people and made us God's people. This reflects the previous verse where Peter talked about being a people of God's own possession.
- (3) What does it take to become God's people? It is God's work—think of Abram being chosen by God. We have been chosen by God as well and are His children by His action—giving us faith in Christ's atoning death and resurrection.
- (4) Then there is the daughter—Lo-ruhamah. Read Hosea 1:6-7. Lo-ruhamah means “No Mercy.”
 - (a) Why “No Mercy”—it is a symbolic name emphasizing that due to the persistent unfaithfulness of Israel, God is bringing judgment upon Israel. God will no longer show His favor on the Northern Kingdom.
 - (b) But in v. 7 he states that He will continue to show mercy and compassion on the Southern Kingdom, Judah. He will deliver them from the attacks of man through His acts, not their armaments.
(Assyrian siege of Jerusalem?)
- (5) Go back to v. 10 of 1 Peter 2. Like the people of the Northern Kingdom, we were only entitled to receive God's wrath.
 - (a) Think Romans 3:23—“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
 - (b) And like Judah we are saved because of His actions, not because of our works.

- II. Specific Instruction and Encouragement for Holy Living (2:11-4:11)
- A. Introduction: Paul now moves into a section where he is giving his readers instructions and encouragement to live in a holy manner. We are talking about the believers' relationships among themselves and with other people.
1. Part of this section from v 11 to 3:7 includes what scholars call household codes—a table of duties of how Christians are to live in the society around them. Paul has these table of duties, but Peter emphasizes suffering for our faith as part of our relationship with those around us.
- B. The Purpose of Holiness (2:11-12)
1. This is one of the three key/theme verses I spoke about several weeks ago in 1 Peter that states the purpose of Peter's letter. It is a summary of this section of 1 Peter.
 2. Peter says abstain from sinful desires and live good lives. What does this mean? Kind of a no brainer? Something obvious and easy, right?
 3. We all need encouragement and instruction. Why?
 - a) **Because we are at war!** With what? With our own sinful flesh!
 - b) This is part of our sinful nature that is trying to destroy us, trying to have us remove ourselves from the Gospel promise.
 - c) See Galatians 5:17—the flesh is in opposition to the Spirit. It is the fleshly desires that we do naturally, not spiritual things.
 - d) “The evil desires of our sinful nature seeks to take over and destroy the Christian in us. We are vulnerable to distortions in our value systems that make us obsessed with material things and leads us to neglect our human relationships.” Mark A. Jeske, *People's Bible Commentary General Epistles*, 94 (CPH; St. Louis).
 4. Note the recurring theme of aliens from chapter 1 of 1 Peter—aliens have no rights in the land where they live.
 - a) Strangers are only temporary residents.
 - b) This knowledge that we do not belong does not lead to withdrawal (i.e. Amish) but we take our standards of behavior not from the culture around us but from our “home” culture of heaven. Our lives are to fit the place where we are headed to, rather than this temporary place in this world.
- C. Christians Submit to Civil Authorities (2:13-17) If God gives us a cross to carry, He also promises to give us the strength to bear it by faith. Christ our

Shepherd calls us by name, brings us into His fold through the Gospel, and cares for us in the midst of suffering. How Jesus responded to suffering is how we are to respond to trials. We are honored to follow Him.

1. Read 1 Peter 2:13-17
 2. We are to submit to the authority of government rulers by obeying them. We should do this, not because of these individuals are personally worthy of our submission to them, we *honor* God by obeying His Word.
 3. Why does God set up governments? To prevent evil.
 4. In spite of our American individualism, we need to remember that God has set governments and authorities over us for a purpose.
 5. How are we to act? Not in complete freedom, doing whatever we want, but in submitting to the government.
 6. Is this submission only to good governments? Think of Christians of the first couple of centuries—facing persecution, shunning, exile and death. Did they rebel? Did they seek to change the government? No. They submitted when it did not affect conscious, but when asked to worship the emperor, they said no and took their punishment, often gladly.
 7. Isn't this submission a reflection of the call to love our neighbors?
- D. Household Slaves Submit to the Authority of Their Masters (2:18-25)
1. Is Peter endorsing slavery in this passage?
 - a) If you read it closely he is not endorsing it or condemning it. He accepted it as an inescapable feature of life in the Roman Empire. In fact, it must have been rather shocking to Peter's original audience that even addressed them at all, after all, they were merely slaves, nobody important!
 - b) Christianity appealed to many slaves since it essentially called for the equality of all before God, but it did not seek to overtly change the Empire—it changed it over time by its influence on the culture.
 - c) What mattered most to Peter and the other Apostles was people's relationship with the Savior, Jesus Christ, and how we (the church) were called to draw others to Him.
 2. The word v. 18 might be better translated as "house servants" or employees in today's language.

3. Christians can live their Christianity by the respectful and cooperative way in which we do their jobs, especially when we work for a boss who oppressive or unfair.
 - a) It is pointed out that suffering for wrongdoing is not really suffering, but suffering unjustly “it is a gracious thing in the sight of God. Verse 21. We submit gladly!
 - b) Be willing to submit, according to your station in life, means that you love the Lord and love people enough to give up some of your freedom, willingly yielding to a) government 2) masters/employers 3) husbands or 4) elders in the church.
4. Peter spends most of this section writing about the suffering of Christ and raising Christ as our example.
 - a) The key idea here is submission. Remember, that submission in the biblical sense does not mean that you thereby become inferior or that what you submit to is superior to you. Submission does NOT diminish your value before God.
 - b) Our inspiration for willing submission comes from Jesus Christ who became obedient unto death, even death on the cross.
 - c) Christ’s submission is important not only because of His example, but also because it is through His submission and suffering that He redeemed the whole human race.
 - d) In verses 23, 24 and 25 Peter refers us back to Isaiah 53, the great Suffering Servant passage, to explore how Christ suffered on our behalf.
 - e) Peter’s final words in chapter 2 comfort suffering Christians who might think that their sufferings prove they have been abandoned. Christ accepts responsibility for the people of His flock. He commits to being their *Shepherd*, that is one who protects his sheep and their *Overseer*, the one who watches over Israel and who never slumbers nor sleeps, and who will bring us from this sad and hurting world to a better one of His own making!

E. A Wife Yields to Her Husband's Authority as Head of the Household (3:1-6) and A Husband Demonstrates Godliness by Respecting His Wife (3:7). Sadly, sin affects marriage and families. We sometimes view God's gift as a burden or hardship. When a believing wife speaks the Gospel gently to her unbelieving husband and demonstrate her faith in action, the power of the Gospel may lead him to salvation. When a husband truly loves his wife and treats her with honor, the family strengthened, and all are blessed. When our families fall short of this calling, our gentle heavenly Father calls us to follow Him and is ever prepared to forgive us.

1. ¹Now our study moves to a subject that I could get in a lot of trouble today. I hope that the Lord will keep me out of it!
 - a) Let's review where we have just come from: in 1 Peter 2 we learned about submission: first as free men to governmental authorities; next as slaves to their masters; and last as Jesus submitted to the punishment that should have been ours.
 - b) This week we continue on the subject of submission but in the context of family relationships.
 - (1) Like the passages from chapter 2, Peter is concern is not life within the Christian community, but at those points where the Christian community interfaces with the world around it.
2. Wives:
 - a) Read 1 Peter 3:1-2. What does Peter mean by the phrase, "in the same way?" (He is talking about the same subject as we have been studying--submission. This is a transition—remember chapter and verses are not part of the original text.)
 - b) We are speaking of a special relationship in this passage—husbands and wives.
 - c) A wife has a special relationship to her husband in that she “belongs” him—just like he “belongs” to her.
 - d) Submission as taught in 1 Peter involves at least four things:
 - (1) Submission begins with an attitude of entrusting oneself to God—Like Christ in 1 Peter 2:23-25.
 - (2) Submission requires respectful behavior (3:1-2). Nagging or disrespectful behavior is not appropriate.

¹ This section comes from Bruce N. Cameron, 1 Peter, GoBible.org, http://www.gobible.org/bible/1peter/to_love_honor_and_cherish.html

- (3) Submission involves the development of Godly character (3:3-5).
- (4) Submission includes doing what is right (3:6). It does not involve violating other Scriptural principles.
- e) The Greek word translated “submission” in the NIV and “subject” in the ESV is "hupotasso" (hoop-ot-as-so).
 - (1) The term has in view the maintenance of God’s willed order, not personal inferiority of any kind. Peter is showing how God has ordered the human race that we must observe His structure of authority, so that peace and order may prevail.
 - (2) As all employees should submit to their masters, even the unreasonable ones (2:18), so all wives should submit to their husbands, even the *unbelieving* or *disobedient* ones.
 - (3) This is primarily a military term. (It is the same word is used in 1 Cor. 15:27 where is speaks of Jesus in the end putting all things under his feet, and God putting everything under Jesus.)
- f) Should wives be in the same situation as a junior military officer?
 - (1) In Colossians 3:18, Paul says that wives should submit to husbands "as is fitting in the Lord." and in Ephesians 5:22 he says that the "husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church."
 - (2) I have heard it said that wives need only to submit to husbands who are properly in this line of authority: Jesus>husbands>wives. Is this what Peter is saying? (No. Peter says, they are to submit to unbelieving husbands.)
 - (3) What is the goal of this submission? (That the unbelieving husband will be converted.)
- g) Note that Peter says in v.1 that the unbelieving husband may be won over without words! What does that mean? (That talking to him may not work at all. He may totally refuse to listen. But the wife still has the testimony of her life!)
 - (1) Do you think that Peter suggests that the submission of the wife is any different than the submission to

- governmental authorities or the submission to a master (or employer)?
- (2) If it is the same, is this an attitude that the Christian should have towards authority regardless of gender?
 - (3) Are our natural hearts in rebellion towards that kind of attitude?
3. Husbands:
- a) So I will not be accused of deliberately not getting to this part of the study, lets skip down now to v.7.
 - b) Notice that Peter again starts out by saying, "in the same way." In the same way as what? (He is talking about an overall attitude that reflects this entire chapter: an attitude of submission to authority.)
 - c) ESV says "live with your wives in an understanding way" and the NIV says "be considerate."
 - (1) Any idea what the Peter is talking about? (The Greek word is "gnosis," and it means "a seeking to know.")
 - (2) Now, what do you think Peter means? (That we should seek to know and understand our wives. The NKJV translates it best when it says, "dwell with them with understanding." What a wonderful picture!)
 - (3) The word translated "honor" in v.7 is the Greek word "time" (tee-may') which is the same word translated "precious" in 1 Peter 2:7 ("now to you who believe, this stone is precious" (speaking of Christ)—How precious is this stone? It is of infinite value.
 - (4) Are we just speaking of respect here--or just honor--For our wives? (What a viewpoint! The same word that describes the precious nature of Christ is the word used to describe the wife.)
 - (5) Does this permit, under any circumstances a Christian husband physically or mentally abusing his wife? (Absolutely not. It is unthinkable.)
 - d) Why does Peter say that if we do not get this right our prayers will be hindered? (Strong's says that the Greek word here means "to cut off!" Vines indicates that the best manuscripts have a related word that means to hinder.)

- (1) How are our prayers going to be hindered?
 - (a) Perhaps if praying to have a good marriage, your prayers will be hindered if you do not follow this advice.
 - (b) Perhaps it means that your relationship with your wife is key to your spiritual well-being.
 - (c) Perhaps it means that Christian couples should pray together--and not treating our wife properly is going to interfere with that.
4. Adornment: Beauty of Character:
 - a) Go back to 1 Peter 3:3-4.
 - b) Is Peter now turning to a new topic? Or does this have something to do with the concept of submission and witness to unbelieving husbands? (He is on the same topic. Read vv. 5-6: Peter is linking the two ideas.)
 - c) Consider this: the Greek word translated "adorning" (ESV) or "beauty" (NIV) in v.3 is kosmos! You know this word--it means the universe, order, arrangement. Think of all the wonderful things in the universe—planets, moons, stars and galaxies.
 - (1) So your kosmos should not come from the way you wear your hair or your clothes or your gold jewelry.
 - (2) What do you think this means? (That your self-worth, your essence should not come from what you have.)
 - (3) Do you think that Peter is giving any advice at all on wearing jewelry?
 - (4) Or does it tell them that we should not rely on these things for beauty or self-worth?
 - (5) What then should we rely on for our "kosmos?" (Look at v. 4 the same word is used and now references your inner self: a gentle and quiet spirit.)
 - (6) Our worth comes from what is inside and not what we have!
 - d) Let's look at this issue in more practical detail: does an engagement ring today make a statement? What is the primary purpose (or statement) of an engagement ring today? (To show

the worth (wealth and importance) of the husband of the bride to be. To show the commitment of the couple to each other.)

- (1) Let's read again 1 Peter 3:3-4. Does this this description fit the concept of the engagement ring? Does Peter say that worth comes from wealth? (No! Seems to be exactly the opposite. The "great worth" that is of value to God is a gentle and quiet spirit.)
- e) The NASB translates v. 3 and 4 to say: Your adornment must not be *merely* external--braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.
- (1) The translators added the word "merely" in v. 3 and the words "let it be" in v. 4 that is not in the original Greek, but they added it since it was implied.
 - (2) This lets us understand that the Greek grammar should be interpreted to add this additional terminology.
- f) Peter now turns to an illustration to complete his teaching.
- (1) Read vv. 5-6.
 - (2) "For this is how"—again a transition that refers back to the previous verses—the internal adornment of the women.
 - (3) Peter turns to a Biblical example, Sarah and Abraham to show that even the old Patriarchs acted in this way.
 - (4) The word translated as "lord" could also be translated as "sir." It is a term of respect between the husband and the wife.
 - (5) Like Sarah, women are being encourage to express their submission to the husband in a way that is appropriate to their culture.
 - (6) Why behave this way? To show that like Sarah, Christian wives are "her children in the faith." Like the adorning of vv. 3-4, the wives show their faith by acting in a respectful manner and demonstrating their trust in God and His holiness.
 - (7) Think of the reverse: Not acting in a respectful way is to demonstrate a separation by sin to God's will.

- (8) By imitating Sarah and following Peter's teaching, the Christian wife gains confidence and strength when suffering for her faith. She could understand that any suffering came to her was not a result of her sinful behavior, but in spite of her Godly behavior.
- F. Humility, Unity, a Tender Heart, and Brotherly Love Characterize Christian Brotherhood (3:8-12) (8-22) Jesus Christ is our Savior. He suffered and died for us. He rose to give us life. His power and authority is above all others.
1. Read 1 Peter 3:8.
 2. First Peter tells us to live in harmony (unity of mind) having sympathy (KJV "compassion")?
 - a) How do we do have sympathy? Any ideas?
 - b) Do these other characteristics that Peter describes help us to have sympathy?
 - (1) Brotherly love
 - (2) tender heart/compassionate
 - (3) being humble
 - c) The last time someone was sympathetic towards you, what did they do? (The secret lies in relating so closely to others that we feel what happens to them is happening to us—walking a mile in their shoes?)
 3. Read 3:9. Peter seemed to start out speaking to Christians in v.8.-- has he now moved on to the world at large? Or is this how we should act with fellow Christians?
 - a) Would a fellow Christian cause us evil or insult? (I think that he has gone into a wider circle than just those in the Church. If we read on it will be clearer.)
 4. Read v.10-12 this is a quote from ps 34. And it is clearly speaking about how to conduct ourselves in the world. Lets break this down.
 - a) What is the reward that is promised here? (love life-see good days v.10; lord keep an eye on us and listens to our prayers v.12.)
 - b) How many of you want that?
 - c) So, how do we attain this? (go through each and ask what think means)
 - (1) Keep your tongue from evil;

- (2) Keep your lips from deceitful speech;
 - (3) Turn from evil and do good; and,
 - (4) Seek peace and pursue it.
- d) Summarize in your own words what Peter is saying? (Peter puts a very high value on what we say.)
 - e) Notice the positive part of this. Peter has been telling us to submit, and be nice, so that we will win others to Christ. That is good for the other person, right? But doesn't do much for us except to know that we helped someone to come to Christ--but here peter says you too are going to get something good out of it-and now!
- G. Christian Virtue Sends a Powerful Message to Outsiders and Gives Opportunity for Witnessing (3:13-17)
- 1. Read 1 Peter 3:13-14. Does Peter say that it is likely that we will suffer? (no).
 - a) Why? (he has just told us to return good for evil. You normally are not harmed if you follow that rule, right? Governments normally do not punish those who do right, masters do not normally punish slaves that obey, and spouses normally appreciate someone who has their best interests at heart.)
 - b) But, does Peter promise suffering won't happen either? (no)
 - c) Do you think that Peter is just saying that if you follow this plan for your life, odds are that your life will be better?
 - d) Or is he saying more than that?
 - e) What about v. 12 where he says that the eyes and ears of the Lord are on the righteous and his face is against the wicked? Don't we have something better going for us than the odds? (Paul said in Romans 8:31: "If God is with us, who can be against us?" In John 17:15 Jesus said, "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one.")
 - f) In light of the suffering of the disciples, what does this mean?
 - g) Is suffering the opposite of blessing? (Compare Matthew 5:11)
 - (1) How does the statement in v. 14 fit in that says, "If you suffer you are blessed?" and, "do not fear what they fear?" (in John 16:33 Jesus said to his disciples, "in this world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have

overcome the world." Jesus has overcome this world and will ultimately make everything right in the next world to come!!)

- (2) By the way, what is it that the world fears that we are not to fear? (Man. We need not fear man because God is in charge.)
 - (3) What practical difference does it make if we fear God instead of man? (We would never be embarrassed about being Christian. We would always obey God instead of man. The difference in Peter is seen when he feared man and denied Christ three times, and then shortly later when he feared God and told the Sanhedrin that he must fear God instead of man (Acts 5:29))
2. Let's read on: read v.15. In the midst of persecution, Peter says that we should be able to tell our persecutors why we believe what we do. What is the key to being able to do that? (Study now.)
 - a) As a practical matter, would you go through persecution if you were not too certain why you were doing it?
 - b) Notice how Peter says that we should speak to those who are challenging our faith? How should we speak? And why? (Part of this same lifestyle of returning good for evil. Even if the person persecuting you is a lowlife, you treat them with gentleness and respect!)
 - c) Peter is starting his teaching on evangelism by pointing back to God, not to ourselves. When our hearts are full of gratitude and genuine love, then we will be prepared for reaching out to others to testify about God's Son and his redemption of the world.
 3. Let's find the reason in 1 Peter 3:16. Read. (Once again. The same reason for submitting to unjust authorities and unbelieving husbands--they may see the truth.)
 4. Read 1 Peter 3:16-17. Peter now moves from what we say to what we do. Why does he call on us to have a "clear conscience?" And why does he say that it is better to suffer for doing good instead of evil? (His point is simple. How can you stand in front of the authorities giving the reason for your hope when your life shows that you do not

act that way? That you violate the laws? You must have a consistent life.)

H. Jesus was Treated Unjustly and Then Gloriously Vindicated (3:18-22)

1. Read 1 Peter 3:18-22.
2. In v. 18 the center of hope and joy for every Christians is the gospel, and in this passage it is articulated clearly and forcefully.
 - a) “*Christ died for our sins.*” These words acknowledge our evil, our problem and our guilt. They also point to the solution—that someone else has paid the price for us. Our need is severe, but the solution is even greater: the death of the God-man, Jesus Christ.
 - b) “*Once for all.*” These words proclaim the completeness and the finality of Christ’s words on the cross, “It is finished!” (John 19:30) It really is finished! Although we sin repeatedly in our lives, Christ’s *one* act of atonement covers all sins of the people.
 - c) “*The righteous for the unrighteous.*” This is the heart of the gospel, that a substitution was made. The Father loaded the blame for the sins of the world upon a righteous substitute and then executed him in our place. The severity of the punishment upon Jesus signifies at the same time the greatness of the mercy upon us who believe it. As Isaiah chapter 53 teaches, the heart of the gospel is “he for me.”
 - d) “*To bring you to God.*” We cannot lift ourselves up to God. Christ has lifted us up to God.
3. Peter then goes into a paragraph that narrates the events of Christ’s humiliation and exaltation. It is reminiscent of the Apostles Creed: He suffered and was put to death in the body v. 18, made alive in the spirit v. 18, through which he went to preach to the spirits in prison (hell) v. 19, was raised and has gone into heaven v. 22, and is at God’s right hand v. 22, ruling over everything in all creation, including all angels (or powers and authorities) v. 22.
 - a) If all these things are true (and they are), then our earthly sufferings don’t matter.
 - b) If Christ is on the throne of heaven (and he is), it doesn’t really matter who is on the throne in Rome (or Washington).

- c) If Christ is resurrected and alive, it doesn't really matter if death temporarily claims the lives of the saints.
4. Now Peter goes down a couple of rabbit holes that need some explanation.
- a) First, in vv. 18-20 Peter addresses a subject that is somewhat unusual:
 - (1) We confess in the Apostles Creed that Jesus descended into hell. This is the only passage in the Bible that mentions this aspect of Holy Week.
 - (2) Is the descent into hell suffering and humiliation? Or exaltation? It is exaltation, he is preaching/declaring his triumph over sin, death and the devil. V. 19
 - (3) Who did He preach to? The people who died in the flood, those who failed to listen to Noah's preaching while the ark was being built and continued in their sin. V. 20
 - (4) When did it happen? It happened after Jesus death on Good Friday and before Easter morning when Jesus rose bodily.
 - (5) *The last phrase of v. 18 and the first phrase v. 19 is translated by the NIV as "but made alive in the Spirit through whom also he went and preached." The ESV translates it "but made alive in the spirit which he went and proclaimed." V. 21*
 - (6) *Both translations are technically correct, but the ESV translation is less confusing, making it clear that it was in the spirit Christ went into hell before the physical resurrection on Easter morning.*
 - b) Second, what is this about Baptism in vv. 21-22?
 - (1) Peter is comparing Baptism to the salvation that the ark brought to Noah and his family from the judgment God brought through the flood.
 - (2) Were Noah and his family saved due to their good works? Not really since God is the one who told them to build the ark. It was God's intervention that saved Noah. The water that saved Noah and his family through floating the ark is a figure of Baptism.

- (3) Similarly, Baptism is not a good work, but the waters of Baptism does save us through faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Unlike what the Baptists say, Baptism does save!
- I. Jesus Example Inspires His People to Overcome Surrounding Evil (4:1-6)
1. Read 1 Peter 4:1.
 - a) What is the “therefore” there for? Refers us back to the topic of the preceding section—see v. 18—the triumphant suffering of Jesus on the cross and his rising from the tomb on Easter that was accomplished for us! In other words, the substitutionary atonement for our sins!
 - (1) How much did Jesus suffer? To what extent did he suffer? (To death.)
 - (2) What do you think it means for us to “arm ourselves with the same mind or attitude”? We are called to be Christ like—to pray that the Lord’s will be done and not ours!
 - (3) To be willing to suffer to death?
 - b) Now let’s look at the last phrase of the verse—“for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,”:
 - (1) Apparently the Greek has a perfect tense in the verb which emphasizes a permanent eternal condition free from sin.
 - (2) How are we eternally free from sin? It is only through Jesus that we are perfect before God, our sins have been forgiven, not as a result of our actions, but solely as a gift from God. See 2 Corinthians 5:18-19.
 - (3) The implication of the message of the preceding section is that we need to be ready to sacrifice earthly gain. Jesus said we are to pick up our cross and follow him. Same message here.
 - (4) This doesn’t mean we won’t sin, even if we face physical suffering, but the suffering we have will strip away sinful distractions from our lives and strengthening our trust in Christ. **Suffering can be a harsh but effective cure for materialism.**
 2. Read 1 Peter 4:2-3.

- a) A result of our life in Christ is that we are no longer living in the flesh but in the spirit.
 - b) What does Peter say about that here? We are being admonished to leave that prior life behind and live for God.
 - c) Go to Romans 12:1-2—we are transformed, not conforming to the world.
 - d) Escalator as a kid—going up the down. Easy when escalator is full of people?
 - e) Note the verse tells us some very practical things:
 - (1) First, our desire (our attitude) is on the will of God and not evil human desires.
 - (2) Second, he seems to say we have been through the evil human desires routine and should be glad to get out.
3. Read 1 Peter 4:4-5.
- a) A Christian's life goes against the flow. We live in a way that dissatisfies the people of the world. We should expect resistance.
 - b) What is the reaction of former friends to our conversion? (They think it is strange. The actions described in the verse are normal to them. As a result, they heap abuse on us.)
 - c) How do we handle that abuse?
 - d) What does Peter suggest that we keep in mind to be able to withstand this abuse? (the former friends are judging us, finding us "strange" and punishing us with abuse. But we need to keep in mind that there is a greater judge!)
4. Read v. 6. Is Peter telling us to preach the gospel to the dead? (It was preached to them when they were alive and they became believers.)
- a) Why does Peter put this in here and why does he speak of the judgment of men "in regard to the body?" I think his point is twofold:
 - (1) That there will be a judgment beyond this life;
 - (2) That even if we die while being persecuted and condemned by man's law, we are still not separated us from the hope of life eternal. **The fact that we died-even while being abused by them-doesn't mean that they are right** that it is just this life that you have to be concerned about.)

- J. Nearness of the End Stimulates Christians to Faithfulness (4:7-11)
1. Read v. 7.
 - a) What is the end of all things?
 - b) Why does Peter say it is near? Do we have that attitude?
 - c) What does it mean to be of sound judgment and sober spirit?
Not be swept away by emotions—called Enthusiasm—the spiritual life happens inside us.
 - d) Why, of all things, do you think Peter mentions our prayers? (He is indicating the importance of a connection to God through prayer.)
 2. How we treat others?
 - a) Read V. 8-9. "Agape" is the Greek word used here for love. Love each other fervently, constantly. What does this mean?
 - (1) How does this attitude "cover a multitude of sins?"
 - (2) Have you ever had any experience with this?
 - (a) If you do not know someone very well, you are more apt to take offense. But if you know someone well, or know that their attitude towards you is loving, you know that they would not be trying to hurt you.
 - (b) If you love someone, you will not delight in exposing their faults and their sins.
 - b) How is it that Peter can tell us to love each other? Would this work in any other context? I just find another person and say to you, "love him?" (The key to this goes back to the beginning of our lesson. Because Jesus died for our sins--died for us—keeping that attitude in mind naturally creates this care for others.)
 - c) In v.9 he tells us to be hospitable to others without grumbling. Can you be hospitable and grumble too?
 3. Read v. 10. The KJV and NKJV use the term "stewards" that we are stewards of these gifts of grace.
 - a) What do you think these "gifts" could be? (by the way, the word "gift" is translated from the Greek word "charisma.") (A spiritual endowment.)
 - (1) Does this mean that everyone has at least one gift?

- (2) Does that then mean that each one of us should be looking to use that gift to help others in the church?
 - (3) Is that a call for everyone in the church to be working to help each other?
4. Last, let read v. 11.
- (1) Do you think this is referring to everyday speech? (No. This is teaching or preaching the word of God.)
 - (2) What does it mean "he should do it as one speaking the very words of God?"
 - (3) It seems that they should stick to the Bible, and not human opinion and
 - (4) They should seek the aid of the Holy Spirit to ensure that God's words are spoken.
 - (5) If we serve--using the gift(s) that we have--how do we do it with the strength God provides? (We don't just roll up our sleeves and do it. We first look to the Lord for guidance from the very beginning of the ministry.)
 - (6) And what is the result of ensuring that the teaching is based on the words of God and looking to the Lord for guidance in what we do? (That God gets the glory for it. That he is praised!)

III. Joy Amid Suffering and Further Clarifications about What is Expected of the Community (4:12-5:11)

1. We now turn to the third major section of 1 Peter. Here Peter wraps up his discussion of suffering that he has focused on (off and on) since chapter 2.
 2. In the first 12 verses of chapter 4 Peter taught us that we should have three attitudes towards life:
 - a) That because of Jesus death and resurrection and our baptism, we are dead to sin;
 - b) That as a result of our new life, our old friends will abuse us, but we need to keep in mind that god will judge and make all things right; and
 - c) We should help each other by be loving and compassionate.
 3. This week he continues--and he talks about our attitude towards suffering.
- A. Suffering for the Sake of Christ is Sharing in Him (4:12-19)
1. Trials
 - a) Read 1 Peter 4:12. Peter says that we are likely to be surprised if we suffer. What is wrong with that? Why not be surprised? Doesn't God promise good things to us? Lev. 26:3-13. God is stronger than Satan and he will protect us!
 - b) When Peter first heard Jesus say that he would suffer, was Peter surprised? (Matt. 16:21-23.)
 - (1) Jesus says something very interesting to Peter (aside from calling him Satan), he says that he has in mind the things of men and not of God:
 - (2) What are the "things of men?" (peace, power.)
 - c) Peter was surprised by Jesus. He learned something from the experience of Jesus' suffering, and he is trying to teach us what he learned.
 - d) Peter seems to make two lines of argument why we should not be surprised.
 - (1) The first, in v. 13-16 essentially say "Christ suffered." We will go into that idea in detail later.
 - e) Let's start with the second line of argument in v.17-19. Read v. 17. I want to explore three ideas about why we have suffering:
 - (1) **Is suffering a judgment from God?**

- (a) Consider that a judgment that starts with the family of God? See Judges 4:1-3.
- (b) Or what about Hebrews 10:5-7?
- (2) Or consider what Peter said in 1 Peter 1:6-7. Does God send these trials to **purify us**?
 - (a) "Trial is part of the education given in the school of Christ to purify god's children from the dross of earthliness."
 - (b) Do you believe that?
- (3) Or does **suffering come from the school of the devil**?
 - (a) If you skip ahead to 1 Peter 5:8, Peter says the devil prowls like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour;
- (4) Read 1 Peter 4:15-16.
 - (a) These verses announce the theme that we suffer for being good—and there is no merit for suffering for being bad. Something we have already seen in 1 Peter.
 - (b) This seems to contradict the idea from Hebrews and elsewhere that we are suffering to get rid of the bad, or to purify us.
- f) **Do you have a problem with this idea of Jesus making good people suffer so that they will be better?** Is that loving? If so, how do you explain in v. 17 the reference to judgment beginning with the family of God?
- g) What is judgment? (Punishment for bad, reward for good.)
- h) Does this mean that good people are punished for the bad things they do? How does this relate to the idea of "purifying the saints?"
 - (1) So if we learn how to live by studying the Bible, and do it, we will not need this purification?
 - (2) Consider this idea: the righteous are saved by faith: but good behavior can keep you out of harms way--out of the way of the trials of purification!
 - (a) Agree? (it clearly helps to keep you out of harm's way.)

- (b) Can you say that salvation is free; but if you want to stay out of harm's way, vigorously keep the law? But—but—but . . .
2. Second Argument: Suffering Because We Are Servants of Christ.
- a) Let's go back and read 1 Peter 4:13-16.
 - b) **The general theme is that we should not object to suffering because Christ suffered.** We are certainly not better than him, and we deserve to suffer and he did not.
 - c) But I want us to dig deep here and go beyond the surface. Verse 16 seems to clearly indicate that we will suffer as Christians—for being and doing good—not as any sort of judgment or punishment.
 - d) Just why did Jesus suffer?
 - e) Was it God's will that he suffer? (It had to be. Isaiah clearly teaches that the Messiah had to suffer to reconcile the people to God.)
 - f) So, is it God's will if we suffer? (If they say no, ask why not if it was His will that Jesus suffered?)
 - g) Is it possible that evil can be defeated only through suffering? (God's perfect will was that Adam and Eve would have paid attention, obeyed and lived happily ever after without sin and suffering. But since Adam and Eve did not obey and follow God's will...)
 - h) We are tempted to say that God then resorted to "plan b", but we know that God knew before He created the world that it would take the death and suffering of Jesus to reconcile us to God.
 - i) Did God lack love or concern towards Christ?
 - (1) Of course not!
 - (2) Is our suffering a sign that God lacks love or concern towards us?
 - j) Do you see the suffering of Job to be like the suffering of Christ? (several parallels:
 - (a) Example to others;
 - (b) God called Job a perfect man;
 - (c) Caused by Satan's attack, the extent of which was controlled by God.)

- (1) **Is it possible that all underserved suffering is just like that—allowed by God?** Doesn't it worry you that the two times where the curtain is pulled back and we can see what is happening, it looks like suffering came in the same way?
- k) Neither the example of Job or Jesus, nor anything written in chapter 4 give any hint of random suffering: being in the wrong place at the wrong time or "just catching cancer."
 - (1) It sure appears to me that that there is random suffering in the world. Think earthquake in Haiti, or the tsunami in Sri Lanka.
 - (2) Is it possible that none of this happens by chance?
 - (3) Is it possible that we all suffer as part of judgment (wrongdoing) or we suffer because we are Christians?
3. Judgment in General
 - a) Let's skip ahead again to v.17-19, we just discussed the first part of v.17. Read v. 17-18.
 - b) Who do these verses say are subject to the judgment? (The family of God and the ungodly--so everyone, right?)
 - c) How does Peter suggest that this is going to turn out for the two groups? Who has the better chance of surviving judgement? (he says that it is "hard" for the righteous, but seems to say worse for the ungodly.)
 - d) Is it just a "better chance" for the family of God? (No. His message here is that His family is going to make it. That the outcome is ultimately going to be for our benefit!)
 - e) Read v. 19.
 - (1) What is his conclusion then? He says that in light of the judgment, we should commit ourselves to God and continue to do good as a witness for Christ.
 - (2) It is our faith and trust in God that is most important to us, believing, like Job, that God has provided for us.

- B. Elders Have Special Responsibilities and Promises (5:1-4)
1. Peter continues with the topic of suffering in chapter 5. He has told us about the cause of suffering in chapter 4, now he tells us about the solution.
 2. Read 1 Peter 5:1.
 - a) While Peter is not pushing his credentials on his readers (he says he is a “fellow elder”—he is like the other elders), he is pointing out that he was a personal, eye witness of Jesus and His sufferings. Reminds me of 1 John 1:1-4.
 - b) What does the term exhort mean: To encourage. Peter is writing words of encouragement for the church.
 3. Read 1 Peter 5:2-3. You will remember that Peter often mentioned how lines of authority should operate among Christians: free men to the law, servants to masters, wives to husbands, etc. Here he talks about the role of elders to the rest of the church.
 - a) How is it that elders should "rule" over the church?
 - (1) As shepherds—how do you evaluate a shepherd—by the health of the flock (are the sheep fed, protected and guided?)
 - (2) As overseers/stewards—entrusted not with silver and gold but with spiritual responsibility
 - (3) Willingly—free choice—not like the Aaronic priesthood which was hereditary.
 - (4) Not for profit—but do they deserve a wage?
 - (5) Eager to serve
 - (6) Not lording it over the others—they are servants, not Lords
 - (7) By example
 4. Read 1 Peter 5:4. Now Peter appeals to their reward at the time of the Second Coming of Jesus, the “Chief Shepherd”, that is when they will be rewarded for their work.
 - a) It will be unfading
 - b) A crown of glory—laurels? A mark of victory. See James 1:12.
- B. Younger Men are to Submit Humbly to the Community’s Elders (5:5-6)
1. Read 1 Peter 5:5-6

2. How is it that the rest (the "young men" or even "all of you"—y'all) should react to this appeal to subject themselves to the authority of the elders? They are to accept authority with humility!
 - a) It says "clothe yourselves with humility." Our lesson quotes a fellow who says that "many would be scantily clad if clothed with their humility."
 - b) What is Peter suggesting in v. 6 when he says "he may lift you up in due time?" (If you are humble and learn when you are young, your turn will come to assume the position of an elder and help others.)
 - c) These young men show strength, spiritual strength, when they submit to the elders. It is hard, against our human passions.
- C. Concluding Exhortation to Humility and Trust (5:7-11)
1. Read 5:7-10.
 2. What are Peter's two solutions to suffering? (v. 7 cast your anxiety upon God. V.10 in heaven Jesus will restore us.)
 - a) How do you "cast your anxiety" or "cast your care" upon Jesus? (Part of this is simply knowing that the Father cares for us. Melanchthon in Augsburg Confession: "The person who knows that he has a Father who is gracious to him truly knows God.")
 - b) So we can trust him now to care for us and we can trust him then to restore us and make us strong, firm and steadfast (thus suggesting that in trials we may not be any of these.)
 - c) Do you think his other suggestions about resisting the devil and being self-controlled and alert help us with suffering? (This suggests that all our suffering comes from Satan. Knowing that it comes from the enemy, and not god, helps us to keep our courage
 3. But perhaps more fundamentally, he seems to suggest that if we are paying attention by being "self-controlled" and "alert" to evil, that we expose ourselves less to the lion.)
 4. Note that our sufferings only last for a little while. This is from a heavenly perspective—what is our life compared to eternity with Jesus?
 5. And we are called in v. 10.
 - a) This is a theme from 1 Peter 1 and 2.
 - b) Note the beautiful promise that we have here in v. 10.

c) We are restored (NIV perfected), confirmed, strengthened and established.

6. Read 1 Peter 5:11

a) Nice doxology in this verse

IV. Final Greetings (5:12-14)

A. Silvanus's Help (5:12)

B. Other Brothers from the Church in "Babylon" (Rome) Send Greetings (5:13)

C. The Holy Kiss and the Peace of Christ (5:14)

1. Note that the last word that Peter is giving the suffering saints Christ's peace.
2. Isn't that also a wonderful gift to us?