

1 Peter 1:1-12 – Born Again, Purified, and Proclaiming the Gospel

Michael Silva / January 6, 2019

Opening:

- Today we are starting a new sermon series in the book of 1 Peter.

Introduction: The First Epistle of Peter.

1. This is a **General Epistle**, the group of books which includes James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude.
 - a) These books bear the author's name as its title and are addressed to the church at large.
2. It was **written** by **Peter** to the **Gentile believers** scattered around the world.
 - a) Peter is first mentioned at the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry in John 1:40.
 - b) **John 1:40-42** ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).
 - c) His name was Simon and Jesus changed it to Peter, which is a Greek, Cephas is the Aramaic, both meaning "Rock."
 - i) In the Gospels, Peter was bold, brash, impulsive and often foolish. He's the one who even denied Jesus during the crucifixion account.
 - ii) But at the beginning of His earthly ministry, Jesus gave Peter a name based on who he would become, not who he was.
 - (1) A truth: Jesus sees past our mistakes and limitations to who we will become.
 - d) Back to Peter, he had a wife (Matthew 8:14ff) and she traveled around with the group.
 - e) He, along with James and John, were successful fishermen and business owners.
 - i) These three men, Peter, James, and John are often referred to as Jesus' inner circle.
 - ii) Peter was often regarded as the leader of the other disciples.
3. At the time in which this letter was written, Nero was emperor of Rome, a madman who tortured and killed Christians.
 - a) The church was facing much trouble and persecution because of Nero's ways.
 - b) This epistle was probably written between 62-66AD just after Paul's death and while Peter was a prisoner in Rome awaiting his own execution.
 - c) Church tradition tells us that when Peter was ordered to be killed by crucifixion that in feeling unworthy to die in the same manner as his Lord Jesus Peter insisted on being nailed to the cross **upside down**. *This is tradition.*

Born Again, Purified, and Proclaiming the Gospel

4. Key Themes:

- a) Full of Living Hope, even in Hard Times!
- b) Having a genuine faith, new birth, living hope, and eternal inheritance.
- c) We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, His own special people.
- d) We are to be serious and watchful, hospitable, humble, sober, vigilant, and we are to resist the devil by being steadfast in our faith.

5. Common **words**: Suffer-12, glory-11, gift-10, proclaim-9, holy-8, and do good-7.

6. Whereas **Paul** has been called the **Apostle of Faith** and **John** the **Apostle of Love**, **Peter** has been called the **Apostle of Hope**.

7. Key Verses: **1 Peter 5:10–11** ¹⁰ But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*. ¹¹ To Him *be* the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Let's begin by reading: 1 Peter 1:1-12 (NKJV)ⁱ

1. I've **summarized** our passage today **Born Again, Purified, and Proclaiming the Gospel**.

1 Peter 1:1 ¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

1. The word **pilgrims** comes from Greek word (**παρεπίδημος** - *parepidemos*) for temporary resident, one who comes from a foreign country or land.

a) From the beginning Peter begins to emphasize that this is not our home.

2. These Christians were in **Dispersion** in several areas mentioned across what is now modern day Turkey, most likely due to persecution.

a) Becoming a Christian in Peter's day often came at great costs.

i) New believers often lost their jobs, were shamed and disowned by their families, and even imprisoned and put to death.

(1) Let that idea sink in for a minute. There was no 1st Amendment protecting their Christianity.

(2) While these conditions are hard to image, I think we are steadily moving in that direction.

(3) I think certain orthodox Christian beliefs will soon be deemed hate-crimes.

1 Peter 1:2 ² elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

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1. The term **elect** means that we are chosen by God. In God's **foreknowledge** we were chosen to follow Him.
 - a) The scriptures present two parallel truths, that we have an **opportunity** and **responsibility** to choose God...
 - i) **John 3:16** – For God so loved that world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes** in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
 - ii) The message that we must choose Christ is clear.
 - iii) And at the same time, God is sovereign, and He has chosen us. **Romans 8:29** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
 - b) Election is a doctrine intended to comfort the believer.
 - i) God's isn't stuck with you. You aren't the last one available when teams were being picked and God had no choice but to accept you.
 - ii) He knew you would have faith in Him and in His foreknowledge, He chose you before the foundations of this earth.
 - iii) He has loved you and wants you with Him.
 - iv) Be comforted in knowing that you are precious to Him and He has hand-picked you to be in Him family.
2. As true believers, you have been sanctified or **set apart** by the **Spirit**. That means that all of God's angels and all of Satan's demons can see that you belong to God.
 - a) We are on the VIP guest list. We have been granted special back-stage passes to God's concert.
 - b) Can the world around you see it?
 - c) This access was purchased for us through Christ's **obedience** at the cross, in **sprinkling of His blood**, which cleanses us from all unrighteousness.
 - d) Through Jesus alone can we experience the **Grace... and peace** that Peter speaks of here.

1 Peter 1:3

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1. Here is one of the major themes of this letter, that we have been **begotten** or born again into a **living hope**.
 - a) This is not our home. **According to His abundant mercy** we are citizens of heaven.
 - b) We have this **living hope** because we have eternal life in **Jesus Christ** who has conquered death Himself through His **resurrection... from the dead**.
2. Christianity isn't about good works, it's about faith in Jesus Christ.
 - a) Good works are simply the fruit of an abiding relationship in Christ.

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3. Let's see what else we've been born into through faith in Christ...

1 Peter 1:4-5 ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1. We have an inheritance like that of Aaron and the priests of the Old Testament.

- a) **Numbers 18:20** Then the Lord said to Aaron: "You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.
- b) We don't have an inheritance that changes like the stock market when interest rates change or earnings reports are low.
 - i) Stocks have dropped with the announcement that interest rates have increased.
 - ii) Apple stocks plummeted 10% when reports showed sales were down.
 - iii) Our inheritance in heaven is unaffected by any of that!!!
- c) Our inheritance isn't backed by the Federal Reserve, it has been reserved in heaven for you.
 - i) And it's been secured by the power of God.

2. We can have a living hope knowing that this life is NOT as good as it gets!

- a) There's a story told of a boat that was making its way across the Atlantic from England to America.
 - i) It encountered a terrible storm that threatened the lives of everyone onboard.
 - ii) Despite this one older woman remain perfectly calm. Others asked her how she could keep her nerves.
 - iii) She explained, "I have one daughter in America and one in heaven. I know that I will see one or the other at the end of this trip and it doesn't matter to me which one that is."

(1) She had a living hope from the Lord.

1 Peter 1:6-7 ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

1. Here we see the purpose of trials for those who are saved.

- a) We are tested by fire in order that we may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- b) C.H. Spurgeon, Indeed, it is the honor of faith to be tried. Shall any man say, 'I have faith, but I have never had to believe under difficulties'? Who knows whether thou hast any faith? Shall a man say, 'I

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have great faith in God, but I have never had to use it in anything more than the ordinary affairs of life, where I could probably have done without it as well as with it? Is this to the honor and praise of thy faith? Dost thou think that such a faith as this will bring any great glory to God, or bring to thee any great reward? If so, thou art mightily mistaken.

- c) When we face **various trials** it positions us on a platform where we can grow in **the genuineness of your faith**.
2. David Guzik, If **gold** is fit to be tested and purified by fire, then how **much more** our faith, which is far **more precious than gold**? God has a great and important purpose in testing our faith.
 - a) Faith is tested to show that it is sincere faith or true faith.
 - b) Faith is tested to show the strength of faith.
 - c) Faith is tested to purify it, to burn away the dross from the gold.
 - i) **Gold** is one of the most durable of all materials. Yet it too will one day perish, but our faith will not.

1 Peter 1:8-9 ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

1. This is the very essence of faith, **believing** in what you cannot see.
 - a) **Hebrews 11:1** **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**
 - b) Salvation is **not** earned with works, it's received through faith.
 - c) To comprehend the true meaning of God's salvation leads to **joy inexpressible**.
 - i) How can we really thank God for what He's done?

1 Peter 1:10-11 ¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the *grace that would come* to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

1. Peter is connecting the Old Testament with the New.
 - a) The Old Testament could be described simply as 'Promises Made.'
 - b) Whereas the New Testament could be described as 'Promises Kept.'
 - c) The **prophets** tried to understand what God's promises meant and how they would be fulfilled.
2. Let me read to you comments Pastor Chuck Smith made concerning the Old Testament feast...
 - a) We need the Old Testament, even as Gentiles, to more fully understand the sacrifices and **sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow**.

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1 Peter 1:12

¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

1. Here we see that not only were the O.T. prophets intently trying to understand the coming **gospel** message but **angels desire to look into** these things as well.
 - a) As believers in Christ who have heeded the **gospel** message, we have been given an opportunity to preach the **gospel** message, something the Angels could do, but that role hasn't been given to them.

Conclusion: What's the big take away from this passage?

1. We have been Born Again, Purified, and given the gift of Proclaiming the Gospel.

Invitation: Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

ⁱ All scripture references, unless otherwise noted, are taken from The New King James Version. (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.