

# 1 Peter 1

Commentary used: *Gospel Advocate NT Commentary (Peter, John, Jude)*, Guy N. Woods

## **What do we know about Peter?**

1. Brother of Andrew (converted by Andrew)
2. A fisherman by profession (along with Andrew, James and John – sons of Zebedee)
  - fished on Sea of Galilee
3. Peter lived at Capernaum
4. A very humble background
  - The Sanhedrin recognized that he was uneducated (*Acts 4.13*)
5. A married man – *Matthew 8.14-15* (Jesus healed his mother-in-law)
  - Also *1 Corinthians 9.5* talks about how Peter took along his wife in his preaching journeys

## **His life:**

- With Jesus for all major events (one of the “inner three”)
- Denied Christ three times and wept bitterly (*Luke 22.62*)

## **Summary of his personality:**

- Impetuous, warm hearted, humble, courageous as he matured in his faith
- Baptized first Gentile into the church (Cornelius)
- Last mentioned in Acts: *Acts 15* – council in Jerusalem
- Last mentioned in Bible in *Galatians 2.11* – discriminated against Gentiles and was corrected by Paul

## **Tradition says he was crucified upside down**

- Jesus seems to have said that he would die a violent death (*John 21.18*)

## **The book of 1 Peter:**

- Written to encourage Christians to remain steadfast in the face of persecution

## **Read 1 Peter 4.12-13** – theme of the book:

*(1 Peter 4.12-13) Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.*

- References to suffering: *1 Peter 1.6/3.17/4.15, 19*

## **Where was the letter written from? - 5.13** – Babylon

- Literally in Babylon
- The Catholic Church believes that Babylon was a symbol for Rome, but that is not correct
- This is not a book full of deep symbolism (as *Revelation* is)
- The Catholic Church has no physical evidence that Peter was ever in Rome – it is very embarrassing for them, since he is supposed to be the first pope – so they claim that "Babylon" refers to Rome
- That is not correct

## **Date for the book:**

- Because of many references to persecution, probably c. 65 AD and the beginning of the

persecution of Nero

- There are many similarities between *1 Peter* and *Ephesians*
- Bible scholars believe that *Ephesians* was written in about 63 AD (shortly before *1 Peter*)
- See: *Gospel Advocate Commentary*, p. 17, for a list of similarities

## **1 Peter 1.1-2**

**V1 – How did First Century letters began?** Person writing the letter, people letter addressed to, blessings or greetings

- Meaning of word *Peter*?** *Matthew 16:18* – small rock or a fragment of rock
- Peter’s “given” name?** Simon Bar-Jonah
- Who gave him the name *Peter*?** Jesus Christ
- Peter wanted to be known by the name Jesus gave him
- How did Peter identify himself?** Apostle of Jesus Christ
- To whom was the letter addressed?** New American Standard Bible: aliens, American Standard Version: sojourners
- Significance?** This world is not our home

**V2 – What part does God the Father play in our salvation?** He has chosen us; he set up the plan by which we may be saved

- Explain “foreknowledge”?** He set up a plan of salvation, and all who obey it were foreknown to be saved
- What does the Holy Spirit do?** Sanctify us (set us apart)
- Jesus Christ?** Sprinkled clean by his blood
- A reference to *Exodus 24.8* – the blood was sprinkled on the people
- Notice the 3 parts of the Godhead, the concept of the Trinity
- Some deny the 3 parts of the Godhead
- The blessings?** Grace (Greek) and peace (Hebrew)
- A blessing of Gentile and Jews (found many places in New Testament, especially in the writings of Paul)

## **1 Peter 1.3-12**

**V3–** A blessing (word of praise) for God the Father

- Why was Peter thankful for God the father?** The opportunity for us to be baptized
- The Bible never refers to a "baptized Christian" – to be baptized makes a person a Christian -See *John 3.5ff* and *1 Peter 3.21*
- So it is redundant (waste of words) to talk about a baptized Christian
- As a result of being baptized, what have we gained?** A living hope, a hope with substance to it
- The basis for our hope?** Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead
- Notice the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (also *1 Corinthians 15*)

**V4 – What is our hope?** Heaven

- Some groups (such as the Jehovah Witnesses) say Christians will not go to heaven, but to an earth that has been cleansed – they need to study this passage (along with *John 14.2*)

**V 5 – Who protects us from falling away? God**

- What is the protection based on? Our faith
- So it is up to us to remain faithful

**V 6 – What did the Christians have to endure? A period of persecution and trials**

**V 7 – Would anything good come from this persecution? Yes, their faith would be proven**

- Note: Our faith is more precious than gold

**V 8 – Had the Christians in Asia Minor seen Jesus? No**

- It is hard for us to fall in love with someone we have not seen, but those Christians had (and we do today)
- Notice the joy that Peter speaks of in the midst of persecution

**V 9 – The result of their faith? Salvation of souls**

- Peter is encouraging them in their persecution

**V 10 – How did Peter characterize the Old Testament prophets? Made careful search and inquiry**

- They were really interested in the coming of the Messiah

**V 11 – A diligent and painstaking search**

- What were prophets telling about? The sufferings of Christ, followed by glories
- Some Old Testament Scriptures on the resurrection of Jesus Christ: *Psalm 16.10, Psalm 68.28*

**V 12 – Were the prophets speaking about their own times? No, the times of Peter and those Christians**

- Notice: The gospel was preached in the Old Testament (*Isaiah 53*)
- What has Peter said thus far to encourage the persecuted Christians?

## **1 Peter 1.13-21**

**V 13 – Gird up your minds**

- Ancient garments were long, flowing, and tied up tight for trips
- Meaning of rest of v 13? All our work in life is to be directed toward one goal

**V 14 – What kind of lives had they lived before becoming Christians? Lives of lust**

- Why had they lived that way? Ignorance, didn't know any better, easy to conform to the world

**V 15 – What should our behavior be like? Like God's: holy**

**V 16 – We are to imitate God in our lives**

*Leviticus 11:44-45 “For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. ‘For I am the Lord, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy.’”*

**V 17** –Is the “if” section correct? Yes, God does judge impartially  
-How should we then live? “In fear” and respect  
-Note: an interesting expression at the end of *verse 17*  
-Meaning? This life is very temporary

**V 18** – Were we saved by payment of expensive perishable ransom? No

**V 19** –What were we redeemed with? Blood of Jesus

**V 20** –Notice the phrase *these last times* – the Christian dispensation is often referred to this way

**V 21** – They had faith in God

## **1 Peter 1.22-25**

**V 22** – What had their love led them to do? Love the brethren  
-How deep was this love to be? From the heart  
-Why would this be important in a time of persecution?

**V 23** –Is their salvation imperishable? No, it is the seed of the salvation that is imperishable  
-The seed? The Word of God

**V 24-25** – The Word of God is permanent - a quote from *Isaiah 40.6-8* (in the Septuagint)  
-Interesting side note: **Read 1 Cor. 5.9** - Paul’s first letter to Corinth must not have been inspired, because it did not become part of the New Testament  
-In other words, the apostles could write things that were not inspired – only the inspired documents survived and were included in the New Testament

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