

1 PETER

Greeting from Peter (1:1-2)

1 From Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ:
To those who have been chosen by God and who are therefore strangers in the world, wherever they may be throughout the regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. ²You have been chosen deliberately by God the Father for the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. It is He who enables your obedience to Jesus Christ, as those set apart for His purposes. And you have also been chosen to know the cleansing power of His blood that covers all sin and failure.

May He impart grace and peace to you abundantly!

Our inheritance in Christ (1:3-4)

³The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be praised for all He has done for us. He has given us a new birth through the great mercy He has shown us. He has given us a living hope so we can look to the future with great expectation because Jesus Christ has been raised triumphantly from the dead. ⁴He has given us an inheritance that can never be ruined, taken from us or even reduced in any way, the inheritance kept for you in heaven.

Faith tried and tested (1:5-7)

⁵Meanwhile, because of your faith in Him, God shields you by His power until the full realisation of the salvation that shall be revealed at the end of time. ⁶So you have much that causes you to rejoice, even though at present there are many different trials and setbacks that have caused you grief. ⁷But these have only been allowed so that your faith can be demonstrated as genuine and well-founded. This proves that your faith is of much greater value than gold, which also has to be refined by fire. Yes, your faith will enable you to be one with Jesus Christ when He is revealed in His full praise, glory and honour.

The era of grace (1:8-13)

⁸You have never seen Him in the flesh, yet still you love Him. Even though you cannot see Him physically now, you still believe in Him and are filled with a tremendous sense of glorious joy! ⁹For even now you are in the process of receiving the objective of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰The prophets spoke about this salvation, but they could only look forward to the grace you already experience. ¹¹They did all they could to try and discover the time and situation in which the work of salvation would be accomplished. The Spirit of Christ working in them enabled them to predict the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow His victory on the cross.

¹²These prophets understood that their words would benefit those to whom these things would be revealed in due course, and this includes you. They could only look forward to what has now been revealed to you by those who have preached the gospel to you in the power of the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven by God to those who believe. Not only prophets but even angels long to look into these things that are now common knowledge to you.

¹³Because you have now received this revelation, you need to have mindsets of those who are ready for action and will be self-controlled in their way of life. You have already received grace from God, so your hope for the future is that this grace will be given to you fully when Jesus Christ returns.

Be holy in all you do (1:14-17)

¹⁴You are called to be God's obedient children and not to give way to the evil desires that marked your lives when you lived in ignorance of His purposes. ¹⁵He who called you is Holy; so to please Him you are to be holy in all you do, living as one who knows his or her life is set apart for God's purposes and glory. ¹⁶To live such a life fulfils God's written command: "Be holy, because I am Holy."

¹⁷You pray to God as your Father and He judges impartially what each person does. So live in fear, in reverent awe of Him, as if you are living as a stranger here on earth because you belong to His heavenly Kingdom.

You were bought with a price (1:18-21)

¹⁸How did God redeem you? In what way did He pay the price for you, so that you could belong to Him eternally? It was not with the

perishable things of this world, such as silver or gold. Something much greater was needed to save you from the empty way of life that many in the past have lived.

¹⁹No, He redeemed you with the precious blood of Christ, God's sacrificial Lamb that was without any blemish or defect. ²⁰Even before the world was created, God in His foreknowledge knew that such a sacrifice would be needed to bring His people back into unity with Him; and this is what has now been accomplished, and all for your benefit. ²¹It is because of Jesus Christ that you have put your trust in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him in His heavenly presence. So now you look to the future with both faith and hope, secure in your personal knowledge of God.

Obey the truth of the Word (1:22-2:3)

²²You have already purified yourselves by obeying the truth of God's Word, fulfilling the command to love your brothers sincerely, deeply, from the heart. ²³Yes, you have been born again. But this second birth was not like the first. The seed of the natural birth perishes, but the seed planted in you at your new birth is imperishable; it is eternal. And it was planted in you because you believed the living, eternal Word of God.

²⁴⁻²⁵It is written: "All people are like grass. Their glory is like the wild flowers. Grass withers, flowers die, but the Lord's Word endures forever." And it is this eternal Word that was preached to you!

2 Because this is the case, get rid of all hatred of others, of all desires to see them hurt or wronged. Be rid of all deceit and hypocrisy or jealousy. And never speak evil of others in any way.

²⁻³Because you have received your second birth, you are to be as new born babies who long for pure spiritual milk that will nourish you and enable you to grow in the process of salvation, which began in you when you first tasted the Lord's goodness.

Christ, the Living Stone (2:4-8)

⁴You have turned to Him, the Living Stone that was rejected by men but chosen by God and is precious to Him. ⁵So now you are to be living stones yourselves that God can build into a spiritual dwelling place for Himself. You have become a holy priesthood because of all

you offer to God through your faith in Jesus Christ, spiritual sacrifices that please Him. For it is written in scripture:

⁶“Look and see, I lay in Zion a chosen and precious Cornerstone. Anyone who trusts in Him will never be ashamed.”

⁷⁻⁸This Stone is so precious to you, but not to those who do not believe in Jesus. This Stone that the builders rejected became the Keystone; so to those who do not believe, “He is a Stone that causes men to stumble and a Rock that makes them fall.” It is because they disobey the message given them that they stumble, and so are destined for the condemnation that is inevitable for those who reject their means of salvation.

A chosen people (2:9-12)

⁹By contrast, see what you have become, people chosen by God Himself. You are a royal priesthood because you offer your lives in sacrifice as those who live in the King. You are a holy nation, not a nation with geographical boundaries but a people set apart for God, a people who truly belong to Him.

Why has God done all this for you? So that you can declare with your mouths and by the way you live, the praises of this wonderful God who called you out of darkness and has brought you into His wonderful light.

¹⁰There was a time when you did not belong to these people who form God’s Kingdom on earth; but now each of you is one of God’s people. Before you did not experience His mercy; but now you are who you are because of that mercy.

¹¹So I implore you, my dear friends, because you are strangers and do not belong to this world, refuse to yield to any sinful desires that will only fight against the well-being of your souls. ¹²Give such an example to the ungodly among whom you live, that they will see God’s goodness in your lives, even when they bring all manner of false accusations against you. For your example will help them to embrace the glory of God that is to be revealed when Christ returns.

Set a good example (2:13-25)

¹³⁻¹⁴Set a good example by having a submissive attitude to all those in authority over you. You are to do this for the Lord’s sake, whether you have to submit to the king or the president as the supreme

2:6 *Isaiah 28:16*

2:8 *Isaiah 8:14*

authority, or to those who govern you. For God creates order so that those who do wrong are punished and those who do right are commended.

¹⁵God's purpose is that you silence those who speak as fools in ignorance of the truth; that you silence them by the example of goodness that you set. ¹⁶This is true freedom, to live obediently in ways that please the Lord. But do not use the freedom He has given you as a front for evil. Live as true servants of God, who show proper respect to everyone.

¹⁷Of course, you are to love all your fellow believers. But you also are to live in fear of God, in reverent awe of Him and submission to His will. And you are to honour the secular authorities.

¹⁸In the workplace, then, have a good, humble and submissive attitude towards those to whom you are accountable. Treat your bosses with respect, not only those who are considerate and treat you well, but even those who are hard task masters. ¹⁹You will be commended for maintaining a positive witness in the face of those who deal unjustly with you, because you want to glorify God who is present with you in every situation.

²⁰There is no credit in being punished for doing what is wrong. But if you suffer unjustly and even endure that for a time, God will commend you for this. ²¹In fact, this is the life to which you have been called, that reflects the way Christ suffered for you. He has set you an example that you are to follow, for you are to walk in His steps!

²²"He never sinned. Neither did He ever deceive by what He said." ²³So when Christ was insulted, instead of retaliating He remained silent. When He suffered He issued no threats; instead He placed Himself in God's hands, knowing that He always deals justly with everyone. ²⁴This is He who took all our sins upon Himself when He hung on the cross, so that now we might die to a life of sin and live in ways that are right and pleasing to God. It is through His wounds that we are healed and set free completely.

²⁵You used to wander around like lost sheep, but now you have turned to the one who is your Shepherd, who oversees your souls because of His concern for your welfare.

Instruction to wives (3:1-6)

3 Wives, let Christ's example show you how you are to have a right submissive attitude to your husbands. Those who do not believe will not be convinced by their wives' words, but by their

change in behaviour. ²They will need to see the purity of their hearts and lives and the respect they have for their husbands.

³Your true beauty, wives, will not come from wearing expensive clothes, nor the way you braid your hair, nor from the cost of the jewellery you wear. ⁴From deep within your spirit, your inner self, should come the beauty that can never fade with time, that of a gentle and quiet spirit that is so precious in God's sight.

⁵In the past this is how holy women showed that they placed their hope in God. To them this was real beauty, to have a beautiful spirit before God. As part of this, they were submissive to their husbands. ⁶For example, Sarah obeyed Abraham and even called him her master. You will be as Sarah's daughters if you live in right ways that please the Lord and walk by faith, not fear.

Instruction to husbands (3:7)

⁷Husbands, in the same way you are to show proper consideration for your wives by the way you behave. You are to treat them with proper respect as the weaker partner for whom you truly care. Together you have inherited the great gift of life, and you do not want any wrong attitudes towards your wives to hinder the effectiveness of your prayers.

Instruction to all believers (3:8-12)

⁸Finally, a word to all of you: Live together in the church in true harmony with one another. Be sympathetic towards those who are troubled. Love each other as brothers in the same family. Always be merciful and compassionate. And be humble! ⁹Never retaliate in a wrong way when others wrong you. Do not insult others, even if they insult you. Instead of reacting negatively to others, bless them, because this is what God has called you to do. And if you bless others, you will yourselves be blessed. ¹⁰For it is written:

“Anyone who desires a life full of love and goodness should refrain from speaking evil of others or in ways that will deceive them.

¹¹⁻¹²Instead, he must turn away from all that is evil and devote himself to doing what is good and right. He must always endeavour to live at peace with others, for the Lord watches over those who live in right ways and He listens attentively to their prayers; but He turns away from evil doers.”

Suffering for doing right (3:13-22)

¹³If your aim is always to do good, how are you going to come to any harm? ¹⁴Even if you have to suffer for doing what is right, you will be blessed. You know the saying: "Do not fear what others fear, neither be frightened." ¹⁵Instead, Christ is to be Lord in your hearts!

Of course, you must always be ready to answer those who question why you have this hope that is expressed in these positive attitudes. But do not answer in an aggressive manner, but with gentleness and respect. ¹⁶If your conscience is clear you will not be troubled by those who speak critically of your behaviour when you reveal Christ's will. Instead, they will be put to shame for the ways they have slandered you.

¹⁷If this is God's will, it is better to suffer for doing what is right rather than for what is wrong. This is the way Christ suffered. He did not deserve to die, but He has died for the sin of others. ¹⁸⁻²⁰He only needed to make the sacrifice once, for all time and on behalf of all sinners. He was the Righteous One giving His life for the unrighteous in order to bring you into right relationship with God. His body was put to death but God's Spirit brought Him back to life, enabling Him to go and preach to the spirits of those in prison through their disobedience. God had waited patiently for their repentance at the time Noah was building the ark; but only eight people were saved from the flood. ²¹⁻²²This water is a symbol of baptism by which you are now also saved.

Your water baptism did not signify that your body was being washed, but that you were promising to live in ways pleasing to God. You were saved because in His resurrection Jesus Christ overcame death and has now ascended into heaven where He reigns at God's right hand, together with the angels, authorities and powers that are in submission to Him.

Live for God (4:1-19)

4 Because Christ suffered in His body, you must be prepared to do likewise, demonstrating that you have turned away from a life of sin. ²Such a person demonstrates that he does not live the rest of his earthly life to please himself, but to fulfil God's will.

³In your past life you spent enough time doing what unbelievers do, living in debauchery, lust and drunkenness, taking part in orgies, living in ungodliness and worshipping idols. ⁴Those who belong to the world find it strange that you do not want to share in

their immoral behaviour and they even abuse you as a result. ⁵However, they will be called to account by He who will judge the living and the dead.

⁶This was why Jesus went to preach the gospel to those who had already died. They were under judgment for the way they had lived in their bodies, but were given opportunity to turn to God in the spirit realm.

⁷The end of all things is drawing near. Therefore, you need to think clearly and be self-controlled in the way you live, for then you can pray effectively. ⁸It is most important for you to love one another deeply because that love covers a multitude of sins.

⁹Have open house for one another without complaining about the way this can inconvenience you. ¹⁰And every person should use the gifts God has given him to serve others, faithfully showing them His grace in a whole variety of ways.

¹¹When you are called upon to speak, do so with God's enabling, desiring Him to be present in all you do through Jesus Christ who lives in you. To Him belongs the glory and the power for all eternity. Amen! It shall be so!

¹²My dear friends, it is not surprising that you have to suffer painful trials at times; it is not that something strange or unexpected is happening to you when you do so. ¹³Rather rejoice that you are participating in suffering for Christ, so that you will participate in the great joy there will be when He is revealed in glory!

¹⁴You are blessed if you are insulted for the Name of Christ. Remember, God's Spirit and His glory remain upon you. ¹⁵Of course, you should not suffer for the wrong reasons, because you are a murderer, a thief, some kind of criminal or just a busybody. ¹⁶But there is nothing of which to be ashamed if you suffer because you are a Christian. You should praise God for the privilege, even if sometimes it is costly!

¹⁷You see, this is a time of judgment and it has begun among God's own people, His family. But what we experience is as nothing compared with the judgment that will come on those who do not obey God's gospel. ¹⁸For it is written: "If it is difficult for godly people to be saved, what will the outcome be for the ungodly and the sinner?"

¹⁹Therefore, those who suffer through obeying God's will should place themselves in the hands of this faithful Creator and continue to walk in ways that please Him.

Instruction to leaders (5:1-4)

5 ¹⁻²I appeal to my fellow elders among you, as one who witnessed Christ's sufferings and will also share in His glory that is to be revealed: Be good shepherds of God's sheep, those He places under your care. Serve them as those called to oversee their lives. Do this not as a duty but because you really want to fulfil God's purpose for you. Be eager to serve the people and do not be concerned about the financial rewards. You serve out of love for the people, not love of money!

³You are not to be authoritarian in your attitudes, suppressing those God has entrusted to you. Rather, you are to be examples to the flock as to how to please God. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd returns you will receive your reward, the eternal crown of His glory.

Instruction to younger men (5:5-11)

⁵The young men among you must be submissive to those who are older. All of you are to clothe yourselves with humility towards each other because, "God opposes proud people, but gives His grace freely to the humble."

⁶All of you are to humble yourselves under God's mighty hand of authority, so that in His time He will lift you up to be with Him. ⁷Because He is so concerned about you, He wants you to lay all your problems, troubles and anxieties on Him.

⁸Keep firm control of yourselves so that you do not live to please your natural, sinful desires. And be constantly aware that your enemy the devil is always prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for those he can devour. ⁹Resist him firmly because your faith gives you the power to do so. Your brothers in other parts of the world are experiencing the same kinds of trials that you have to face.

¹⁰However, God pours all His grace upon you because He has called you to know His glory eternally through your unity with Christ. Yes, you will have to suffer and face the cost of obedience to Him first; but He Himself will restore and keep you strong, firm in your faith and steadfast in your obedience. ¹¹To Him alone belongs power for all eternity. Amen! It shall be so!

Final Greeting (5:12)

¹²I have only written to you briefly with the help of my dear and faithful brother, Silas. My purpose has been to encourage you and

to remind you of the grace that God has truly given you to enable you to stand firm in the face of all adversity and opposition.

¹³The sister who lives in Rome, this 'Babylon', who like you has been chosen to belong to Christ, sends her greetings, as does my son, Mark. Greet one another in the love of Christ. And may His peace be imparted to all of you who are one with Him.