

**I PETER 1:1-2**  
**INTRODUCTION TO I PETER!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Peter chapter 1 as we begin an in-depth study of I Peter.

Now let me say this. I do understand that there is a lot on prophecy and what is going to happen in the future here in I Peter and a lot more in II Peter.

That is obviously important for us to understand so that we are aware of the things that are going on.

But there is much more to this letter that Peter wrote than just prophecy. In fact, it deals with the persecution we face, that we are to be a holy people, that we are to love one another, that we are to grow in the Lord as we take in His Word, that we are to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against our soul, that we are to submit to those in authority over us, that we are to submit ourselves at work, we are to submit ourselves in marriage, how we are to conduct ourselves as suffering comes our way looking at the example of Jesus in suffering – how He handled it, how pastors are to shepherd the flock that God has entrusted to them, that we are to humble ourselves and much more much more!

In other words, this is how we are to live in a world that is at war with God and His people, you and me!

Listen to what Peter tells us in I Peter 2:9-12, **“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”**

As we study this letter that Peter wrote I believe the Holy Spirit is guiding us because I don't think we dig into a study apart from the Holy Spirit leading us. I believe that with every book of the Bible we study. That we are in that book at the right time for each of us, that these are the things that we need to hear and apply to our lives!

Why I Peter?

As I have said, Peter is showing us how to walk now that we have come to saving faith!

But not only that. I believe the Lord wants to give us hope, comfort as well as instructions on how we are to live out our faith even during the most difficult of times and I guess I should say, in spite of the difficult times we are facing!

Warren Wiersbe put it like this,

***“While there's life, there's hope!”***

That ancient Roman saying is still quoted today, and, like most adages, it has an element of truth but no guarantee of certainty.

It is not the fact of life that determines hope, but the faith of life.

A Christian believer has a *“living hope”* (1 Peter 1:3, NASB) because his faith and hope are in God (1 Peter 1:21).

This *“living hope”* is the major theme of Peter’s first letter. He is saying to all believers, *“Be hopeful!”*

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, p. 892

I like that and how important it is for us to understand these things because, if we don’t, we are going to live our Christian life in a way that will not shine the light of Jesus but will mimic the actions and words of this world, which truly has no hope apart from Christ.

Several weeks back, after the abomination of the opening ceremony at the Olympics in Paris, I posted on Facebook how their portrayal of the Last Supper was a slam against Christ and Christians all over the world. I did not say anything more than that except that if they slammed Islam like they did Christianity, there would have been a holy war against France!

And some of my family jumped on that and said all kinds of wild things, called me names. I just put what I believe, I did not call anyone out except the officials that put on this abomination!

And as the name calling went on, my last post was that when you don’t have a point to make about what you believe, you end up calling people names!

It is interesting because one of my relatives said, *“Joe Guglielmo love how you are completely missing my point to try to make yourself feel better that your life choices bully others which is far from Christian. I believe that is called Gaslighting which your Lord in Savior Donald Trump excels at.”*

*Personally, I always viewed the Last Supper as a big gay orgy which is most definitely the best way to spend an evening before you are about to be nailed to a cross the next day. . . .*

*So you see, you can't scare me from your FB or your pulpit, I'm an equal opportunity offender and pro "sin" flaunter.*

*And I am almost positive that burning in hell would be a lot more fun than the pearly gates of heaven but since they both don't exist and we just become worm food, I'll take "Sin" any day and every day.*

*Because at the end of the day the word "Sin" was written in an outdated book by a bunch of people wanting to control others. . . ."*

Again, I said nothing about sin, nothing about Donald Trump, I did not bully her, but I truly believe the conviction of God was upon her and she is fighting back. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit would soften her heart and she would come to saving grace.

It is as Peter wrote in I Peter 3:14-17, **"But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.' But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil."**

We are in a battle, and we don't fight with physical weapons, but spiritual weapons. And we need to be ready, we need to prepare to give a defense to everyone who asks the reason for the hope that is in us!

And let me also say this. It is not about us or what people may say or do to us. It is about them and their relationship with the Lord that they need to come to saving grace. So if we do suffer, may it be because of the good we are doing and not evil!

Now here is the perspective we are to have. We have Jesus in our lives and thus, we should shout for joy because of that. We looked at this joy in the Lord as we studied through Paul's letter to the church in Philippi!

And yes, it is not easy, but again, if it was easy, we would not need Jesus. But let's face it, with the things that are going on today, we can't do it on our own, at least not with the joy of the Lord flowing from our lives!

And in our study of I Peter we are going to embark on an adventure of encouragement, hope in the day's we are living in.

Now let me say this. I don't want to offend anyone, but Peter was not the first Pope, nor was he the head of the church in Rome!

In fact, we never see Peter mention himself as the apostle to the Gentiles.

Yes, Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Regiment was a Gentile and God called Peter to witness to him, his family and friends, and they got saved. (Acts 10)

The door to the Gentiles was opened up through Peter, but that was until Paul came on the scene and Paul becomes the apostle to the Gentiles.

We see this in Romans 11:13-15, "**For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?**"

Paul loved his brethren; the Jews and he saw the door close to them and he saw his ministry with the Gentiles!

Peter is not spoken of much anymore, not that he was not serving the Lord, but the focus now is upon the Gentiles getting saved!

In Galatians 2:7 we are told, **“But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter.”**

Paul specifically tells us here that he was the apostle to the Gentiles and Peter was the apostle to the Jewish people!

I know that may be shocking to some, but probably not. To most if not all of you, this is not shocking!

Keep in mind that it is likely that the church at Rome had been founded by a group of Jewish Christians who came there from Judea.

We see this played out for us in Acts 2:5-11 where we are told, **“And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, ‘Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs - we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.”**

They were there for Pentecost, and they saw all these mighty things of God, they most likely heard Peter's powerful message, and they got saved.

They may have remained in Jerusalem for a time learning about the Lord but eventually they went back to their hometowns, those who were also from Rome, and brought the Gospel message with them!

From what we can gather, Peter never went to Rome until he was arrested for preaching the Gospel and he was sent there to face trial and then his execution by the Roman government!

In knowing that you can see that Peter is not speaking from some ivory tower or just speaking forth without any knowledge or experience of persecution. He understood what it was all about, and he is encouraging others who are experiencing these things.

You see, Peter wrote this letter to a group of Christians who were being persecuted for their faith and that persecution was only going to get more intense under Caesar Nero.

And, as we are going to see in the study of this letter that Peter's exhortation is two-fold.

First of all, he wants them to have a *steadfast endurance* during this time and to *live a life of commendable behavior* in spite of what they were facing.

Now persecution should be no surprise to us as Christians and yet it does often catch us by surprise.

This is especially true in America where we want to grow in the Lord and yet we don't want any difficult times, we just want an easy road and then be taken to glory.

But remember what Jesus said in Matthew 10:24-25, "**A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!**"

We grow through those difficult times!

And keep in mind that ever since the birth of the church on the day of Pentecost, it has been persecuted.

But now it is not just by the Jews or local communities, Rome is coming down hard against them.

But why did this happen?

Why was Rome so hard against Christians?

What occurred that brought this on?

Remember Paul's first imprisonment in Rome as he appealed to have his case brought before Caesar?

Paul was under house arrest, chained to Roman soldiers 24 hours a day seven days a week, and when that day came, as he appeared before Caesar, I believe he gave a powerful witness of Christ that left this leader to either accept the truth of Christ that was presented to him or to reject the truth.

He ended up rejecting the truth and since Paul committed no crime, he was released for a time. This was around 62 A. D.

Many believe Peter arrived in Rome sometime in the year A.D. 62 - a year or so after Paul was released after his first imprisonment there.

Who was Caesar at this time?

It was none other than Nero, who started out not too bad of a guy. Let me be clear on that, he was never a real good guy, but after this rejection of Christ, things began to change and Nero either went insane or was demon possessed or both!

His actions were that of a madman as he began to persecute Christians.



Then, on July 19, 64 A. D. Nero had his men burn some of the old buildings in Rome and the fire got out of control and burned for six days and six nights.

He basically wanted to burn some of the old buildings to build new ones but like I said, it got out of control and the people were not happy and rumors started to spread that Nero had done this.

To help deflect the blame of this disaster from himself, Nero blamed the Christians for burning Rome, and they were the perfect scapegoat!

Of this the Roman historian Tacitus wrote, ***“But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor and the propitiations of the gods did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration [fire] was the result of an order by Nero. Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most tortures on a class hated for the abominations, called Christians by the populace.”***

Like I have said, Peter arrived in Rome sometime in the year 62 A. D., after Paul was released from his first imprisonment there.

That would place the writing of I and II Peter around 63 and 64 A. D.

And Peter was put to death for his faith shortly thereafter, around 64 A. D.

And so this was a time of great persecution against Christians, things were heating up against Christians!

And again, Nero was a crazy man. He would burn Christians at the stake; he would place them in animal skins and then let out the lions to eat them.

It is said that he put Christians on poles and lit them on fire and rode naked in his chariot past them as they burned to death!

That is not normal, obviously!

Now please keep in mind that Nero died in 68 A. D. so that would mean that both Peter and Paul had to be put to death before that time.

Thus, Nero martyred Peter probably in 64 A. D. or so, as I have said.

Also, Nero wanted to crucify Peter, but Peter felt that he could not die as His Lord and Savior did, so he was martyred for his faith upside down on a cross!

Jesus spoke of this before he ascended up into heaven in John 21:18-19 as He said, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.’ This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’”**

Paul was also rearrested, and Nero had him beheaded for his faith in around 66 A. D.

It does seem that at the end of his life Peter was in Rome but not when Paul wrote Romans from Corinth, because he does not mention Peter’s name.

And not during Paul’s first imprisonment.

Now I do believe Peter wrote this letter from Rome.

Why do I believe that?

Listen to what Peter says as he concludes this letter. We are told in I Peter 5:13, **“She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.”**

Now some see Babylon as the ancient city of Babylon, but I don’t think that is what Peter is saying here.

Keep in mind that Rome is persecuting Christians, and that persecution is growing. Thus, if Peter wrote from Rome, which I believe he did, he didn't want any further trouble with Rome, so he speaks of Rome as being Babylon, a cryptic name for Rome, which was wicked, immoral and full of idolatry!

Like all the letters of the New Testament, there are those that reject what the historical record says is the author, they reject Peter as being the author of this letter.

Folks, the early church never doubted who wrote this letter, they believed it was Peter.

First century believers like Ignatius taught that Peter wrote this letter.

In the second century we have men like Polycarp, Justin Martyr who believed it was Peter.

In the third century we have men like Irenaeus, Tertullian and Clement said it was Peter.

In fact, we have this writing from the fourth century by church historian Eusebius of Caesarea and he wrote, ***“As to the writings of Peter, one of his epistles called the first is acknowledged as genuine. For this was anciently used by the ancient fathers in their writings, as an undoubted work of the apostle.”*** (Ecclesiastical History 3.3).

One of the problems that critics have is the Greek writing of this letter; they don't believe that a Galilean fisherman could have enough grasp of the Greek language to write like that.

First of all, that is like saying the good old country boy can't read or write, why?

Because he is a good old country boy!

That is foolish thinking!

There is no reason to believe that Peter was not educated just because he was a fisherman from Galilee.

Secondly, in Acts 4:13, as two fishermen, Peter and John appeared before the Sanhedrin for their faith in Christ, we are told, **“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.”**

The Living Bible puts this verse like this, **“When the Council saw the boldness of Peter and John and could see that they were obviously uneducated non-professionals, they were amazed and realized what being with Jesus had done for them!”**

You see, by the power of the Holy Spirit working in their lives, by being with Jesus, it blew these religious leaders away because they spoke in a powerful way.

That same power is available to us today if we spend time with Jesus!

Also, in II Peter 3:1 we are told, **“Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder).”**

In other words, Peter speaks of this first epistle – that he wrote it.

I think it is plain enough for us to understand, Peter wrote this letter and to deny it would be contrary to what the Scriptures are saying, what the facts are.

In the days we are living in, many Christians are troubled, worried, anxious about all that is going on.

Let me say this, the Church of Jesus Christ today is no different than the Church of Jesus Christ in the first century!

What do I mean by that?

I mean that persecution was there when the church got started and it has continued on through church history.

One writer put it like this. He wrote,

Throughout the nearly two millennia of its existence, the church of Jesus Christ has been no stranger to suffering. The clash of truth with error, of the kingdom of light with the kingdom of darkness, and of the children of God with the children of the devil inevitably results in severe conflict.

Opposition, rejection, ostracism, scorn, contempt, persecution, even martyrdom have been the lot of believers through the centuries. That the evil world system vents its fury on the church should surprise no one, for that is how it treated the Lord Jesus Christ.

Describing the persecution His followers would experience, Jesus pointed out the axiomatic truth, ***“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!”*** (Matt 10:24-25).

Centuries before His birth, Isaiah predicted that Christ would be ***“despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”*** (Isa 53:3).

The apostle John noted His rejection by the sinful world: ***“He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him”*** (John 1:10-11).

Jesus plainly told the disciples that He was going to suffer and be killed. Matt 16:21 records that ***“Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day”*** (cf. 17:12; Mark 8:31; 9:12; Luke 9:22; 17:25; 22:15; 24:26,46; Acts 1:3; 3:18; 17:3; 26:23; Heb 2:10,18; 5:8; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:11; 2:21,23; 4:1; 5:1).

Unable to attack Jesus after His ascension, the enemies of the truth assaulted His followers.

- John MacArthur, I Peter Introduction

We see this played out for us in Acts 4:1-4 where we are told, **“Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”**

Keep in mind that the church started in Jerusalem and for many, they just remained in Jerusalem until the persecution was trying to stomp them out!

But, instead of stomping them out, like burning embers in a fire, when the foot of persecution came down hard upon them, it spread those embers, the Gospel message to Judea, Samaria and ultimately to the ends of the earth! (Acts 1:8)

Now, if you want to sum up this letter, it can be as simple as this – ***WHERE THERE’S CHRIST, THERE’S HOPE!***

I think that is so important for us to understand, especially in the days we are living in where we see people coming against the things of God and are hostile to those who are following Jesus Christ.

And I believe it will only get worse in this country because man does not want to go to the light of Christ because they love the darkness more, they love their wickedness!

But, like I have said, ***WHERE THERE'S CHRIST, THERE'S HOPE!***

Make no mistake about it, He will see us through life's most difficult situations. Let me share this with you and then I will give you the outline for I Peter.

We are told,

Life is difficult. But this harsh truth has not always been understood by those following Jesus Christ. Many Christians today have trouble sorting out the complexity of their identity and calling in Christ. They were reared to believe that a Christian should only experience the joys of being one of God's elect. They have been taught nothing of our exilic state.

With these three simple words in the opening of this letter, Peter gives us the biblical corrective – a profound clue for finding life's true horizon. We are the ***“elect exiles of the dispersion”*** (1:1). . . .

Throughout the Scriptures, the way up comes by going down; restoration comes after trials (5:10). It is this inversion in attaining glory that marks Peter's theme throughout this letter.

Christians' future inheritance and exaltation – our eternal share in the glory of Christ – will be awarded to us on the day of his appearing (1:13; 2:12; 4:13; 5:1, 4, 10).

But that promised day only comes ***after*** this brief season of present-day sufferings. For suffering always precedes subsequent glories. As it was for God's Son, so it will be for all of us who are in him.

This bringing together of two seemingly incompatible truths – our status in Christ and ***our*** sufferings on earth – is how Peter's letter begins (1:1, 2).

And in the body of the letter these incompatible ideas are continually joined to one another.

And, as we will see, these things are spoken of and then Peter shares how we are to live or endure these trials, these persecutions that come upon our life.

Faith and work come together to show that our faith is real!

Now, I want to give you a quick outline of I Peter before we get to our text this evening.

### **THE LETTER OF I PETER – OUTLINE**

1. ***THE SALVATION OF THE BELIEVER*** – I PETER 1:1-2:12

A. SALVATION – I PETER 1:1-12

B. SANCTIFICATION – I PETER 1:13-2:12

2. ***THE SUBMISSION OF THE BELIEVER*** – I PETER 2:13-3:12

3. ***THE SUFFERING OF THE BELIEVER*** – I PETER 3:13-5:14

A. HOW WE CONDUCT OURSELVES IN SUFFERING – I PETER 3:13-17

B. CHRIST, OUR EXAMPLE IN SUFFERING – I PETER 3:18-4:6

C. GOD’S COMMANDS TO US IN SUFFERING – I PETER 4:7-19

D. HOW WE ARE TO MINISTER IN SUFFERING – I PETER 5:1-14

Thus, in these three points we see **HOLINESS** in our salvation and sanctification.

We see **HARMONY** as we submit our lives in all walks of life – to those in government, business, marriage, family life and so on.

And lastly, we see **HUMILITY** as we humble ourselves as we suffer for Christ.

One writer put it like this. He wrote, ***“Peter wanted his readers to live triumphantly in the midst of hostility without abandoning hope, becoming bitter, losing faith in Christ, or forgetting His second coming. When they are obedient to God’s Word despite the world’s antagonism, Christians’ lives will testify to the truth of the gospel.”*** (John MacArthur)



This morning we will be looking at an - ***INTRODUCTION TO I PETER!***

And I have broken down the verses we will be looking at into these two main points.

They are,

***WRITTEN TO – I PETER 1:1***

***THE TRINITY – I PETER 1:2***

So, with that as our introduction to this letter, let's begin reading in I Peter chapter 1, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word and we see this glorious and encouraging truth come forward – ***WHERE THERE'S CHRIST, THERE'S HOPE!***

## **I PETER 1**

### VERSE 1

I am not sure why there is confusion about who wrote this letter, because we are told. In fact, it was given to us in the opening of this letter that we were told. Thus, we don't have to guess who wrote this.

Listen again to what we are told, and you tell me who wrote this letter. We are told, **“Peter, and apostle of Jesus Christ”** and that makes it very easy. And as we have seen, the early church supported that fact.

Keep in mind that the name **“Peter”** is ***PETROS*** in the Greek. His name means ***“a stone”*** and it was a name that was given to him by Jesus.

Remember that his birth name was ***“Simon”*** and that means ***“Shifting sand.”***

We also see in the Scriptures that he was called “*Cephas*” which is an Aramaic name, and it too means “*Stone*.”

In saying that, some still believe that Peter was the head of the Church in Rome and thus, the first Pope!

To make their point, they will go to Matthew 16:13-18, and they say that these verses show that Peter was the first People!

In that portion of Scripture we are told, **“When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, ‘Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?’ So they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.’”**

Because of what Jesus said, that the church is going to be built upon “**this rock**” the Roman Catholic Church believes that the Church is built upon Peter, the first Pope!

First of all, Peter was never a Pope!

I believe the Scriptures teach that the Church is built upon the proclamation made by Peter, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

You see, the Church is built upon Jesus Christ and the fact that He is Almighty God, He builds the Church, there is no man who can build His Church and I will show you why I believe this to be true.

Remember that the name “**Peter**” in the Greek is *PETROS* or a small stone.

The Greek word for “**Rock**” is *PETRA* or a massive stone!

That is what Jesus is saying here that the Church is not to be built upon a small stone; no man can build His Church. The Church is to be built upon the *ROCK*, upon Jesus Christ!

Do we really need a Church to be built upon a man, the world is filled with that and look at how that is working out!

I do realize that may not be enough for you so let me share a few more things.

Who is Jesus speaking to?

His disciples and they are Jewish, keep that in mind.

As you look throughout the Scriptures, when the word “**rock**” is used in a figurative sense, it is never used of man; it is always speaking of God!

That is important. Jesus does not change that here.

Thus, what Jesus is saying is that “*Upon God Himself – upon Jesus, the Son of the Living God – I will build my Church.*”

Now for those that think that Peter started the church, and he was the first Pope, that is not what the Scriptures teach. Peter never spoke of himself as the foundation of the church, the rock that the church was built upon.

How can I say that?

It is easy. In Acts 4:11-12 we are told, “**This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**”

Peter did not call himself this supporting stone, but he is speaking of Jesus!

Now because the Church is built upon God and not man, we are told that “**the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.**”

In other words, no matter what Satan and his demons do, they will not overcome the Church; it will stand no matter who is against it.

That should comfort us in the days we are living in because there is much that is coming against the Church, false doctrine and the like, but the faithful will be made strong by the Lord and the gates of Hades will not overcome it!

We also see that Peter tells us that his calling by God is to be an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Peter was an important leader in the church and thus, placing his name on this letter would mean a lot to his readers.

Now folks, in saying that Peter was an apostle he is not alone.

You see, when you think about it, in the broadest sense of this word, we are all apostles.

The word “**apostle**” means one who is sent out or an ambassador.

Now we are not part of the apostles in the sense we were part of the 12 men God chose, but we are ambassadors for Christ.

That is exactly what Paul tells us in II Corinthians 5:18-20, “**Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.**”

An ambassador is a representative of a country who goes to other countries and speaks forth what his president wants him to say.

That is us. Jesus, our Leader, has sent us into the world to share the Gospel message and we don’t promote ourselves or our ideas, but His!

You see, we represent Christ to a world lost in sin and thus, may we do so in such a way that we point people to Jesus Christ who is the Giver and Sustainer of life!

Peter also tells us who he is writing to. Peter tells us that he is writing to pilgrims who have been dispersed, a term used of Jewish believers.

Now Peter was probably writing to Gentiles but like the Jews who were dispersed for their faith in Jesus, these Gentiles were spread out also. (I Peter 1:18, 2:10, 4:3).

Now these cities that this letter was going to are five cities located in Asia Minor or modern-day Turkey.

Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia are places that Christianity spread during the years where the church was dispersed because of persecution, from Jerusalem, to Judea, Samaria and ultimately to the ends of the earth!

And this probably was the route that this letter was distributed. Keep in mind that it was not written to any one congregation but really to all Christians!

And we see here that Peter calls them “**pilgrims**” and not a John Wayne western!

This word speaks of someone who has settled in a foreign land temporarily and is living alongside a group of people from which they don't belong to.

Isn't that exactly what the Bible says about us as Christians? You bet it is.

You see, we are no longer of this world, our citizenship is in heaven, (Philippians 3:20), and we are just passing through on our journey home.

In I Peter 2:11 we are told, “**Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.**”

The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“Beloved, I implore you as aliens and strangers and exiles [in this world] to abstain from the sensual urges (the evil desires, the passions of the flesh, your lower nature) that wage war against the soul.”**

The Living Bible says, **“Dear brothers, you are only visitors here. Since your real home is in heaven, I beg you to keep away from the evil pleasures of this world; they are not for you, for they fight against your very souls.”**

In other words, don't live like the world because you are not born of this world anymore.

You are a child of God as Paul said in II Corinthians 5:17, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”**

We are in this world ministering the love of Jesus Christ to the lost, but we are no longer of this world, this world is no longer in us, Jesus is! At least that is the way it should be, but sometimes we do allow the world into our lives and if we allow too much of the world in us, like too much water in a boat, we will be sunk!

As we read on, we will see Peter speak of – ***THE TRINITY!***

What is that all about?

Let's read on and see!

## VERSE 2

Keep in mind that Peter is speaking specifically here in I Peter 1:1-12 about our – ***SALVATION!***

And as much as some like to deny this fact, Peter shows us how the Holy Trinity is involved in our salvation. I don't understand how, but many, like I have said, deny the Triunity of God, and we will see they are wrong!

He starts out with our election or how God the Father chose us out of His grace for the Kingdom.

He said, “... according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. . .”

Now please understand that this word, “foreknowledge” in the Greek speaks of “*knowledge known in advance.*”

In other words, God knows all things before they happen, He knows the beginning from the end of all things. And thus, He knows who is going to be saved and who is not going to be saved.

Now some come to the conclusion, like the five-point Calvinist, that God has predestined some for heaven and some for hell and you have no choice in the matter.

In other words, if you want to be saved and yet God does not predestine you, then there is nothing you can do to change that. That means you are headed for Hell, and you can't do anything about it!

Also, if you are predestined to be saved and yet you don't want to be, there is nothing you can do to change that, you are in.

That is foolish. It is a choice that we make. This is not a shot-gun wedding!

In Joshua 24:15 we see this played out for us that you have a choice to make. It is not made for you. We are told, **“And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”**

I think that is very clear!

In fact, in II Peter 3:9 we are told, **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”**

God’s desire is that all should be saved.

Then why aren’t they?

Because of our free will, we have a choice to enter in or reject what God is showing us.

Adam and Eve had a choice in the Garden of Eden to make. To obey God or to disobey God and eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They disobeyed because it was their choice. Did God know what they were going to do? Absolutely because He knows all things, but He did not make them do that!

It is a choice and if we enter in, we are predestined and if we reject Jesus, then we are not!

It is as Jesus said in 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.”**

The call is for you to open the door of your heart and let Jesus in – it is a choice!



In Matthew 11:28-30 we are told, **“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”**

And in Isaiah 1:18, **“‘Come now, and let us reason together,’ Says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.’”**

It is an invitation!

And that invitation is open to all, as Jesus said in John 3:16-17, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”**

I think that is pretty simple and yet, there are Calvinist who believe that the word **“world”** is only speaking of those who will be saved. In other words, *“For God so loved those who He was going to save that He gave His only begotten Son . . .”*

Let me be clear on this, that is not what Jesus was saying when He used that word. He meant anyone and everyone can come to saving faith by believing in Him! The door is open for them to come, and then they must come!

Think of it like this. *“On the door to heaven, from our side, it says, ‘Whosoever will, may enter. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved.’ Any man, that means you and that means me! You can come in and find pasture and find life. When you get on the other side of the door someday in heaven, you’re going to look back, and on the other side of that door you will find written, ‘Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.’”*

Secondly, it is the sanctification of God the Holy Spirit working in our lives to perfect us, to make us like Him.

In II Thessalonians 2:13-14 we are told, **“But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Many don't even believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity, they don't believe He is real!

Then how are they living out their Christian faith, by their own efforts, their own power?

And how is that working out?

It isn't and thus, as Zechariah 4:6 tells us, **“... ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, Says the Lord of hosts.’”**

I think that is very clear. We need the Holy Spirit to help us live as God has called us to live – the sanctification process!

And then there is the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all our sins, it makes us as white as snow.

In I John 3:5 we are told, **“And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.”**

And in the last part of Revelation 1:5 we are told, **“... To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”**

Now, in sharing those three points, do you see how the Holy Trinity is actively involved in our lives?

Yes, the word ***“Trinity”*** is not found in the Scriptures, but it doesn’t have to be. The Scriptures speak for themselves that there is one God manifested in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

We see an example of this in Matthew 3:16-17 as Jesus was being baptized in the Jordan River and we are told, **“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”**

That tells me that the argument that the word ***“Trinity”*** is not used in the Bible is an empty argument.

You see, there are many biblical concepts that people believe in that don’t have a specific word describing them used in the Bible.

For example, the word ***“Bible”*** is not found in the Bible, but we use it anyway to describe the Bible.

Likewise, ***“omniscience”*** which means ***“all-knowing,”*** ***“omnipotence”*** which means ***“all-powerful,”*** and ***“omnipresence”*** which means ***“present everywhere,”*** are words not found in the Bible either, but we use them to describe the attributes of God.

We don’t have to see a specific word in the Bible in order for the concept it describes to be true.

And make no mistake about it, the concept is seen throughout the Scriptures, from the Old Testament on into the New Testament!

And then Peter says, **“Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”** Like Paul, Peter speaks of the Siamese Twins of the New Testament, Grace and Peace.

And as I have said before, you will never experience the peace **OF** God until you first make peace **WITH** God through Jesus Christ.

Paul spoke of this in Romans 5:1-2, **“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”**

I like the way that James Denney sums it up. He says, ***“Grace is the first and the last word of the Gospel; and peace – perfect spiritual soundness – is the finished work of grace.”***

You see, when you realize that the work was finished by Christ and is based upon His faithfulness and not yours, when you realize you don’t deserve life, but God freely gives it to you, that weight is lifted off your shoulders, you don’t need to carry it any longer because Jesus will and does!

### ***IT IS FINISHED!***

Kenneth Wuest summarized what Peter is saying about the work that each Person in the Trinity does to save us.

He wrote, ***“We have therefore the three steps taken by the three Persons of the Triune God. God the Father chooses the sinner to salvation. God the Spirit brings the sinner thus chosen to the act of faith. God the Son cleanses him in His precious blood.”***

So we have seen that God saves us and now Peter is going to show us that He not only saves us but He sustains us, we won’t be lost, we can’t lose our salvation, a very hot topic and yet, for me, I am confident in what the Scriptures teach on this subject.

And that is what we will look at in our next study – ***SECURITY IN CHRIST!***