

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

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I. WRITER: * Map *

The author is Simon Peter. He was a fisherman, a native of Bethsaida (on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee). But later, in his adult life, he lived in Capernaum (about 3 miles west of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee). Jesus based His Galilean ministry out of this city.

Peter was a partner in the fishing business with James and John, the sons of Zebedee. He had a wife, and of course then, a mother-in-law, whom Jesus healed. He is first mentioned at John's Baptism (John 1:35-42), having been a convert of John the Baptist. How do we know that?

Acts 1:21,22 - "Where of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us."

In John 1:40-42, we learn his brother Andrew brought him to Christ having discovered Jesus to be the Messiah, he "first findeth his own brother Simon", and "brought him to Jesus". It is clear from the gospels that Peter was energetic, impulsive (especially with his mouth), and bold.

II. AUDIENCE

It is written to churches in Asia Minor - Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythinia. "Strangers" and "pilgrims" here on this earth but could refer to both scattered Jewish and Gentile Christians.

III. DATE: 58/59 A.D.

It was written from Babylon. Jews in considerable numbers were still dwelling in that city at the time of Peter's writing. Since we know that the ministry of Peter was primarily to the Jews, it seems logical that he ministered to the Jews where most of them lived, and that would be in Jewish colonies in Asia Minor, and also in Babylon on the Euphrates. However, Babylon by some interpret that to be Rome. Unclear.

IV. NOTES: Introduction (by John Phillips):

"Rome was burned in A.D. 64. Nero was the likely suspect. He accused the Christians of starting the blaze. Nero launched a fearful persecution of the church. The center of the persecution was Rome; but just as fire had spread, so the flames of persecution spread. Both Peter and Paul seem to have perished during this time."

Slide 3 is HIDDEN

Outline of 1 Peter

Introduction (1 Pet 1:1–2)

- I. The Question of Salvation (1 Pet 1:3–8)
 - II. The Question of Scripture (1 Pet 1:9–12)
 - III. The Question of Sanctification (1 Pet 1:13–25)
 - IV. The Question of Separation (1 Pet 2:1–12)
 - V. The Question of Submission (1 Pet 2:13–3:13)
 - VI. The Question of Suffering (1 Pet 3:14–4:19)
 - VII. The Question of Shepherding (1 Pet 5:1–7)
 - VIII. The Question of Satan (1 Pet 5:8–11)
- Conclusion (1 Pet 5:12–14)

Introduction (1:1-2)

1:1 - ¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

The statement of authorship: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ”. At this time in his life, Peter now has suffered much, has seen much, knows what it means to take a stand for Christ, has been arrested, beaten, and put in prison, and realized that crucifixion on a cross awaits him.

Peter is writing to Christians, and he uses the same term as Paul did in Hebrews 11. Strangers means “foreigners”. As Christians, this world is not our home. These mentioned locations are Roman Provinces throughout Asia Minor.

1:2 - ²Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Notice the doctrine of the Trinity is mentioned – God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit.

Peter immediately gets deep into doctrinal teaching in just the second verse. He clarifies who he is writing to: the saved, by using the phrase, “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father”. The word elect means chosen or selected. The word is used simply to differentiate those who believe in Christ from those who do not. It does not imply predestination to be saved or not be saved. God foreknows who will get saved but does not predetermine who will get saved. The Bible is clear that “whosoever will’ may be saved.

I. The Question of Salvation (1:3-8)

1:3 - ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

The word “hope” means “expectation or confidence”. Our hope, which rests upon the resurrection of Christ, is a living (“lively”) hope. We have been born again to a living hope, to an inheritance that is reserved in heaven for us, because our salvation is now kept by the power of God.

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

These two verses are one “proof” text that we cannot lose our salvation. Our salvation (“inheritance”) is “incorruptible”, meaning that it is indestructible; it cannot be damaged in any way. It is also “undefiled”, meaning that it is not stained or dirtied by anything.

“Fadeth not away”, means its value doesn’t diminish with time, it doesn’t change. “Reserved in heaven for you”, meaning it is “guarded”. God is keeping it or guarding it for us. “Who are kept by the power of God”, emphasizes the keeping power of God. It also clarifies our complete dependence upon God. There is no such thing as “holding out faithful unto the end” (as Pentecostals and Charismatics teach): God does the holding.

John 10:28-30 - ²⁸And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. ³⁰I and my Father are one.

Our flesh can’t keep us saved even for one second. The only way we can live the Christian life is by the power of the Holy Spirit. Teaching you can lose your salvation is a works salvation (you do something to keep it). And if you are saved but have been taught you can lose it... it causes a lack of assurance.

1:6 - ⁶Wherein ye greatly rejoice (in our salvation/inheritance), though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations (adversity or trials):

The security of the believer produces joy that sustains us through suffering and trials. “For a season” tells us that the trials will not be long compared with eternity, nor will they be of any significance compared with the glory to come.

Romans 8:18 - For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

“If need be” reveals the truth that sometimes trials are needed for God to accomplish His work in us. God’s way of improving us is through the suffering of trials.

1:7 - ⁷That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

There is a reason for the affliction and trials, that is, the maturing of our faith. The fire of trials purifies our faith just as the fire of the furnace removes the dross and purifies gold. Faith is called "precious". God values it highly and goes to great lengths to mature and purify it in us.

1:8 - ⁸Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Not seeing yet believing is the essence of faith. In receiving Him we can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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II. The Question of Scripture (1:9-12)

1:9-11 - ⁹Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls. ¹⁰Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: ¹¹Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

Salvation was a subject of prophecy in the Old Testament, with the prophets inquiring and searching diligently concerning it, especially Psalm 22, Daniel 9 and Isaiah 53. These passages make it very clear that the Christ would have to suffer and die. It is sad that Daniel prophesied to the very day when the Messiah would come, but the Jews missed it.

1:12 - ¹²Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

Those preaching the gospel are reporting those things that the prophets ministered: the salvation bought by the suffering of Christ. It is the Holy Ghost who is empowering the preaching of the gospel. It is this process of Holy Ghost empowered preaching of the gospel of Christ with the resultant salvation of souls that the angels desire to look into.

III. The Question of Sanctification (1:13-25)

A. The character of God (1:13-17)

1:13 - ¹³Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

“Gird up the loins” is a figure of speech based on the gathering up and fastening of the long Eastern garments so that they would not interfere with the wearer’s vigorous movements (such as running). Peter applies this illustration to our minds: Remember, the battle is in our minds (our hearts): our thought life. Paul put it this way: “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

1:14-16 - ¹⁴As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: ¹⁵But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; ¹⁶Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Obedient to the Holy Ghost, not to our flesh. And once we are saved, we are to be perfecting holiness, emulating Christ.

1:17 - ¹⁷And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:

There is only one thing a child of God should fear: that is God Himself. A reverential trust.

B. The cross of Christ (1:18-21)

1:18,19 - ¹⁸Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

With the phrase, “Forasmuch as ye know”, Peter is emphasizing that our salvation must be settled in our own minds and hearts before the assurance that causes us to rejoice can flourish. We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, not by keeping tradition.

1:20 - ²⁰Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

God was not taken by surprise by the fall of mankind. God knew we would fall before the world was created. And the plan for Christ to suffer, shed His blood and die for mankind was also set before the world was created. He went to Calvary and fulfilled all the Old Testament Scriptures that spoke of a suffering Savior. And this is why we believe:

1:21 - ²¹Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

“Too many people try to have faith in their faith, instead of having their faith and hope in God. And that only leads to doubt and despair. Peter himself had been through that after his denial of Christ. His faith in his faith had failed. He had to learn in those dark days that Christ’s sacrifice for him covered it all.”

C. The control of the Spirit (1:22-25)

1:22 - ²²Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Saved people should have a love for the brethren. Jesus said,

John 13:34-35 - ³⁴A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1:23-25 - ²³Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. ²⁴For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: ²⁵But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

We are born again by the Word of God. We can't be saved apart from the Word of God.

One commentator (John Phillips) wrote this about being born again:

"In regeneration, the Spirit of God first uses the Word of God to quicken the conscience and bring about a condition that we usually call "conviction of sin." John described it (John 16:7-11). The Spirit of God then uses the Word of God to open the sinner's eyes to Christ and his heart to a realization that he needs to accept Christ as Savior and Lord. Regeneration takes place when the awakened sinner responds to Christ (John 1:11-13). Thereafter, the Spirit of God uses the Word of God in the life of the born-again believer to effect spiritual growth."

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IV. The Question of Separation (2:1-12)

A. Its requirement (2:1)

2:1 - ¹Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

To make a successful journey through this life, we need to lay aside some things:

malice: anger; an unforgiving spirit, bitterness.

guile: wile, or deceit; using cleverness to try to get even or to make a good impression on someone.

hypocrisies: pretension, flattery, or deception; pretending to be what you are not.

envies: pain felt and malignity conceived at the sight of another's excellence or happiness.

evil speakings: slander.

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B. Its reasons (2:2-11)

2:2 - ²As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

There can be no spiritual growth without spiritual food, the Word of God. The “sincere” milk is the “pure” milk of the Word. The greatest need for a newborn baby is care and nourishment so it can grow. Without a hunger for the Word of God, we will not grow in grace.

2:3 - ³If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Since saved people have tasted that the Lord is gracious, we should desire more of Him. And our access to Him is in and through His word. I can't emphasize this enough: we can have no real relationship with Him outside His Word. And so, if our relationship with Him is distant, it is because we are not in His Word enough.

2:4,5 - ⁴To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ⁵Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Christ was rejected of men, a stone of stumbling, the precious cornerstone. What is a cornerstone? It is the first stone set in the construction of a foundation, important since all other stones will be set in reference to this stone, thus determining the position of the entire structure. Christ is the foundation stone of the church, which the “builders”, the religious leaders of the day, rejected, not Peter.

2:6 - ⁶Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Peter is quoting Isaiah 28:16 “. . . he that believeth shall not make haste” is translated here as “shall not be confounded,”. Confounded means ashamed, perplexed; dismayed, or astonished.

2:7,8 - ⁷Unto you therefore which believe *he is precious*: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, ⁸And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*

Christ is a stone of stumbling to the unbelieving. The Jews stumbled at the idea that they could earn righteousness and salvation by the works of the law, and they failed to see that they could only be saved by faith in Christ.

2:9 - ⁹But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

We are to be a “peculiar people”. The Greek word translated as “Peculiar” means simply a *purchased possession*, a people purchased for God’s own possession. A “royal priesthood”, if we are saved, we are all priests: able to come boldly before the throne of grace ourselves. And an “holy nation” meaning a separated people.

2:10 - ¹⁰Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Gentile Christians, have now become the people of God.

2:11 - ¹¹Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Peter and the writer of Hebrews both picture saved people as strangers and pilgrims on this earth, our home being in heaven. A stranger is a foreigner. A pilgrim is a traveler in a foreign land. The only difference between the two is the pilgrim is traveling: he’s going through that foreign land to a destination (in this case heaven).

John Phillips wrote this:

“We are to have a new attitude to the world around us: The world is an enemy of Christ and His people. The “world,” as we meet it in the Bible, can be defined as human life and society – with God left out. It is the Devil’s lair for sinners and his lure for saints. The idea of the believer being a stranger and a pilgrim in this world takes us back to the spiritual history of Abraham. Abraham, became “a stranger and a sojourner” (pilgrim) in the world (Gen. 23:4). His attitude to this world was settled at the outset. God said to him, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee” (Gen. 12:1). He had to turn his back upon the old way of life and begin to live by faith, looking to God to guide him and guard him in the way. When Sarah died, Abraham described himself to the sons of Heth, from whom he wanted to purchase a burial plot, as “a stranger and a sojourner with you.” They responded at once, “Thou art a mighty prince among us” (Gen. 23:4, 6).

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C. Its results (2:12)

2:12 - ¹²Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Peter here describes living a life above reproach. He stresses that our behavior among the lost should be remarkable for its honesty: saints in any kind of business should manifest to the lost an honesty that causes the lost to acknowledge and glorify God. Because one thing the lost are looking for in someone who claims to be saved is honesty.

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V. The Question of Submission (2:13-3:13)

A. Our formal obligations (2:13-25)

1. Submit as subjects (2:13-17)

2:13-14 - ¹³Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; ¹⁴Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

Peter also stresses the need to obey earthly governments, in fact to submit to "every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake". Every law as long as it does not contradict the law of God.

2:15,16 - ¹⁵For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: ¹⁶As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness (just means wickedness), but as the servants of God.

This speaks of putting to silence the objections of the lost by our honesty and our submitting to authority in our lives. Dishonesty and rebelling against authority will always be a bad testimony to the lost around us.

We are free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2) but are not to use our liberty as an excuse for sin. So, even though we are free, we choose to be servants of God, not using our liberty in a way that will cause a brother to fall or a lost person to remain lost.

1 Corinthians 10:23 - All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

I may be free to do many things, but not everything I choose to do will edify those around me.

1 Corinthians 8:9 - But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

2:17 - ¹⁷Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Peter gives four very concise commands concerning how we are to treat four different relationships in our life.

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1. We are to "Honour all men". Everyone we come into contact with, we are to treat them with respect, regardless of their skin color, their social class, or their religious beliefs. If we don't treat them with respect, they'll have absolutely no interest in hearing the gospel from us.

2. We are to love the brethren. Christ commanded it, and told us it would send a message to all around us that we are indeed genuine and truly His disciples:

John 13:35 - By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

3. We are to fear God.

Matthew 10:28 - And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

John Phillips wrote:

“We are to fear God. This is not slavish, paralyzing fear. Rather, it is a reverential awe. Such fear of God is the beginning of wisdom... The fear of God will drive out the fear of man.”

4. We are to honor those in office, whether it be the king, president, mayor, or police officer. We are to honor those in positions of power even though the man filling the position may seem to deserve no honor. Remember, the king at the time of this writing was probably Nero.

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2. Submit as servants (2:18-20)

2:18-20 - ¹⁸Servants, be subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. ¹⁹For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

The theme of this book is suffering. Suffering wrongfully, but taking it patiently glorifies God, because we are still trusting in the goodness of God. Servants or employees are to be subject even to froward bosses. What does froward mean? It means “habitually disposed to disobedience and opposition”. In today’s English, it would be a boss who is a “jerk”. We are serving Christ as we obey that boss who is behaving forwardly (like a jerk). Remembering that our job is a ministry in which we serve Christ.

Peter doesn’t ignore the abuse factor in servant-master relationships. It can often come up that a boss will ask an employee to do something wrong and that employee refusing to do so can result in suffering wrongfully.

3. Submit as saints (2:21-25)

2:21-23 - ²¹For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: ²²Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: ²³Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

Peter gives as our example to follow is Christ suffering wrongfully and taking it patiently. This is our calling, to follow Christ in patiently enduring wrongful suffering. We need to commit ourselves to "Him that judgeth righteously". Let God take care of us : He can do a much better and more thorough job than we can.

2:24-25 - ²⁴Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. ²⁵For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

More than our example in enduring wrongful suffering, Christ was our sin-bearer, paying the price for our sin, purchasing us as His own: "that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness:". 1 Corinthians 6:20 - For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

B. Our family obligations (3:1-7)

Marriage is a ministry in which we serve Christ. It is not about getting our needs met. It is about serving Christ in the office of husband or wife by serving the other person. A husband loving and giving himself for his wife and a wife submitting to and reverencing her husband, neither of which comes naturally to our flesh.

3:1 - ¹Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

"Likewise" ties verse 1 back into chapter 2's discussion of suffering patiently for Christ's sake. Wives are called to be subject to their own husbands (even if that husband is lost), committing themselves to God, trusting in God that He is in control, that He will judge righteously. That He will protect her, and He will work in the heart of that husband.

Her testimony of obedience will be used of God in her husband's heart. Because as that husband sees her submission to him as unto Christ, the Holy Spirit's conviction will work. However, if she disobeys God in resisting or nagging her husband: God will not be free to work on his heart. Notice "may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives". Conversation means behavior or lifestyle.

What does a husband need most from his wife? Respect. What message does nagging from a wife send to a husband? You are not meeting my expectations and you don't have my respect! She is shooting herself in the foot: she's tearing down her husband: how can he love her?

What does a wife need from her husband? To be loved unconditionally and accepted. What message does a husband criticizing and trying to change his wife send? That he does not love her, that he does not accept her as she is. He also is shooting himself in the foot because how can she respect him?

3:2-4 - ²While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. ³Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; ⁴But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

“Chaste” behavior is behavior that is free from defilement or impurity. “Adorning” is decoration. “Plaiting” is an intertwining or braiding something into the hair. It does not forbid make-up, but it instructs women to emphasize a meek and quiet spirit instead of the outward appearance.

3:5-6 - ⁵For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: ⁶Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

The O.T. once again used as an example. In this case, Sarah. The phrase, “And are not afraid with any amazement”: is a hard one. Many commentators struggle with it. It seems to mean that they submit themselves to their husbands willingly, trusting God to take care of them, without fear of being taken advantage of by their submission. It is her trust in God to take care of her that allows her to let go and surrender to her husband without fear of what he will do.

That God intends the husband to lead in the home and the wife to submit doesn’t imply in any way that men are superior to women. Submission is not a weakness. It is Christ-like. God has a plan for the way homes should be run and to establish order. He assigns specific roles to a husband and a wife that are different. Each is just as important as the other.

3:7 - ⁷Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Many may argue that the wife is weaker emotionally. Her emotions may cloud her judgment and make her more susceptible to deception. It may very well be that the wife is more susceptible to deception, but Peter here seems to be addressing the fact that she is the weaker physical body and therefore should be given esteem and physical care for her physical body (vessel).

“Heirs together of the grace of life”: participators in the same lot, a personal equality, based on an equality of possession. We will be equal in heaven.

This speaks of the husband patiently honoring his wife, understanding her, knowing her weaknesses, and seeking to augment them, knowing her strengths and seeking to expand them. Treating her as a partner (“being heirs together of the grace of life”), not an inferior. Not doing so hinders prayer: discord in marriage hinders prayer.

As John Phillips put it:

“The husband and wife are partners, they must work together. They have something more than marriage vows to bond them together. They have Christ. They are true yokefellows. They should work together to establish a Christian home, to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. A husband’s failure to treat his wife with love, kindness, consideration, and courtesy plays havoc with his prayers.” And I might add, a wife not submitting to her husband and respecting him hinders her prayers.

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C. Our fellowship obligations (3:8-13)

3:8,9 - ⁸Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: ⁹Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Believers are to love each other and bless those who rail on them. Being of the same mind is frequently stressed of a N.T. church. “Pitiful” means “tenderhearted”, full of compassion.

Ephesians 4:32 - And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

3:10-11 - ¹⁰For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: ¹¹Let him eschew (flee from) evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue (pursue) it.

Our mouth can be the cause of a lot of our suffering. So, if we want to love our life and see good days, refraining our tongue is mandatory. Guile means deceit.

3:12 - ¹²For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

God does not hear our prayers when we are out of fellowship with Him, but His eyes and ears are constantly on those in fellowship with Him.

2 Chronicles 16:9 - For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him....

3:13 - ¹³And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

God’s protection is also upon His children that are in fellowship with Him unless it is God’s will for the believer to endure wrongful suffering.

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VI. The Question of Suffering (3:14 – 4:19)

A. Suffering experienced (3:14-17)

3:14 - ¹⁴But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

God does bring suffering into His children's lives to accomplish what He deems necessary. And suffering for His sake or for doing the right thing should bring joy to the child of God, not bitterness or a desire for revenge. We cannot escape suffering in this world if we are children of God:

2 Timothy 3:12 - Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

And Peter finishes the verse with an admonition to not be afraid or troubled by that persecution.

3:15 - ¹⁵But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

In the context of suffering persecution and not being afraid of it, we need to let God be our protector and fear Him. To sanctify Him in our hearts is to allow Him to occupy in our heart the place He deserves (on the throne of our heart). Peter tells us to be prepared to give an answer to anyone that asks us about the hope and joy we possess in Christ as we endure that suffering.

3:16-17 - ¹⁶Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. ¹⁷For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

The key is to keep our testimony, the outward behavior, pure before the lost. We can rejoice in suffering for Christ's sake, but if we are suffering because we have been a fool or have gotten into sin (and blown our testimony), then we still need to take the suffering well, but it is no glory to God.

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B. Suffering exemplified (3:18-22)

3:18-20 - ¹⁸For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: ¹⁹By which (Holy Spirit) also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; ²⁰Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

As our sin bearer, Christ died and shed His blood. But He was also our example, suffering as the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. In the same manner, as we preach to gospel, we will suffer persecution, that we may bring some to God.

What does “Christ preaching unto the spirits in prison” mean. There are differing opinions on this. My position is that in the days of Noah, fallen angels left their “first estate” (Jude) and had sexual relations with human women producing giants. God then put those angels in everlasting chains (Jude). My theory is that Christ preached a triumphant proclamation to those angels. I won’t argue with anyone who has a different reasonable theory.

3:21 - ²¹The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

This does NOT teach that baptism washes sin away. It even says, ‘not the putting away of the filth of the flesh’. There are so many other scriptures that teach we are saved by faith, so obviously this cannot be saying that baptism saves us. Therefore we ignore all of those Catholic and Protestant interpretations. So then, there are two main views on this verse.

1) Some claim that this verse is teaching that it is our conscience that is saved when we obey God in being baptized. That after being saved by faith, by obeying God in baptism, our conscience has answered the commandment of God.

2) Others say that it is teaching that baptism is a figure of what does save us, which is the gospel.

3:22 - ²²Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

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I like what one commentator wrote: “This whole discussion about the days of Noah is part of a larger context; the background is suffering. Peter is putting things in perspective. In the end, suffering cannot hurt us. It lifts us up, even by its own tumultuous waves, to higher ground and even to that other shore. Peter is emphasizing that there is more! Jesus suffered! To the point of death! “Even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8). Let the world do its worst. All it can do is kill the body. Beyond that is resurrection—and more, as Peter now states!

Peter tells us *where Christ reigns*: “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God” (3:22a). The fact that monsters like Nero have their little day does not alter the fact that Jesus now sits on the supreme throne of the universe. The suffering of God’s people is a mystery as great as the mystery of iniquity. All we see down here are the seemingly tangled threads on the reverse side of the tapestry of life.

When we get to heaven, we shall see the magnificent picture on its other side. Meanwhile, Christ is on the throne. The glorious and astounding fact is that there is a Man in heaven on the throne of God (Heb. 1:1—3, 8), and He has our interests at heart.”

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C. Suffering expected (4:1-2)

4:1,2 - ¹Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; ²That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

As Christ has suffered in the flesh, we are to be of the same mind, being dead to self, living to God. In verse 2, Peter asserts that our new nature requires that we cannot go on in our sin if the Holy Ghost indwells us.

D. Suffering explained (4:3-6)

4:3 - ³For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings (Roman festival of immoral feasting), banquetings (drinking party), and abominable idolatries:

Our old lives before salvation are in the past. We are now a new creation in Christ.

4:4,5 - ⁴Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot (debauchery), speaking evil of *you*: ⁵Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

The world will not find our new life in Christ acceptable and speak evil of you (co-workers, old friends, family, neighbors, etc.)

4:6 - ⁶For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

The lost are made accountable by the preaching of the gospel. Because of coming judgment, the gospel is preached to “them that are dead”. Those who receive Christ will live according to God in the spirit, those who reject Him will be judged according to men in the flesh.

E. Suffering exploited (4:7-11)

4:7 - ⁷But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

“The end of all things is at hand” is the thought that should be within the heart and mind of every one of us who is saved, influencing every decision we make. This world will soon pass away. “Be sober” means “of a sound mind, moderate, temperate”.

4:8 - ⁸And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Loving one another, as Christ has loved us, is a love that is intense and strong amongst the saints of God. This kind of love (agape) will cover sins: not being offended by offences that come our way and bringing them up again.

4:9-11 - ⁹Use hospitality (kindness to strangers) one to another without grudging, complaining) ¹⁰As every man hath received the gift, *even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

When we extend hospitality, we ought to do so without murmuring and not being insulted at a lack of gratitude on the part of the receiver.

We are to use those gifts that God gives us to give Him glory by reaching the lost or to edify and serve other members of the body of Christ (Romans 12:6-9 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-12).

F. Suffering exalted (4:12-14)

4:12-14 - ¹²Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: ¹³But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. ¹⁴If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

We are to expect fiery trials and not be surprised by them, considering them as partaking of Christ's sufferings. We all tend to think that our suffering is unique and unlike anything that has been suffered before. But suffering is not something which is accidental, it is the normal Christian experience. The thought of God's trials purifying the Christian like a furnace purifies gold is found throughout Scripture.

G. Suffering examined (4:15-19)

4:15-19 - ¹⁵But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. ¹⁶Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. ¹⁷For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? ¹⁸And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? ¹⁹Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Peter is saying we should avoid being in the position of being punished for wrong doing, but as Christians, we will be persecuted for living righteously and should glorify God through it, trusting Him to give us grace to endure it.

VII. The Question of Shepherding (5:1-7)

A. Rules for shepherds (5:1-4)

In the New Testament, there are 3 words for the office of what we call today the pastor. Each name describes a different aspect of their role: **Elder**: Ruler; **Pastor**: Shepherd; **Bishop**: Administrator or Superintendent. All three are in this passage.

5:1-3 - ¹The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ²Feed (to shepherd or to pastor) the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight (verb form of Bishop) thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

"Elder" is a ruler, another word for Pastor. They were charged with feeding the flock of God with the word of God, and of being examples to the flock. Shepherding suggests provision and protection, supervision and discipline, instruction and direction. "Taking the oversight thereof" (verb form of Bishop) means "to look upon, observe, examine, look after".

So, Pastors need to study their people, examining them carefully for signs of trouble, for needs. "Willingly" implies the right motive: as unto the Lord. "Neither as being lords..., but being ensamples" implies not driving, but leading; not domineering, but setting an example.

5:4 - ⁴And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The crown of glory goes to pastors.

B. Rules for sheep (5:5-7)

5:5,6 - ⁵Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. ⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

It is a mark of true Christian maturity and growth to have a submissive and yielding attitude not only to all authority, even a younger preacher than you. God will always resist pride in any form. So, unless we want God resisting us, we need to be always on guard against pride creeping into our heart. We shouldn't insist on having our own way. Humility should be our constant goal.

5:7 - ⁷Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

God cares for His own, therefore, the child of God is to let go of all anxiety and worry. We might tend to think some of the things we worry about are not significant enough to bring to God in prayer, but if they are bothering us, God wants us to bring them to Him, He wants us to trust Him that much. If it is causing us stress or anxiety, it's not too little to pray about.

VIII. the Question of Satan (5:8-11)

5:8-9 - ⁸Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: ⁹Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

The devil is constantly seeking those he may devour. His primary mode of operation is deception. The battle is in our thought life! He deceives them into thinking lies.

1. "My family would be better off without me", and they kill themselves.
2. "This church is full of hypocrites" or "this church doesn't meet my needs", or "this church doesn't appreciate me", or "the Pastor made a decision I didn't like", they get offended and leave the church.
3. "My wife and I just can't get along" or "he doesn't love me anymore", and so they divorce.

Our heart will lie to us in so many ways! The battle is in our thought life. We need to replace those wrong thoughts with the truth of God's Word.

In verse 8, "sober" means "to be watchful". We are to resist Satan "stedfast in the faith". This requires work. Studying, meditating, and memorizing the Word of God helps to combat the lies of the heart.

5:10 - ¹⁰But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

It is the grace of God that carries God's children through all of the various circumstances of our lives. Our sufferings serve a purpose: to make us "perfect (complete), stablish, strengthen, settle" us.

5:11 - ¹¹To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

God is glorified in all that we endure for His sake as we endure it by His grace.

Conclusion (5:12-14)

5:12-14 - ¹²By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. ¹³The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. ¹⁴Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

The salutation was written by Silvanus (thought to be the Silas of the book of Acts who traveled with Paul). He acknowledges Marcus and the church that is at Babylon. This could be the actual city of Babylon in Mesopotamia where a great number of Jews lived since the time of the Babylonian captivity. The Roman Catholic Church claims that Peter was the first bishop of Rome and the founder of the papacy, and so their scholars all insist he meant Rome when he said "Babylon".

Slide 20 - And so ends the first epistle of Peter...

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