

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST LETTER FROM PETER

Simon Peter is the best known of the Twelve. He was a native of Bethsaida (*John 1:44*) and had a home in Capernaum (*Mark 1:29*). He had a large and successful fishing business on Lake Galilee (*Luke 5:1-11*) when Jesus called him to be an apostle. From then on Peter's life was close to Jesus, and he along with James, John, and Andrew, formed the *inner circle* of Jesus' disciples. It was Peter who first declared Jesus is the Messiah (*Matt. 16:16*). Jesus changed his name from Simon to Peter (Greek for a rock) or Cephas (Aramaic for a rock). Compare note on *Matt. 16:18*. He is the first to publicly proclaim the Good News on Pentecost (*Acts ch 2*), and is the leader in the activities of the first years of Christian history. But Peter disappears in *Acts 12:17* and appears briefly in *Gal. 2:11* and *1 Cor. 1:12*. These two letters imply that he visited among the churches of the province of Asia. He took his wife along on his tours (*1 Cor. 9:5*). There is no evidence that he spent his last twenty-five years at Rome, as some claim. But there is proof that he died at Rome, about the same time that Paul did, in 67 or 68 A.D. Tradition says he was crucified upside-down.

First Peter has probably the most complete synopsis of the teaching and ethics of the Good News of any New Testament Letter. Christian living is linked with the example of Jesus, and great emphasis is put on the need to live a holy life! In the first century, as the number of Christians rapidly increased, so did persecution. Compare *Rev. 6:2-6* and notes. Peter writes to encourage those who suffer. *Erasmus* said about this Letter: "It is worthy of the Prince of the apostles, and full of apostolic dignity and authority. It is *sparing in words, but full of sense.*" Peter probably writes from Babylon on the Euphrates (*1 Pet. 5:13*). Some think Babylon is being used as a code-name for Rome, but no evidence places Peter in Rome at this date. *Johnson* says: "There are reasons for thinking that Peter has seen the Ephesian Letter, one of the epistles of Paul's (first) imprisonment, and so this Epistle was probably written as late, at least, as 63 A.D."

THE FIRST LETTER FROM PETER

1 From Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ—
1 To God's chosen people who live as refugees scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. **2**You were chosen according to the purpose of God the Father, and were made a holy people by his Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be cleansed by his blood.

May grace and peace be yours in full measure.

A Living Hope

3Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Because of his great mercy, he gave us new life by raising Jesus Christ from the dead. This fills us with a living hope, and so we look forward to possess the rich blessings that God keeps for his people. He keeps them for you in heaven, where they cannot decay

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

Praise to God for a Living Hope

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept

1. **From Peter, an apostle.** Peter does not claim authority higher than the other apostles. **To God's chosen people.** See *Rom. 8:29-30* and notes. **Refugees scattered.** DIASPORA originally meant the Jews who were scattered all over the world in Gentile nations. But it soon came to be used of Christians in general, both Jew and Gentile. Christians are refugees, from another world (*Phil. 3:20*). The Letter is addressed to five Roman provinces where Paul had preached the Good News of God's act in Christ to set men free.

2. **According to the purpose.** The plan which God had already decided on, was to save men and women through the Good News! See *Col. 1:20; Acts 2:23* and notes. **Were made a holy people.** This looks from God's side. Compare *Titus 3:5*. **To obey Jesus Christ.** This looks from man's side. *We reach out* through faith to seize the sacrifice of Christ and make ourselves part of it! See notes on *Acts 2:38, 40*. **And be cleansed.** See *Heb. 12:24*.

3. **Let us give thanks.** We thank God and praise him for his love which is the basis of what he has done for us!!! **He gave us new life.** God's act in Christ is to change us!!! **By raising Jesus Christ.** See *1 Pet. 3:21* and note. [Some think Peter is talking about the *living hope* that filled the apostles when they learned Jesus had raised from death.]

4. **We look forward.** Our living hope is not merely of eternal existence, but we become sons and daughters of God, and will share in everything God keeps for his people! **In heaven.** "This is better than any earthly wealth, because it is in heaven where it remains safe!"

or spoil or fade away. ⁵They are for you, who through faith are kept safe by God's power for the salvation which is ready to be revealed at the end of time.

⁶Be glad about this, even though it may now be necessary for you to be sad for a while because of the many kinds of trials you suffer. ⁷Their purpose is to prove that your faith is genuine. Even gold, which can be destroyed, is tested by fire; and so your faith, which is much more precious than gold, must also be tested, that it may endure. Then you will receive praise and glory and honor on the Day when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸You love him, although you have not seen him. You believe in him, although you do not now see him. And so you rejoice with a great and glorious joy, which words cannot express, ⁹because you are receiving the purpose of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰It was concerning this salvation that the prophets made careful search and investigation; and they prophesied about this gift that God

in heaven for you. Through ⁵ faith you are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly ⁶ rejoice, though now for a little while you may have suffered grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so ⁷ that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though ⁸ you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are ⁹ receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Concerning this salvation, ¹⁰ the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and

5. **Who through faith are kept safe.** See *1 Pet. 5:7; 1 John 5:4-5*. God's power is available to the Christian through faith! **Revealed.** *1 John 3:1-3*.

6. **Be glad.** In this hope you have as a Christian! **Even though.** "You will be faced with persecution in different forms and many problems because of your relationship to Christ." See *John 16:33*.

7. **Their purpose is to prove.** "There is a reason why God allows these things to happen to you. They are to prove that your faith is genuine. All false believers will be *weeded out* by the many kinds of trials." **Even gold.** "Gold, which is so precious to men, is tested and refined by fire. Your faith is much more precious than gold! Do you wonder, then, that it must be tested???" **Then you will receive.** At Christ's Second Coming, the one whose faith survives the testing, will receive his or her eternal reward. See *Rev. 22:12-14*.

8. **You love him.** "You have not seen Jesus Christ, nor do you see him now. But you love him and believe in him! You live by faith! **And so you rejoice.** "You have believed the witness of us apostles, and so you rejoice in Christ who is your Savior, with a great and glorious joy! **Which words cannot express.** Human language cannot describe the union with God which the Christian like Paul may enjoy (*2 Cor. 12:3-4*). This is the living hope which each Christian has!!

9. **Because you are receiving.** "Eternal life begins now, for those who love God!" Compare *John 10:10; 1 Cor. 2:9*. The Christian has past sins forgiven, and is God's child (*Rom. 8:15*). In this way, we are *now receiving* salvation. But some of this is still future, as we wait for our whole being to be set free by our bodies being changed (*Phil. 3:20-21*).

10. **It was concerning.** The prophets did not understand the symbols and words which the Spirit spoke through them. They prophesied about the Messiah and salvation, and then tried to understand the message the Spirit had given them. See *1 Cor. 2:9*. God gives salvation as a *gift* through His act in Jesus Christ.

would give you. ¹¹They tried to find out when the time would be and how it would come. This was the time to which Christ's Spirit in them pointed as the Spirit predicted the sufferings that Christ would have to endure and the glory that would follow. ¹²God revealed to these prophets that their work was not for their own good, but for yours, as they spoke about those things which you have now heard from the messengers of the Good News, who announced them by the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. These are things which even the angels would like to understand.

A Call to Holy Living

¹³So then, have your minds ready for action. Keep alert, and set your hope completely on the blessing which will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. ¹⁴Be obedient to God, and do not allow your lives to be shaped by those desires

with the greatest care, trying 11 to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that 12 they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Be Holy

Therefore, prepare your 13 minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, 14 do not conform to the evil desires you had when you

11. **This was the time.** The prophets of the Old Testament spoke by means of the Spirit of Christ = Holy Spirit. But their message was partial, and they could only guess at how these things would come true. One of the *gifts* from the *Spirit* was the inspired ability to understand the Old Testament (*1 Cor. 12:8* and note). Those who had this gift could understand what the prophets could *not* understand, and see that the Old Testament pointed to the time when The Christ would come as a human being and suffer as our *sin offering*. Great glory would follow this event, as God's grace was made available to all!!! Compare *Luke 24:25-26; Heb. 11:39-40*.

12. **God revealed.** God showed the prophets that what they predicted pointed forward to a future time. They looked forward to a New Age (*Matt. 19:28*) which would be the *last days* (*Acts 2:16-17*) and the kingdom of God's dear Son (*Col. 1:13*). **Which you have now heard.** This is the Good News preached on Pentecost and around the world (*Col. 1:23*). **By the power of the Holy Spirit.** The apostles and prophets of Christ spoke by inspiration. See *John 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:6-10; 1 Thess. 1:5*. In the Christian Age, the Holy Spirit is active in the world as never before!!! Compare *John 7:37-39; Eph. 2:22; Acts 5:32; 1 Cor. 6:19-20*. **Even the angels.** Many had an exaggerated sense of the importance of angels. Here Peter shows them watching with interest as the drama of salvation unfolds! But even the angels could not understand what God was preparing to do!!! Peter's message is: *This salvation is worth living for and suffering for!!!*

13. **So then.** "Because of all these things I remind you about, hold firm to what you have in Christ!" **Ready for action.** These people wore long flowing robes. When they prepared for action, they pulled their robes up and fastened them with a belt, to keep from being *tripped up*. Peter's symbolism says: "Get it all together and be ready to move out!" Peter speaks of four attitudes in the next verses: keep alert (*verse 13*); be holy (*verse 15*); be reverent (*verse 17*); love one another (*verse 22*).

14. **Be obedient.** "Your sense of being God's child will cause you to turn away from the things you did in your ignorance!"

you had when you were still ignorant. ¹⁵Instead, be holy in all that you do, just as God who called you is holy. ¹⁶The scripture says, "You must be holy, because I am holy."

¹⁷You call him Father, when you pray to God, who judges all men by the same standard, according to what each one has done; so then, spend the rest of your lives here on earth in reverence for him. ¹⁸For you know what was paid to set you free from the worthless manner of life you received from your ancestors. It was not something that loses its value, such as silver or gold; ¹⁹you were set free by the costly sacrifice of Christ, who was like a lamb without defect or spot. ²⁰He had been chosen by God before the creation of the world, and was revealed in these last days for your sake. ²¹Through him you believe in God, who raised him from death and gave him glory; and so your faith and hope are fixed on God.

lived in ignorance. But just ¹⁵ as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it ¹⁶ is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

Since you call on a Father ¹⁷ who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. For you know that it ¹⁸ was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious ¹⁹ blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the crea- ²⁰ tion of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through ²¹ him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

15. **Instead, be holy.** "Supersede evil desires with holy living! God your Father is holy, and you must be like him!"

16. **The scripture says.** "Moses, whom some of the false teachers claim to honor, wrote the same thing in *Lev. 19:2*." [Peter did not quote chapter and verse divisions, since they originated in the sixteenth century.]

17. **You call him Father.** Compare *Jer. 3:19*. "You worship the God of the Universe, and you call him Father! He judges men by the same standard, whether they are Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, free or slave, man or woman!" **In reverence for him.** "If God is your Father, then heaven is your home, and you are a refugee here in this world! You must live the rest of your life in reverence for Him!"

18. **What was paid.** "It cost something to *buy you for God!* And you know it was not material things like silver or gold." **Worthless manner of life.** See note on *1 Thess. 1:9*.

19. **By the costly sacrifice of Christ.** BLOOD = BLOODY DEATH = COSTLY SACRIFICE. "You see the value which God placed on you, by the costly sacrifice which He paid to buy you for Himself!" **Like a lamb.** The Passover lamb pointed to Christ the Lamb of God who takes away sins! God demands the best! Compare *Lev. 22:21-22*.

20. **He had been chosen.** Notice the costly sacrifice of Christ was according to God's Plan. (See *Luke 9:31* and note. **Before the creation of the world.** God chose Christ to be the costly sacrifice, even before the creation of man! **In these last days.** Jesus came at the time the Jewish Age was near its termination. As Peter writes this, Jerusalem and the Temple have perhaps seven years left in their existence.

21. **Through him.** Peter preaches the same gospel that Paul preaches. Both show the importance of faith in Christ! Christ is the *door* through which we may come to God! **Are fixed on God.** "Our faith and hope are fixed on the power and truth of God, which Christ revealed to us through his Spirit!"

²²Now that by your obedience to the truth you have purified yourselves and have come to have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts. ²³For through the living and eternal word of God you have been born again as the children of a parent who is immortal, not mortal. ²⁴As the scripture says,

"All men are like the wild grass,
and all their glory is like its flower.
The grass dies, and its flower falls off,
²⁵but the word of the Lord remains
forever."

This is the word that the Good News brought to you.

The Living Stone and the Holy Nation

2 Rid yourselves, therefore, of all evil; no more lying, or hypocrisy, or jealousy, or insulting language. ³Be like newborn babies, always thirsty for the pure spiritual milk, so that by

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, with all your hearts. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, 22
23
24

"All men are like grass,
and all their glory is like
the wild flower;
the grass withers,
and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord 25
stands forever."

And this is the word that was preached to you.

2 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and slander of every kind. Like 2
newborn babies crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your sal-

22. Now that. "You have purified yourselves by obeying the truth which is the Good News, through the influence of the Spirit." *Johnson* says: "The Spirit is inseparable from the gospel. The gospel dispensation is that of the Spirit. See *Acts 15:8-9*." **And have come to have a sincere love.** *Johnson* says: "The Spirit of Christ in our hearts is the spirit of brotherly love." **Love one another.** "You must actively practice this Christian love. If you do not continually *fan it into flame*, it will die out!"

23: **For through.** "It is through God's *truth* revealed in the Good News about the Kingdom (*Matt. 13:19* and note) which is the seed that grew up in your hearts (compare *Gal. 3:1-2*), that you have been born again." The *life* is planted by the word of God (*Acts 10:36; James 1:18*), and birth takes place through the *water and the Spirit* (*John 3:5; Titus 3:5*).

24: **As the scripture says.** *Isa. 40:6-8* Septuagint. "Our human life, like the wild grass, doesn't last very long at the best! But a new birth from the living and eternal word of God is a birth to eternal life!!!"

25. **Remains forever.** "Like its *source*, it is eternal and never loses its power!" **This is the word.** "This living and eternal word of God is the same Good News brought to you by the preaching of us apostles and all who proclaim the truth!!!"

1. **Rid yourselves.** "Since you are children of God, you must remove evil from your lives." In all centuries, it is important that Christians live holy lives, so that they will not bring disgrace on the Messianic community and the Christ who is their Lord! The four types of evil which Peter names, still are common problems in day-to-day living.

2. **Be like newborn babies.** "As newborn babies are always thirsty and eager for milk, so you who are *newborn* in Christ must always be thirsty and eager for the pure spiritual milk of the Good News! As babies grow to be adults, so you will grow up, and be saved when Christ Comes!"

drinking it you may grow up and be saved. ³As the scripture says, "You have tasted the Lord's kindness."

"Come to the Lord, the living stone rejected as worthless by men, but chosen as valuable by God. ⁵Come as living stones, and let yourselves be used in building the spiritual temple, where you will serve as holy priests to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For the scripture says,

"I chose a valuable stone,
which now I place for the cornerstone
in Zion;
and whoever believes in him will never
be disappointed."

⁷This stone is of great value for you that believe; but for those who do not believe:

"The very stone which the builders re-
jected
turned out to be the most important
stone."

vation, now that you have ³
tasted that the Lord is good.

The Living Stone and a Chosen People

As you come to him, the ⁴
living Stone—rejected by
men but chosen by God and
precious to him—you also, ⁵
like living stones, are being
built into a spiritual house
to be a holy priesthood offer-
ing spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God through
Jesus Christ. For in Scrip- ⁶
ture it says:

"See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious
cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in
him will never be
put to shame."

Now to you who believe, this ⁷
stone is precious. But to
those who do not believe:

"The stone the builders
rejected
has become the cap-
stone."

3. **For the scripture says.** Peter quotes *Psalms 34:8* Septuagint. "Your thirst for this spiritual milk will be very strong, because you have already tasted the Lord's kindness in it!" Compare *Heb. 6:4-5*.

4. **The living stone.** Compare *Rom. 9:32-33; Mark 12:10-11*. Christ is a living stone because he has life (*John 1:4*), and he gives this life to those who believe in him, and they become living stones (*verse 5*). Christ was rejected by the Jewish leaders, but chosen by God to be the rock foundation (*Matt. 16:18*) for the spiritual temple (*Eph. 2:19-22*).

5. **And let yourselves be used.** "Through the living and eternal word of God, you have been born again and have become living stones! You must let yourselves be used in building the spiritual temple." Note the church is built up of living stones. **Where you will serve.** Each one who has been born again (*1 Pet. 1:23*), man or woman, is a priest to God and has direct access to God through Jesus Christ! Christians offer themselves as living sacrifices (*Rom. 12:1-2*), to praise God!

6. **For the scripture says.** *Isa. 28:16* Septuagint, paraphrased. God said long ago that Christ would be a Living Stone. Compare *Rom. 9:33*. **Cornerstone.** This was the most important part of the foundation and tied two walls together. Some see in this Christ joining Jew and Gentile into one group in himself.

7. **For you that believe.** "He is very great in value to you who believe in him, because you are honored by being built on him." See *Rev. 3:12*. **Who do not believe.** "For the unbeliever, who rejects Christ, it is the shame written in *Psalms 118:22* Septuagint."

⁸And another scripture says,
 "This is the stone that will make people
 stumble,
 the rock that will make them fall."
 They stumbled because they did not believe in
 the word; such was God's will for them.

⁹But you are the chosen race, the King's
 priests, the holy nation, God's own people,
 chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God,
 who called you from the darkness into his own
 marvelous light. ¹⁰At one time you were not
 God's people, but now you are his people; at
 one time you did not know God's mercy, but now
 you have received his mercy.

Slaves of God

¹¹I appeal to you, my friends, as strangers and
 refugees in this world! Do not give in to bodily
 passions, which are always at war against the soul.

and, 8

"A stone that causes men
 to stumble
 and a rock that makes
 them fall."

They stumble because they
 disobey the message—which
 is also what they were des-
 tined for.

But you are a chosen 9
 people, a royal priesthood, a
 holy nation, a people belong-
 ing to God, that you may de-
 clare the praises of him who
 called you out of darkness
 into his wonderful light.
 Once you were not a people, 10
 but now you are the people
 of God; once you had not re-
 ceived mercy, but now you
 have received mercy.

Dear friends, I urge you, 11
 as foreigners and strangers
 in the world, to abstain from
 sinful desires, which war a-

⁸. **Another scripture says.** *Isa. 8:14.* Christ is of great value to those who believe. But to the one who rejects Christ; he is a stone they stumble over and fall and are broken to pieces. Compare *Matt. 10:34-39; 21:44* and notes. **They stumbled.** Those who reject Christ. See *Mark 4:17.* **Such was God's will for them.** God did not decree that they would reject Christ, but he did decree that those who did reject him, would stumble and fall to their punishment.

⁹. **But you are.** "You who do believe have not stumbled or fallen against *the stone.* The titles of honor given to God's ancient people belong to you, both Jew and Gentile!" **The chosen race.** *Deut. 7:6.* **The King's priests.** *Exod. 19:6.* **The holy nation.** *Exod. 19:6.* **God's own people.** *Isa. 43:21* Septuagint. **Chosen to proclaim.** They honor God by proclaiming Him to the world, both in words and in actions! **Who called you.** God calls everyone through the Good News (*John 6:44-45*) into his own marvelous light (*Acts 26:18*).

¹⁰. **At one time.** "You Gentiles were once alienated and estranged from God because of your idols and your sins, and you knew nothing of God's mercy. But now through Christ, you have received God's mercy, which you share together with the Jews." Compare *Rom. 9:25; 1 Cor. 6:9-11.*

¹¹. **As strangers and refugees.** "You have no birthright here on this earth, but are only staying here temporarily as you travel to Eternity!" Compare *Heb. 11:13.* **Do not give in.** "Since you are citizens of heaven, and will be here only a short time, do not give in to your bodily passions! If you do, you will not reach your homeland!" See *Rom. 7:23;* but also *Col. 2:20-23.*

¹²Your conduct among the heathen should be so good that when they accuse you of being evil-doers they will have to recognize your good deeds, and so praise God on the Day of his coming.

¹³Submit yourselves, for the Lord's sake, to every human authority: to the Emperor, who is the supreme authority, ¹⁴and to the governors, who have been sent by him to punish the evil-doers and praise those who do good. ¹⁵For God's will is this: he wants you to silence the ignorant talk of foolish men by the good things you do. ¹⁶Live as free men; do not use your freedom, however, to cover up any evil, but live as God's slaves. ¹⁷Respect all men, love your fellow believers, fear God, and respect the Emperor.

against your soul. Live such 12
good lives among the pagans
that, though they accuse you
of doing wrong, they may see
your good deeds and glorify
God on the day he visits us.

Submission to Rulers and Masters

Submit yourselves for the 13
Lord's sake to every author-
ity instituted among men:
whether to the king, as the
supreme authority, or to gov- 14
ernors, who are sent by him
to punish those who do
wrong and to commend those
who do right. For it is God's 15
will that by doing good you
should silence the ignorant
talk of foolish men. Live as 16
free men, but do not use your
freedom as a cover-up for
evil; live as servants of God.
Show proper respect to ev- 17
eryone: Love the brother-
hood of believers, fear God,
honor the king.

12. **Should be so good.** "Many lies and wild stories will be told about you by the unbelievers. Make sure that your conduct is so good and so ethical, that these charges are proved to be false, and they come to respect your good deeds. Your conduct may win them to Christ, and then they will praise God on the Day of his coming!" [*MacKnight* understands the Day to be a time of great persecution (see *Isa. 10:3*). The Christian's conduct during times of calamity and crisis has much influence on unbelievers.]

13. **To every human authority.** "You must not be like some who despise the government authorities. It is the Lord's will that you obey the government and be a good citizen (*Rom. 13:1-8*)."
To the Emperor. Nero was Emperor as Peter writes this.

14. **And to the governors.** "This means that Christians in every country are to obey the laws of these countries in everything not sinful or contrary to God's command (*Acts 4:19; 5:29*), without considering whether the religion of the governors and of the country are true or false." It is a paradox that the same government can serve both God and Satan at the same time (see note on *Rev. 13:2*).

15. **For God's will is this.** "I assure you that it is God's will that you submit yourselves to human authority. By doing this you will be able to silence those ignorant men who insult and slander you, and who say you intend to destroy the government."

16. **Live as free men.** *MacKnight* says: "The Jews boasted in their having been at all times freemen; that is, in having been always governed by their own laws, *John 8:33*. In this sense, the precept *live as freemen*, means, live according to the rules of your religion, free from complying with the established idolatry." **To cover up.** "Don't use your freedom as an excuse to *cover up* your rebellion against the government!" **As God's slaves.** "God bought you with the costly sacrifice of Christ! But the fact you belong to Him ought to make you the best citizen of all in everything not contrary to the spirit and the letter of God's word!"

17. **Respect all men.** "Every human being ought to receive your respect! Love your fellow believers in Christ just as Christ loved you! Fear (reverence) God and respect the Emperor. You can do both, as Jesus showed (*Matt. 22:21*).

The Example of Christ's Suffering

¹⁸You servants must submit yourselves to your masters and show them complete respect, not only to those who are kind and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. ¹⁹God will bless you for this, if you endure the pain of undeserved suffering because you are conscious of his will. ²⁰For what credit is there if you endure the beatings you deserve for having done wrong? But if you endure suffering even when you have done right, God will bless you for it. ²¹It was to this that God called you; because Christ himself suffered for you and left you an example, so that you would follow in his steps. ²²He committed no sin; no one ever heard a lie come from his lips. ²³When he was insulted he did not answer back with an insult; when he suffered he did not threaten, but placed his hopes in God, the right-

Slaves, submit yourselves 18
to your masters with all re-
spect, not only to those who
are good and considerate,
but also to those who are
harsh. For it is commend- 19
able if a man bears up under
the pain of unjust suffering
because he is conscious of
God. But how is it to your
credit if you receive a beat- 20
ing for doing wrong and en-
dure it? But if you suffer for
doing good and you endure
it, this is commendable be-
fore God. To this you were 21
called, because Christ suffer-
ed for you, leaving you an
example, that you should fol-
low in his steps.

"He committed no sin, 22
and no deceit was found
in his mouth."

When they hurled their in- 23
sults at him, he did not re-
taliate; when he suffered, he
made no threats. Instead, he
entrusted himself to him who

18. **You servants.** This includes both servants and slaves. Christianity did not change social status, and a servant was still a servant. As a Christian servant, each was to do their best, not only for a good master, but also for one who was harsh! See *Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-24*. [But Christian principles eventually destroyed slavery.]

19. **God will bless you for this.** The Christian who does what Peter says, has God's blessing on his action. If his conscience, taught by God's word, leads him to suffer even though he does not deserve this, and he bears it patiently because of his love for God, he will be blessed by it.

20. **For what credit?** "If you do wrong, and are caught and punished for it, you only get what you deserve! There is no credit in this!" **But if you endure.** Some were *harsh* to try to discourage the Christian faith of their servant! To be patient under such circumstances, pleased God.

21. **It was to this.** "It is part of being a Christian to suffer for doing good!" **Christ himself.** "Christ-on-the-cross is our example! If the sinless Christ would suffer for our sins, surely we can endure undeserved suffering, however wrong it may seem to us, because we are not sinless as He is!"

22. **He committed no sin.** Note the emphasis on the sinlessness of Christ. Peter uses the same language as *Isa. 53:9* Septuagint. Compare *1 Pet. 1:19*.

23. **He did not answer back.** "Christ was insulted by the Jewish leaders, but he did not answer them back with an insult!" **He did not threaten.** "When he suffered crucifixion, he did not threaten, even though he could have destroyed his persecutors!" **But placed his hopes in God.** "He did not take revenge, but turned the whole matter over to God, and forgave his murderers."

eous Judge. ²⁴Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵You were like sheep that had lost their way; but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls.

judges justly. He himself ²⁴bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you ²⁵were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Wives and Husbands

3 In the same way you wives must submit yourselves to your husbands, so that if some of them do not believe God's word, they will be won over to believe by your conduct. It will not be necessary for you to say a word, ²because they will see how pure and reverent your conduct is. ³You should not use outward aids to make yourselves beautiful, such as the way you fix your hair, or the jewelry you put on, or the dresses

Wives and Husbands

3 Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without talk by the behavior of their wives, when they see ²the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty ³should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine

24. Carried our sins. "He who had no sin, took our sins in his body to the cross!" See *2 Cor. 5:21. Die to sin. Rom. 6:1-7.* In this we escape from the power and punishment of sin through God's act in Christ. **Live for righteousness.** "We have been set free so that we can make ourselves a living sacrifice in praise and honor to God!" **By his wounds. *Isa. 53:5-6.* "It is through Christ's doing and dying that we are accepted as righteous by God!"**

25. You were like sheep. "Sin had made you lose your way, just like sheep do, and you were in danger of being lost completely, or killed by wild animals!" **But now.** "God acted in Christ to set you free! By coming to him you have been brought back!" **To follow.** "Christ, who is the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls, will direct you and defend you, as you follow him!" This shows the obligation of every believer in Christ to imitate the example of Christ's spirit and willingness to suffer.

1. In the same way. "As I have instructed servants to submit to their masters." **You wives.** Some think Peter assumes his readers have already seen Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. Compare *Eph. 5:21-24; 1 Cor. 7:13-15.* Since women had been treated as slaves or at least *second class citizens*, they saw the *freedom in Christ as being let out of jail!* This is one reason why it was necessary to write certain things to them, and tell them not to **abuse** their freedom! **So that.** "If your husband is an unbeliever, you may win him by your conduct as you live a sweet, Christian life of peace." **For you to saw a word.** "You cannot *argue* your husband into the Kingdom, but you may *live* him into it!" *Ben Sira* said: "A silent woman is the gift of the Lord . . . a loud crying woman and a scold shall be sought out to drive away enemies."

2. They will see. "Actions often speak louder than words!"

3. You should not use. Peter's meaning is: "No amount of ostentatious display can substitute for a gracious Christian personality!" In the Bible, modesty always has to do with "overdressing to the point of being absurd." If what Peter says were taken *literally*, it would forbid wearing any clothes at all! But the woman who spends her time on the outward aids will not secure her husband's love as much as she will with a pure and reverent life. Compare *1 Tim. 2:9-10; Isa. 3:17-23.*

you wear. ⁴Instead, your beauty should consist of your true inner self, the ageless beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of the greatest value in God's sight. ⁵For the devout women of the past, who hoped in God, used to make themselves beautiful in this way, by submitting themselves to their husbands. ⁶Sarah was like that; she obeyed Abraham and called him "My master." You are now her daughters if you do good and are not afraid of anything.

⁷You husbands, also, in living with your wives you must recognize that they are the weaker sex. So you must treat them with respect, because they also will receive, together with you, God's gift of life. Do this so that nothing will interfere with your prayers.

Suffering for Doing Right

⁸To conclude: you must all have the same thoughts and the same feelings; love one another as brothers, and be kind and humble with one

clothes. Instead, it should be ⁴that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. ⁵For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like ⁶Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

⁷Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Suffering for Doing Good

⁸Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate

4. **Your beauty should consist.** "Develop a radiant personality! This is the true ageless beauty! It shines out of a gentle and quiet spirit, not one that is loud and quarrelsome! God will not be impressed with your *display*, but he will value your gentle and quiet spirit!"

5. **For the devout woman.** "Those devout women of the past whose names are in the Scripture made themselves beautiful in this way!"

6. **Sarah was like that.** "There is no disgrace or shame in submitting to your husband! Jewish women think of Sarah as *the example* of a good wife. See how she did! Even if you are married to an unbeliever who objects to your new life in Christ, you must still respect him and submit to him in everything (but of course stand firm in the faith)." It seems to be especially easy for a wife to despise her husband. See *Eph. 5:22-23* and notes. **Her daughters.** As Abraham is the father of the faithful, so Sarah is the mother of all Christian women, who should imitate her example. **If you do good.** Submit to your husbands. **And are not afraid.** "Fearlessness is part of the Christian Character. Do not allow your husband or pagan society to frighten you into acting contrary to our Christian religion!"

7. **You husbands, also.** "Before becoming a Christian, you may have treated your wife as a slave. Do not do this!" **Weaker sex.** Peter does not mean weaker in intelligence or moral character, but weaker in physical strength. This fact made her a second class citizen in the eyes of some. But in Christ's church there is neither class, sex, nor social status! See *Gal. 3:28*. **Because** "Your wife is your *companion-counterpart* (see note on *Matt. 19:5*). As a Christian, she also shares God's gift of life!" **Interfere.** "Family quarrels make it impossible to join in prayer, and often make the prayers of either impossible!"

8. **To conclude.** "I have been telling you how to manage your affairs as a religious society." **You must all.** "You must have a sense of being ONE in Christ! **As brothers.** "Treat each other as members of the same family!" **Be kind and humble.** "Don't quarrel and fight! Instead work for the good of each other!"

another. ⁹Do not pay back evil with evil, or cursing; instead pay back with a blessing, because a blessing is what God promised to give you when he called you. ¹⁰As the scripture says,

“Whoever wants to enjoy life and wishes to see good times, must keep from speaking evil and stop telling lies.

¹¹He must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

¹²For the Lord keeps his eyes on the righteous and always listens to their prayers; but he turns against those who do evil.”

¹³Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for doing what is right, how happy you are! Do not be afraid of men, and do not worry. ¹⁵But have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and make him your Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you

and humble. Do not repay ⁹ evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For,

“Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.

He must turn from evil ¹¹ and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

For the eyes of the Lord ¹² are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

Who is going to harm you ¹³ if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.” But in your hearts ¹⁵ acknowledge Christ as the holy Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope

9. **Do not pay back.** “Do not take revenge!” **Instead.** “Pay back evil with good, as Christ taught (*Matt. 5:38-42*)! In this way you will help to prevent quarrels and fighting!” **Because a blessing.** “God promised you a blessing! But he will treat you just as you treat others!”

10. **As the scripture says.** Peter paraphrases *Psalms 34:12-16* Septuagint. “David also said it was necessary to live this way, to reach that eternal country!” **Must.** See *1 Pet. 2:1* and note.

11. **And do good.** “It is not enough to just turn away from evil. You must actively make a habit of doing good!” Compare *Matt. 12:43-45* and notes.

12. **For the Lord.** “When you actively make a habit of doing good, you keep yourself in God’s fellowship! He watches over you and hears your prayers!” **But he turns.** “If you do evil, he will turn away from you!”

13. **Who will harm you?** “As a general rule, we *reap what we sow*. If you are eager to do good to those who wrong you and forgive even those who will not thank you for it, others will treat you this way also!”

14. **But even.** “You may have to suffer for Christ. The hate of evil men may force this upon you. If so, *be happy!*” Compare *James 1:2-4* and notes. Peter is saying that God will bless you in this. Compare also *Heb. 12:5-13*. **Do not be afraid.** See *Luke 12:4-5*. **Do not worry.** See *Matt. 6:34*.

15. **But have reverence.** Peter expects persecution to intensify, and wants Christians to prepare themselves for it. If a Christian is to stand firm, he must have reverence for Christ in his heart and he is to submit to whatever suffering comes his way, recognizing that Christ is Lord! **Be ready.** “Christians expect an eternal life of happiness in the body, after death. Be ready to tell others who ask about this. But do not be proud or boastful, or threaten them when you do it.”

have in you. ¹⁶But do it with gentleness and respect. Keep your conscience clear, so that when you are insulted, those who speak evil of your good conduct as followers of Christ will be made ashamed of what they say. ¹⁷Because it is better to suffer for doing good, if this should be God's will, than for doing wrong. ¹⁸For Christ himself died for you; once and for all he died for sins, a good man for bad men, in order to lead you to God. He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually, ¹⁹and in his spiritual existence he went and preached to the imprisoned spirits. ²⁰These were the spirits of those who had not obeyed God, when he waited patiently during the days that Noah was building the ark. The few people in the ark—eight in all—were saved

that you have. But do this ¹⁶with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is ¹⁷better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ ¹⁸died for your sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom ¹⁹also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who ²⁰disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were

16. **But do it.** "Whether you are asked to explain your hope by some person or a court of law, do it with gentleness and respect! By doing this, those who accuse Christians of evil conduct will be made ashamed of the things they say against you."

17. **Because it is better.** Compare *1 Pet. 2:20* and note. **God's will.** *MacKnight* says: "The apostle adds this to show that the wicked can do no evil to believers but by the permission of God." Compare *Job 1:6-12; 1 Cor. 10:13*.

18. **For Christ himself.** "Some are saying that our suffering proves that our cause is bad, and that God is displeased with us. This is not true, as you can see from the fact that Christ himself died for us!" **Once and for all.** Peter emphasized the *completeness* of God's work in Christ. **A good man for bad men.** "He is an example of one who suffered for doing good!" **In order.** "He did this so that by means of his *sin-offering*, he might lead you to God." **Physically.** "As the Logos in human form, he died physically, just as all men do!" **Spiritually.** *Johnson* says: "Having life in himself, as soon as the body failed through weakness, the power of the indestructible life began to show itself." Christ *actually* died physically, Christ was *actually* made alive spiritually (and his body raised from death). He is both the example and the guarantee of our resurrection! In raising Christ from death, God showed his approval of Christ's act of dying for the sins of the world!!!

19. **And in.** "In his spiritual existence he went and preached through Noah (*2 Pet. 2:5*) to those who are now imprisoned spirits." [Some think Jesus actually went into the world of the dead and preached the Good News to them there. But this and other views cause theological difficulties.]

20. **These were the spirits.** "These *now imprisoned* were the spirits of those who had not obeyed God, when He waited patiently for them to turn from sin during the days (120 years) that Noah was building the ark." **The few people.** "Out of all those who lived at the time of Noah, only eight were saved. They were in the ark (according to God's instructions), and the same water that destroyed the others, was the means of their salvation! This teaches us that we should not be prejudiced against the Good News when we see others rejecting it!"

by the water, ²¹which was a figure pointing to baptism, which now saves you. It is not the washing off of bodily dirt, but the promise made to God from a good conscience. It saves you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone to heaven and is at the right side of God, ruling over all angels and heavenly authorities and powers.

Changed Lives

4 Since Christ suffered physically, you too must strengthen yourselves with the same way of thinking; because whoever suffers physically is no longer involved with sin. ²From now on, then, you must live the rest of your earthly lives controlled by God's will, not by human

saved through water, and ²¹this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven ²²and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Living for God

4 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does ²not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of

21. **Which was a figure.** "The water of the flood itself, which held them safe in the ark, was a figure pointing to baptism which now saves you!" *Alford* (Greek Testament) says: "Water saved them, bearing up the ark; it saves us, becoming to us baptism." See *Acts 22:16* and note. Baptism is the climax to the *faith event* in which a person becomes new in Christ! [On the nature of faith, see note on *James 2:19*.] It is not. Peter says this to *by exclusion*, contrast "Christian baptism" with Jewish rituals of purification and pagan washings, and even the Flood itself (which did wash away the sin-contaminated flesh of those in Noah's day). See chart on *Acts 19:3*. **But the promise.** "The one who in good conscience comes to the water of baptism, has believed in Christ, turned away from his sins and turned to God, declared his faith in Christ, and now baptism becomes both the *point of contact* and the promise or pledge of his or her new life." **It saves you.** "Baptism saves you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, from which it draws its power, and which is *acted out* in the burial in the liquid grave." Compare *Col. 2:12*; *1 Cor. 15:13-17*.

22. **Who has gone to heaven.** *Heb. 9:24*. **The right side.** *Heb. 10:12*. **Ruling.** *Heb. 1:1-3*; *1 Cor. 15:25*. The rule of Christ even over angels and heavenly authorities and powers is further proof that he is able to save his people! See *Eph. 1:20-23*.

1. **Since Christ.** "Since Christ suffered physically and died to save his people, each of you must have this same attitude! You must be willing to die for Christ, if this should be God's will for you!" See note on *1 Pet. 3:17*. **Because.** "The person who has firmly made up his mind to die rather than renounce Christ, has freed himself from the power of sin!"

2. **From now on.** "Your baptism was a promise (*1 Pet. 3:21*) to God! You must allow God's will to control your earthly lives! You must not allow either your human nature or fear of persecution to turn you back to the old ways! If you have overcome fear of persecution and death, weaker temptations will be no problem to you!"

desires. ³You have spent enough time in the past doing what the heathen like to do. Your lives were spent in indecency, lust, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and the disgusting worship of idols. ⁴And now the heathen are surprised when you do not join them in the same wild and reckless living, and so they insult you. ⁵But they will give an account of themselves to God, who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶That is why the Good News was preached also to the dead, to those who had been judged in their physical existence as all men are judged; it was preached to them so that in their spiritual existence they may live as God lives.

God. For you have spent ³ enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it ⁴ strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. But they will have to give ⁵ account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason ⁶ the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

Good Managers of God's Gifts

⁷The end of all things is near. You must be self-controlled and alert, to be able to pray.

⁸Above everything, love one another earnestly,

The end of all things is ⁷ near. Therefore be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above ⁸ all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a

3. **You have spent enough time.** "You never should have lived this way at all, but whatever time you spent was too much!" **Indecency.** Here the word means: "one who actually practices immorality, adultery, incest, homosexuality, etc., and doesn't care who knows it!" The technical term is *lasciviousness*.

4. **And now.** "The heathen cannot understand why you do not join them in these things as you once did! And so they insult you and make fun of you and say you are antisocial!" The worshippers of Bacchus, in their orgies and drinking parties, would run up and down the public streets and fields like crazy people, doing their indecencies!

5. **But they.** "Don't let these things disturb you. All these will have to answer to God for what they are doing! Christ will judge them as well as you!" In Jewish thought, *living* = God's people; *dead* = Gentiles. See *verse 6*.

6. **That is why.** "To encourage you to suffer death for Christ, know that is why the Good News was preached also to the Gentiles dead in sin (*Eph. 2:1*), to make them know Christ; to those who had been judged and condemned to death in their physical existence as all men are judged (*Rom. 3:9*); it was preached to them so that by the power of God, in their spiritual existence (as Christ now lives) they may *live as God lives*." This applies to both right now, and to eternity. [I have followed *MacKnight* on this.]

7. **The end of all things.** To the Jewish mind, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was the *end of all things!* See *Matt. 24:1-3* and notes. This can also be understood in view of *John's last hour* (*1 John 2:18*). **You must be.** Compare *1 Thess. 5:6-8; Matt. 24:42-44*.

8. **Love one another earnestly.** "Love is the mortar which builds living stones into the house where God lives through his Spirit (*Eph. 2:20-22*). Without this *love* to hold you together, you will be nothing but a pile of jagged rocks! If you love one another, you will be more strongly motivated to help one another, especially in this time of persecution! For love will make you overlook the many faults you see in each other!"

because love covers over many sins. ⁹Open your homes to each other, without complaining. ¹⁰Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. ¹¹Whoever preaches, must preach God's words; whoever serves, must serve with the strength that God gives him, so that in all things praise may be given to God through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

Suffering as a Christian

¹²My dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful test you are suffering, as though something unusual were happening to you. ¹³Rather be glad that you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may be full of joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴Happy are you if you are insulted because you are Christ's followers; this means that the glorious Spirit, the Spirit of God, is resting on you. ¹⁵None of you should suffer because he is a murderer, or a thief, or a criminal, or tries

multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever spiritual gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Suffering for Being a Christian

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in Christ's sufferings, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.

9. **Open your homes.** Persecution often made it necessary to "run for your life!" Hospitality was therefore especially important! See notes on *Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2*.

10. **Each one.** Peter means the gifts from the Spirit (*1 Cor. 12:4, 28*), but the same principle applies to everyone. Each one is to think of his abilities and talents as *gifts from God*, and to use them wisely for the good of others (*Gal. 6:10*).

11. **Whoever preaches.** "He must preach it as a message from God, of whom he is a servant (*1 Cor. 3:5* and note)." **Whoever serves.** Compare *Acts 6:2-4* and notes. "The one who serves must view this as serving Christ by proxy!" Compare *Matt. 25:31-46*. "Your good works praise God through Christ!" *Matt. 5:16*.

12. **Do not be surprised.** "Do not think the painful test is something which never happened to the people of God before!"

13. **Rather be glad.** "Suffering only proves that you are God's child! (See *Heb. 12:5-11*.) Be glad that you are sharing Christ's sufferings! (See *2 Cor. 1:5-7*.) When Christ's glory is revealed, you will receive your reward!"

14. **If you are insulted.** See *Matt. 5:3, 11-12* and notes. **This means.** "If you had the spirit from the Enemy of Christ, the world would not insult you. The fact that they do insult you because you are Christ's followers, proves that the glorious Spirit is resting on you!"

15. **None of you.** "Being guilty of such things as these bring neither glory or reward to those who suffer because of them!"

to manage other people's business. ¹⁶But if you suffer because you are a Christian, don't be ashamed of it, but thank God that you bear Christ's name.

¹⁷The time has come for the judgment to begin, and God's own people are the first to be judged. If it starts with us, how will it end with those who do not believe the Good News from God? ¹⁸As the scripture says,

"It is difficult for good men to be saved; what, then, will become of the godless and sinful?"

¹⁹So then, those who suffer because it is God's will for them, should by their good actions trust themselves completely to their Creator, who always keeps his promise.

The Flock of God

5 I appeal to the church elders among you, I who am an elder myself. I am a witness of Christ's sufferings, and I will share in the glory

However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, 18

"If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

So then, those who suffer ¹⁹ according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

To Elders and Young Men

5 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be re-

16. But if you suffer. The name *Christian* was widely used by this time (*Acts 11:26*). Many good people suffered only because they were Christians! **But thank God.** "Praise God for his finished work in Christ that makes it possible for you to bear the *name* of Christ!"

17. The time has come. Those who think this passage teaches that in the Judgment, Christians will just barely squeeze by, do not give full honor to *God's finished work in Christ!* Christians are given full right to enter the eternal Kingdom (*2 Pet. 1:11*)!!! *MacKnight* is right in thinking the judgment is that which Christ predicted in *Matt. 23:25*. Even Christian Jews such as Peter would suffer in the events which led up to the destruction of Jerusalem! But Josephus tells us no Christian Jew was in Jerusalem when it was destroyed (see note on *Matt. 24:21*).

18. As the scripture says. Peter paraphrases *Prov. 11:31* and *Ezek. 9:8-11*. "The time has come for judgment to be poured out on the Jewish nation for their crimes, and it must begin with you Jewish Christians who have become *in fact* God's own people! If God allows such punishment to come on us, whom He loves so dearly because of our faith in Christ, what will He do to those Jews who reject His Son???" *Johnson* applies the *principle* to the whole church. "If even we Christians must suffer in this life, what will God do to the godless and sinful after the Judgment???"

19. So then. "In punishing the Jews, God is just! Therefore, if we suffer as a Christian, because it is God's will for us, we should trust ourselves completely to God's care by living holy lives full of good actions. And we know our Creator always keeps his promise, and he will raise us to eternal life at the Resurrection!" Compare *Rom. 8:28* and note.

1. To the church elders. See notes on *Titus 1:5*; *Acts 6:3*. **An elder myself.** Peter is an apostle, but he takes the title only of *elder* (which he was) to speak to them as *one of you*. **A witness.** Peter was an eye-witness of the things he writes about. **Will share.** As an apostle, Peter already shared in ruling the world through the Good News (*Matt. 19:28* and note). Peter here looks forward to glory that will be revealed at Christ's Coming, when we will see the *completeness* of God's finished work in Christ (which stands as a historical fact).

that will be revealed. I appeal to you: ²be shepherds of the flock that God gave you, and look after it willingly, as God wants you to, and not unwillingly. Do your work, not for mere pay, but from a real desire to serve. ³Do not try to rule over those who have been given into your care, but be examples to the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the glorious crown which will never lose its brightness.

⁵In the same way, you younger men must submit yourselves to the older men. And all of you must put on the apron of humility, to serve one another; for the scripture says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." ⁶Humble yourselves, then, under God's mighty hand, so that he will lift you up in his own good time.

vealed: Be shepherds of 2
God's flock that is under
your care, serving as over-
seers—not because you
must, but because you are
willing, as God wants you to
be; not greedy for money,
but eager to serve; not lord- 3
ing it over those entrusted
to you, but being examples
to the flock. And when the 4
Chief Shepherd appears, you
will receive the crown of
glory that will never fade
away.

Young men, in the same 5
way be submissive to those
who are older. Clothe your-
selves with humility toward
one another, because,
"God opposes the proud
but gives grace to the
humble."
Humble yourselves, there- 6
fore, under God's mighty
hand, that he may lift you

2. **Be shepherds.** In Palestine, the shepherd led the sheep out into the fields where they could find plenty to eat. The shepherd did not *drive* the sheep, but he led and they followed. Shepherds watched out for dangers, and if a sheep wandered away from the flock, he went after it and brought it back. This is a beautiful example of the work of the church elder. [Pastor is another word for shepherd. Preacher = evangelist. See note on *Eph. 4:11.*] **Willingly.** "God wants you to fill this job because you have a sense of the honor and mission of such work." **Not for mere pay.** Some church elders were paid a salary (*1 Tim. 5:17-18*). This is one of the *efficiencies* of a larger congregation. But the elder who is paid, must do it because he has a real desire to serve, and not with a "hired hand" attitude.

3. **Do not try to rule.** Church elders are not permitted to **DOMINEER** the flock of God! Compare what Jesus said in *Luke 22:25-26*. **Given into your care.** **THE FLOCK IS GOD'S!** The elders have been called to shepherd it! **But be examples.** "You should set the example in your own lives, of love, humility, benevolence, hospitality, etc., that God expects all Christians to develop!" Compare *1 Thess. 1:7; 1 Tim. 4:12*.

4. **And when.** "To encourage you to fulfill your mission, I tell you that when the Chief Shepherd appears, who owns the flock, you will receive the eternal reward!" [The idea of a put-in-for-life church Boss is not in the Bible!!!]

5. **In the same way.** Greeks and Romans looked at *humility* as being bad, not good. But things are to be different in the messianic community! As elders are to be motivated by a real desire to serve, so are all the others. **You younger men.** *MacKnight* understands this to mean *less mature Christians* are to submit to the *more mature leadership*. Compare *1 John 2:12-14*. **The apron of humility.** The TEV gives the literal translation, the NIV gives the meaning. *Julius Polux* says the apron was worn by slaves. Compare *James 4:6*. The quotation is *Prov. 3:34*.

6. **Humble yourselves.** "Since God resists the proud, be sure to humble yourselves under God's mighty hand! Take his punishments patiently, so that he will lift you to heaven in his own good time, as he promised!"

7 Throw all your worries on him, because he cares for you.

8 Be alert, be on watch! Your enemy, the Devil, roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. **9** Be firm in your faith and resist him, because you know that your fellow believers in all the world are going through the same kind of sufferings. **10** But after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who calls you to share his eternal glory in union with Christ, will himself perfect you, and give you firmness, strength, and a sure foundation. **11** To him be the power forever! Amen.

Final Greetings

12 I write you this brief letter with the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother. I want to encourage you and give my testimony that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.

up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 7

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 8 9

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. 10

With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in 11

7. Throw all your worries on him. "Don't spend a lot of time worrying about persecutions, or whether you will have food and shelter, or what the future holds for you! God loves you and will work things out for you in ways you cannot even imagine! Do what you can, of course, but throw all your worries on Him!!!" Compare *Matt. 6:25-34*.

8. Be alert! "Even though you throw all your worries on Him, yet do not neglect lawful opportunities to escape trouble!" Compare *Acts 22:25* and note. **Like a roaring lion.** A lion hunts quietly, so we see in this the fact that the Devil is *sneaky* in the way he tries to fool you and seduce you to sin! But this is a *roaring* lion! The lion roars to terrify and panic his victim and paralyze it with fear. Then the warning is: "Don't let the roaring of Satan frighten you into giving up your promise in Christ!"

9. And resist him. "Resist the Devil (*James 4:7*) by being firm in your faith and he will run away from you!" **Because you know.** "As you well know, all your fellow believers are going through the same things here in this world!" Compare *1 Thess. 2:14-16* and notes. [There is a tradition which says that after Christ declared the final punishment of the Devil in such clear terms, that *being* lost all hope and goes about eager to drag down all mankind to the doom which he faces!]

10. But after. "Compared to the joys of Eternity, the sufferings of this life are both *light* and *brief*!" Compare *2 Cor. 4:16-18*. **Will himself perfect you.** Since this is after *suffering a little while*, it must be speaking of *his eternal glory* which Christians expect to share in Eternity. Compare *1 John 3:1-3*. But Peter could also refer to the fact that the persecution would terminate at the death of Nero, and there would be a period of peace.

11. To him! Peter's doxology. *MacKnight* sees in this the fact that the Devil has no power in the Universe, or ability to tempt men, except as God permits!

12. With the help of Silas. This is Paul's old companion! He is the one who *wrote down* this letter and also the one who delivered it. *Johnson* says: "It has been supposed that Paul, then a prisoner at Rome, had sent Silas to Peter." [Silvanus is the Latin spelling of Silas.] **The true grace of God.** The Good News of God's finished work in Christ to set men free!

¹³Your sister church in Babylon, also chosen by God, sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark. ¹⁴Greet each other with the kiss of Christian love.

May peace be with all of you who belong to Christ.

it. She who is in Babylon, ¹³ chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. Greet ¹⁴ one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

13. **In Babylon.** Probably Babylon on the Euphrates. Some think this is a *code name* for Rome, but history does not place Peter in Rome at this date. *Alford* (Greek Testament) says: "There is no reason whatever for regarding this any place but the Chaldean capital (Babylon on the Euphrates)." **Mark.** Probably the John Mark who wrote the Gospel.

14. **With the kiss.** See note on *Rom. 16:16*.