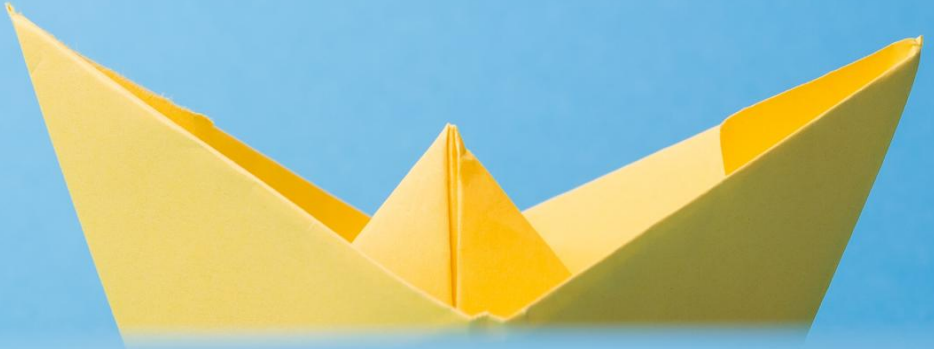


PETER

*Out of the Water*





# PETER

*Out of the Water*

Zack Flipse



*An Oostburg CRC Media production*

## Bibliography

1. Scripture quotations taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright © 1984 by International Bible Society
2. Barnes, Albert. *Notes on the New Testament: James, Peter, John, and Jude*. Baker Book House, 1959.
3. Kistemaker, Simon J. *Exposition of the Epistles of Peter and of the Epistle of Jude*. Baker Book House, 1987.
4. McNab, Andrew, et al. *The New Bible Commentary*. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968.
5. Fausset, A. R., et al. *Jamieson, Fausset & Browns Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Zondervan Pub. House, 1961.
6. Gromacki, Robert Glenn. *New Testament Survey*. Baker Book House, 1974.
7. MacArthur, John. *Twelve Ordinary Men: How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness, and What He Wants to Do with You*. Thomas Nelson, 2002.
8. Miller, John, et al. *Fisherman to Follower: The Life and Teaching of Simon Peter*. Hayes Press, 2015.
9. Eusebius, et al. *The Ecclesiastical History*. Harvard University Press, 1992.
10. Roberts, Alexander, et al. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*. Vol. 1, The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885.
11. Bruce, F. F. *The Defense of the Gospel in the New Testament*. Eerdmans, 1977.
12. Greenway, Roger S. *Go and Make Disciples!: An Introduction to Christian Missions*. P & R Publishing, 1999.
13. Shelley, Bruce L. *Church History in Plain Language*. Word Publishing, 2008.
14. Josephus, Flavius, and William Whiston. *The Complete Works*. T. Nelson Publishers, 1998.
15. Foxe, John. *Foxes Book of Martyrs*. Spire Books, 1971.
16. Staniforth, Maxwell. *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers*. Penguin Books, 1968.
17. Mitchell, Alexander Ferrier. *The Westminster Confession*. Thomas Paton, Printer.
18. *The Heidelberg Catechism*. CRC Publications, 1988.
19. Carson, D. A., et al. *New Bible Commentary*. Inter-Varsity Press, 1998.
20. Henry, Matthew, et al. *The NIV Matthew Henry Commentary in One Volume: Based on the Broad Oak Edition*. Zondervan Pub. House, 1992.
21. Packer, J.I. *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs*. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1993.
22. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles: The Second Epistle of Peter*, ed. And trans. John Owen. Eerdmans, 1984.
23. Photo by Alex on Unsplash, Cover by Zack Flipse © Oostburg CRC Media 2019.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1. Setting the Stage.....</b>                       | <b>5</b>  |
| <i>The Author</i>                                      |           |
| <i>The Setting</i>                                     |           |
| <i>The Theology</i>                                    |           |
| <b>2. Chosen &amp; Preserved (I Peter 1:1-12).....</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>3. Anchored in Rock (I Peter 1:13-2:12).....</b>    | <b>23</b> |
| <b>4. Humbled to Serve (I Peter 2:13-3:7).....</b>     | <b>33</b> |
| <b>5. Wives &amp; Husbands (I Peter 3:1-3:12).....</b> | <b>39</b> |
| <b>6. Preach the Gospel (I Peter 3:13-22).....</b>     | <b>45</b> |
| <b>7. Living it Out (I Peter 4).....</b>               | <b>55</b> |
| <b>8. Making Disciples (I Peter 5).....</b>            | <b>61</b> |
| <b>9. Authority &amp; Truth (II Peter 1).....</b>      | <b>69</b> |
| <i>The Resetting</i>                                   |           |
| <b>10. False Teachers (II Peter 2).....</b>            | <b>77</b> |
| <b>11. The Second Coming (II Peter 3).....</b>         | <b>85</b> |
| <i>Addendum: Lasting Impact (Jude).....</i>            |           |
|  | <b>91</b> |



---

# SETTING THE STAGE

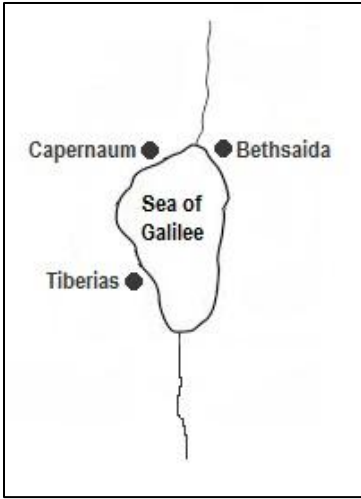
## *The Author*

- I & II Peter were written by Simon Peter, a disciple of Jesus and Apostle in the early church. Scripture refers to him by a few different names:
  - Simon
  - Peter
  - Simon Peter
  - Cephas (Aramaic for Peter)
- Simon Peter and his brother Andrew grew up in Bethsaida, a small, rural town on the north side of the Sea of Galilee.
- They grew up in relative proximity to four other disciples: James and John (another pair of brothers, sons of Zebedee), Philip, and Nathanael (John 1:44). It is likely they knew each other, to some degree, from an early age.

*“Since they were all God-fearing Jews, Philip probably grew up attending the same synagogue as Peter and Andrew. Because of the relationship that existed between them and the sons of Zebedee, Philip was possibly acquainted with all four.”*

*(MacArthur, 139)*

- These men all made a living as fishermen. While the average small town fisherman in Jesus’ day was uneducated and lower-class, that’s not true in every case. While Philip and Nathanael fit that bill, James and John (the sons of Zebedee) seem to have been raised with some wealth.
  - The fishing business was large enough to hire workers (Mark 1:20).
  - Moreover, Zebedee’s family is known favorably to the high priest, so John is able to go into his home (John 18:15).
- Simon Peter exists somewhere between those two worlds. Luke 5:10 describes James and John as his “partners.” It seems Simon Peter and Andrew’s fishing business did well, itself. They were able to move from rural Bethsaida to the “big city,” Capernaum.



*“Peter and Andrew were originally from the village of Bethsaida (John 1:44)...At some point, the brothers relocated to the larger city of Capernaum, close by their hometown. In fact, Peter and Andrew shared a house in Capernaum (Mark 1:29) and operated a fishing business together from there. Capernaum afforded an especially advantageous location, situated as it was on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee (where fishing was good)--and located at the junction of key trade routes.”*

*(MacArthur, 73)*

- While Simon Peter may not have been formally educated, by the time Jesus meets him he's at least been educated as a disciple of John the Baptist. It is Andrew who initially introduces his brother to the Savior.

*“The next day John [the Baptist] was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God!’ When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus...Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.”*

*(John 1:35-37, 40-42).*

- Simon Peter’s history seems to contradict the “poor, uneducated, small town fisherman” stereotype. Rather, we find him to be:
  - A successful businessman (partnered with Zebedee)
  - A smart businessman (moved to Capernaum)
  - A studying believer (discipled by John)
  - A committed believer (follower of Jesus)
- Despite his many strengths and successes, we often find Simon Peter in precarious predicaments of his own making. He is the recipient of frequent



rebukes from Jesus and gets himself into several near disastrous situations. We will cover many of these stories as we read his letters.

*“Peter was eager, aggressive, bold, and outspoken—with a habit of revving his mouth while his brain was in neutral. I have often referred to him as the apostle with the foot-shaped mouth.”*

*(MacArthur, 37)*

- It seems the things that made him a great leader—his confidence, boldness, and willingness to speak—are the same things that got in his way.
- The rapper *Propaganda* describes his own faith walk as being “slow cooked.” He grew up with faith, but it took a long time for him to truly live for Jesus. Peter’s story is very much the same, and so many Christians can relate. This is what makes Peter feel so common.

*“It was, after all, the Lord who chose him to be the leader. Peter was formed and equipped by God’s sovereign design to be the leader. Moreover, Christ Himself shaped and trained Peter to be the leader. Therefore when we look at Peter, we see how God builds a leader.”*

*(MacArthur, 45)*

- By the end of Jesus’ time on earth, Peter was ready to lead. At Pentecost, Peter stood up and gave the first sermon of the church age (Acts 2:14). 3,000 people were saved that day, and every day after their numbers grew (Acts 2:47).
- A short time later, Peter was put in jail. Even from prison, his message reached another 2,000 hearts (Acts 4:4), and every day after their numbers continued to grow (Acts 5:14).
- Not only was Peter the first to preach about Jesus, he was also the first to preach that good news to the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-45).

*“The first forty years saw the infant church spread at a phenomenal rate. It sprang up in most of the major cities in the Roman Empire and was transformed from a tiny Jewish sect into a fellowship of many different peoples.”*

*(Shelley, 16)*

- Peter is undoubtedly the leader of the early church during this period of explosive growth, and a teacher in the growing Christian communities in Rome.

## The Setting

- It was about this time when Paul was converted and began to preach the good news, too. If Peter was “slow cooked,” Paul was “deep fried.” After an encounter with God, “at once [Paul] began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God” (Acts 9:20).
- Peter and Paul’s differences didn’t end there. While their first time spent together started off on the right foot, it ended with a big, public dust-up.

*“For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. All they asked was that we continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew.”*

*(Galatians 2:8-14)*

- Peter, slow to change, still wasn’t completely comfortable doing life with Gentiles—especially not in front of prominent Jews. Paul, on the other hand, was eager to live and work among the Gentiles. For this reason Paul, in front of everybody, calls Peter a hypocrite.
- This is the only interaction between these two men described in Scripture.
- It was not, however, their only interaction—as historians Irenaeus, Eusebius, Dionysius, and others make abundantly clear.

*“Since, however...tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul.”*

*(Irenaeus, III.II.II)*

*“You have thus by such an admonition bound together the planting of Peter and of Paul at Rome...”*

*(Dionysius in Eusebius, II.XXV.VIII)*

- Peter substantiates these claims in the concluding remarks of I & II Peter:
  - He is in Rome
    - I Peter 5:13; “She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings...”
  - He is with Mark
    - I Peter 5:13; “...and so does my son Mark.”
  - He is familiar with current letters from Paul
    - II Peter 3:15-16; “...Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters...”
- “Babylon” is a common 1<sup>st</sup> century allusion to Rome.

*“From Revelation and also from Jewish writings we learn that to call Rome ‘Babylon’ was commonplace. Jewish writers did so because of the similarity between the Babylonians destroying Solomon’s temple in 586 B.C. and the Romans destroying Jerusalem in A.D. 70.*

*(Kistemaker, 20).*

- This information serves us in three ways:
  - Despite their confrontation at Antioch, Peter and Paul taught a unified Gospel message and affirmed one another’s work.
  - Peter’s connection to Paul during this time calms critics who suggest I & II Peter are too similar to Paul’s writing to be authored by anyone else.
  - Peter’s connection to Mark, his interpreter, calms critics who suggest I & II Peter are written too well in Greek to have been authored by the Aramaic speaking Peter. We should also note that Peter’s brother Andrew had a Greek name.

*“Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter.”*  
(Irenaeus, III.I.I)

*“The fact that his own brother’s name, Andrew, is a Greek one suggests that from boyhood Peter would have grown up with this language.”*  
(Wheaton, 1369)

- Peter and Paul worked together in Rome for several years (about 61-68 A.D.) up until the time of their deaths. Paul is a prisoner in Rome (Acts 28) roughly 60-61 A.D. Persecution of Christians exists in Rome, but won’t intensify until the Great Fire of Rome in 64 A.D. under Nero.

*“Among other diabolical outrages, [Nero] ordered that the city of Rome should be set on fire, which was done by his officers...This dreadful conflagration continued nine days. Nero, finding that a severe odium was cast upon him, determined to charge the whole upon the Christians, at once to excuse himself and have an opportunity of fresh persecutions.”*  
(Fox, 14).

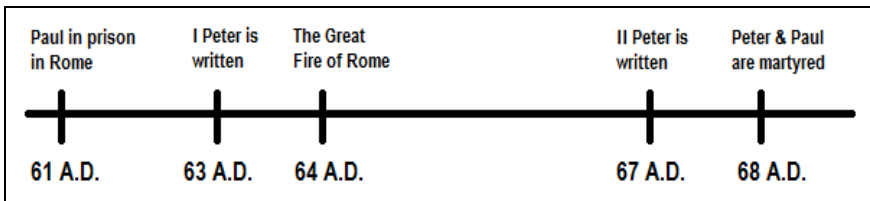
- While historians disagree how *exactly* the fire was started, Nero did indeed use it as an opportunity to persecute Christians.

*“Tacitus calls [Christians] ‘a class of people loathed for their vices’ and says that, when Nero tried to fix the crime of arson on them, a great number were convicted, not so much on this charge (which broke down on examination) but as enemies of humanity. He makes it clear that, in his opinion (and no doubt in the opinion of many others), even if they did not set Rome on fire, they fully deserved the most exemplary punishment because of their general character.”*  
(Bruce, 63)

- As Christian persecution intensified, Peter and Paul became top targets and were martyred for their faith by 68 A.D.

*“St. Peter, after various miracles, retired to Rome, where he defeated the artifices and confounded the magic of Simon Magus, a great favourite of the Emperor Nero: he likewise converted to Christianity one of the minions of that monarch, which so exasperated the tyrant, that he ordered both St. Peter and St. Paul to be apprehended. During the time of their confinement, they converted two of the captains of the guard and forty-seven other persons to Christianity. Having been nine months in prison, Peter was brought from thence for execution, when, after being severely scourged, he was crucified with his head downwards; which position, however, was at his own request.”*  
*(Fox, 12)*

- Shortly following Peter’s crucifixion, Paul was beheaded at the request of Nero. Of the six fisherman from Bethsaida—Peter, Andrew, James, John, Nathanael, and Philip—five of them were martyred under Nero “about the same time” (Fox, 13). Only Andrew was not part of this group, and only because he had been crucified two years earlier.
- Because of the similarities between Peter’s letters and much of Paul’s writing, we expect I & II Peter to be written sometime after Paul arrived in Rome and before the two Apostles were crucified. Peter cites the sufferings of Christians in the world, but is not yet at odds with governing authorities as you would expect beginning in 64 A.D. The historical and textual evidence suggests a dating, then, of 63 A.D—before persecution intensified.



- It is interesting to consider how Paul and Peter may have influenced each other’s writing at the time. Many theologians date Paul’s Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon) and Pastoral Epistles (I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus) during his imprisonment in Rome circa 61 A.D. This would mean Paul and Peter were together for the writing of nine letters included in our New Testament today (Paul’s seven and Peter’s two letters).

## The Theology

- I Peter is addressed to believers “scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia” (I Peter 1:1). The letter, however, doesn’t contain any contextual information specific to these cities that isn’t common to believers throughout the Roman Empire. II Peter, in fact, is broadly addressed to those who “have received faith” (II Peter 1:1). It is likely Peter simply meant to address these letters to a wide audience.



*(adapted from Kistemaker, 34)*

- This makes the contents of the letter easily applicable to Christians today.

*“There is almost nothing that is local or of temporary interest; there are no discussions about points pertaining to Jewish customs such as we meet with in Paul; there is little that pertains particularly to one age of the world or country. Almost all that he has written is of universal applicability to Christians, and may be read with as much interest and profit now by us as the people to whom his epistles were addressed.”*

*(Barnes, 106)*

- Peter’s letters are a refreshing blend of thought-provoking theology and practical applications woven together by hope for times of suffering.

*“In brief, the purpose for writing this letter is that Peter wishes to convey a message of hope and encouragement. The word hope is a key word that occurs five times in First Peter. Peter writes a letter of hope to Christians who experience frequent and intense suffering”*  
(Kistemaker, 21)

- Foundational to the ideas expressed in his letters are doctrines of singularity (faith in Christ is the only salvation), election (God chooses His own), perseverance (God keeps His people safe), mission (our work in the world), and sanctification (our growth in Christ-likeness).
- These two short letters provide incredible depth and serve as useful building blocks in Reformed Theology.

*“Peter met their needs by reassuring them of the gospel. Father, Son and Holy Spirit work together to bring us a new life in which the past is forgiven, the present is protected and motivated, and the future assured. This is a way of life to be lived out in practical terms and in everyday relationships. It equips the followers of Jesus for living in the real world of the here and now and for that world of eternal glory for which Jesus is even now preparing us.”*  
(Wheaton, 1372)

- Peter makes frequent references to the Old Testament, as he also does in the sermons recorded in Acts. Understanding the God of history, revealed in the Old Testament, is essential to developing theology and understanding the world around us.
- Peter argues this understanding should embolden the people of God to accomplish God’s work in the world. This is fitting, coming from one of the foremost evangelists in history.

*“Peter does not advocate retreat from the world. Rather, he exhorts Christians to live commendable lives in the world and to do that which is good.”*  
(Kistemaker, 21)

- Understanding Peter’s background, encounters with the Christ, and mission work will help us best understand his message.

*“Peter writes as one whose heart has lost none of the first of love stirred up by the Master at the Sea of Tiberius. In this letter there is all the vividness of the personal recollections of a follower of Jesus Christ.”*

*(Wheaton, 1373)*

- In this study guide, each chapter will examine an experience of Peter that provides a fuller picture into the heart behind his teachings. The stories of Peter’s life and ministry contained in the Gospels and Acts give us valuable insight into the message Peter wishes to convey to the broad audience he addresses.



# CHOSEN & PRESERVED

## I Peter 1:1-12

- We have already established the authorship and setting of the letter, which Peter states in the first verse.
- By the second verse, Peter has already moved into deep doctrinal issues.

*“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, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.”*  
(I Peter 1:1-2)

- In two verses, Peter establishes a significant theological position: God chooses his own. This is a consistent position from Peter, found in his first sermon and also his letters.
  - “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39)
  - “To God’s elect” (1:1)
  - “who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God” (1:2)

*“The word foreknowledge appears in Peter’s Pentecost sermon, where he declares to his Jewish audience that Jesus ‘was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge’ (Acts 2:23). Peter implies that God worked according to his sovereign plan and purpose which he had made in advance.”*  
(Kistemaker, 35)

- This doctrine is commonly referred to as predestination, or *election*. The Triune God is the only one who can bring about salvation in a person. Without God’s intervening, no one would ever find their way to Him. Instead, God, by His grace, must choose those who will be called His children.

*“So it is a wonder, and matter for endless praise, that he should choose to save any of us; and doubly so when his choice involved the giving of his own Son to suffer as sin-bearer for the elect. The doctrine of election, like every truth about God, involves mystery and sometimes stirs controversy. But in Scripture it is a pastoral doctrine, brought in to help Christians see how great is the grace that saves them, and move them to humility, confidence, joy, praise, faithfulness, and holiness in response.”*

*(Packer, 149-150)*

- Critiques of election often center around the non-believer. If it is God who chooses to save, isn't it also God who chooses to condemn? This is a misunderstanding of the doctrine. If “there is no one righteous, not even one” (Romans 3:10) and in fact “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), then God's decision is not to condemn them, but to leave them as they desire to be.
- John 3:16-17 explains that Jesus came to save and *not* to condemn. The fact that Jesus came to save implies that the world was *already* condemned and in need of saving. If you need a savior, you need saving from something. God doesn't need to condemn human beings; we've done a fine job of that ourselves.
- We understand, then, that election is not about God condemning at all. It is a doctrine of incredible grace that God would choose those who were far off to be called His children. This is how Peter understands salvation.

*“But if foreknown, must it not be certain? How could a thing which is foreknown be contingent or doubtful? The essential idea here is, that the original choice was on the part of God, and not on their part, and that this choice was founded on what he before knew to be best.”*

*(Barnes, 111)*

- It follows logically that if God is the one issuing salvation, the salvation is assured and set in stone. If it depends on God, it's dependable. If He has in mind to save, the God who never fails will not fail to save. If God has chosen you to be His child, be assured you are certainly His child through and through.

*“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 in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”*  
(1 Peter 1:3-5)

- Peter describes the promised future for the chosen as being imperishable, unfading, kept, and shielded. He paints an interesting picture of how God protects His children.

*“In [verse 5] every word is significant, yet the important term is ‘shielded’ or ‘guarded.’ In the Greek, this verb is a military term that can mean either ‘to protect someone from danger’ or ‘to prevent someone from escaping.’”*  
(Kistemaker, 44)

*“It means to keep, as in a garrison or fortress; or as with a military watch...The meaning is, that they were weak in themselves, and were surrounded by temptations; and that the only reason why they were preserved was, that God exerted his power to keep them.*  
(Barnes, 114)

- This is the doctrine of *perseverance*; God protects His people from unbelief.
- The word choice is exceptional. We are guarded from outside attempts at deception by Satan, and also from our own internal fleshly inclinations. We are kept confined by God as in a sheep’s pen (John 10:16), safe from wolves and from wandering.
- Peter and Paul both describe Christian faith as being God’s slaves (Romans 6:22, 1 Peter 2:16). It’s in this “protective custody” kind of guarding that this slavery should be understood. God keeps us in the place He prepared for us.

*“They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.”*  
(Westminster Confession, XVII.1)

- These two doctrines, election and perseverance, are closely tied and form a biblical, logical system for thinking about our salvation.
- For Peter, this is a reason for praise and joy. They are mercies that ought to prompt the believer to respond with action. Peter worked hard at obedience. Peter worked hard at evangelism. To do less is impossible for true believers.

*“To suppose that believing in perseverance leads to careless living and arrogant presumption is a total misconception. Sometimes the regenerate backslide and fall into gross sin. But in this they act out of character, do violence to their own new nature, and make themselves deeply miserable, so that eventually they seek and find restoration to righteousness. In retrospect, their lapse seems to them to have been madness.”*

*(Packer, 242-243)*

- Peter calls this new character “new birth,” and expects a life of obedience to follow.

*“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so 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 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 receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”*

*(1 Peter 1:6-9)*

- We learn two things about suffering, here.
  - First, suffering is a measure by which we can test for true faith. If suffering causes us to lose faith, then we were never truly elect to begin with. If suffering increases our faith, this can only be the work of God in us.
  - Second, in light of the “inexpressible and glorious joy” that accompanies faith in God, the suffering seems short and little. It’s as if you were asked, “Would you eat this ghost pepper for \$100 million?” The reward so far outweighs the suffering that the proposition is laughable. The test seems small in comparison to the reward. The pepper is hot for a little while, but the reward will last you a lifetime.

- Notice Peter is careful to clarify what exactly this faith is about. This is important, as these doctrines of election and perseverance are only applied to those who are found to have true faith.
- True faith is in the...
  - Triune God (1:2)
    - Chosen by God
    - Sanctified by the Spirit
    - Obedient to Jesus Christ
  - Death of Jesus Christ (1:2)
  - Resurrection of Jesus Christ (1:3)
  - New birth for believers (1:3)
  - Heaven prepared by God (1:4)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ (1:5)
- This is an all or nothing proposition. Peter understands the care, complexity, and research involved in this faith.

*“Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying 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 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.”*  
*(1 Peter 1:10-12)*

- In these first 12 verses, Peter has given an incredibly concise yet detailed description of what salvation is and does. In these final verses, he explains just how special it all is.
- First, he enlists the prophets of the Old Testament. We find that they were not just God’s mouthpieces, but that they “searched intently and with the greatest care” to understand how God would save. What they discovered was that a Messiah would come at an appointed time.
- Second, he notes that even angels cannot comprehend the mystery of salvation.

- This argument supposes that salvation is...
  - Authored by God alone
  - Unfathomable
  - Handled with care
  - Of deep interest to both men and angels
- These ideas about salvation closely inform how Peter lives and preaches, and he encourages his readers to do the same.

*“As the Old Testament prophets searched God’s revelation in an effort to understand its meaning so the recipients of Peter’s letter ought to take the Word of God no less seriously. God has given Christian believers his Word and through it his assurance of their salvation.”*

*(Kistemaker, 58)*

## Backstory: Renounced & Reinstated

- Peter’s rejoicing over God’s guarding and shielding makes sense in light of Peter’s own temporary falling away.
- When Jesus was arrested and put on trial, Peter—true to form—boldly followed. Jesus had said earlier that evening that Peter would disown him three times (Matthew 26:35).
- In the courtyard of the high priest, maybe within earshot of Jesus Himself, Peter sat at a fire. Maybe he felt inadequate or frustrated that John was allowed inside and he wasn’t (John 18:16). Whatever the reason, bold Peter was especially susceptible to the pressures of the world.
- Three times he was asked if he was a follower of Jesus, twice after Jesus was struck in the face just inside the house (John 18:22). And although he had promised Jesus only hours before he would never disown him (Matthew 26:35), all three times he denied being a follower.
- Peter experienced firsthand the fickle nature of the flesh. One hour a devoted follower, the next a deserter. But He also experienced firsthand the length God would go to guard His own children.
- After His resurrection, Jesus questions Peter three times, “Do you love me?” Peter answered correctly each time, as if to reinstate him from his previous three denials. Jesus emphatically called him again to “Follow me!”

*“The third time [Jesus] said to him, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ He said, ‘Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Feed my sheep’...’Then he said to him, ‘Follow me!’”*  
(John 21:17, 19)

- This cemented in Peter that salvation could be earned by no man, no matter how successful or powerful. Salvation could only be found in the drawing, redeeming, and sustaining work of the Triune God!

*The only reason which any Christians have to suppose they will ever reach heaven, is the fact that God keeps them by his own power. If it were left to the will of man; to the strength of his own resolutions; to his power to meet temptations, and to any probability that he would of himself continue to walk in the path of life, there would be no certainty that any one would be saved.*  
(Barnes, 114).

- When we understand Peter’s own experience with this perseverance, his words on choosing and guarding in I Peter 1:1-5 become all the more heartfelt. It’s no wonder he considers it reason for rejoicing!





# ANCHORED IN ROCK

## Backstory: A Piece of Rock

- The first time Simon Peter is mentioned in Scripture, He is a disciple of John the Baptist. Immediately, he is called to leave John and follow Jesus.

*"The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas' (which, when translated, is Peter)."*

*(John 1:40-42)*

- Simon, upon meeting Jesus, is given a new name. Jesus calls him "Cephas," an Aramaic word meaning "a stone." The passage in John includes the Greek version, "Petros." This is where Simon is first called Peter.
- "Petra" is the Greek word for "rock," so "petros" would be "little rock" or "piece of rock."

*"Petros, the Greek word for Peter, is derived from Petra, which...means a rock, such as stands out in the sea or on a beach, a ledge or shelf of rock, or a rocky peak or ridge."*

*(Miller, 23).*

- Jesus' word choice provides a great metaphor:
  - There is a Rock that stands out in the sea.
  - It has a ledge as to be built upon/connected to.
  - Peter is *called* to be a *piece* of that Rock.

*"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."*

*(Matthew 16:18)*

- Upon confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, Peter receives this encouraging word from Jesus: “On this rock I will build my church.”
- We should not take this to mean that Peter is the foundation of the church, but in accordance with his new name He is a *part* of that foundation.

*“Upon what Rock did the Son of God intend to build His church? Upon Peter (Petros, a piece of rock) or upon Petra, the Rock? The answer of every sincere heart must be, not upon Petros but upon Petra.”*

*(Miller, 25)*

- Peter is, of course, an important part of the Rock, but he is only one piece, and thankfully so! Even Peter is too unstable to be the foundation for anything lasting.
- Instead, the church is built upon an immovable Cornerstone/Capstone. A cornerstone is a large, flat stone. It is the first stone to be laid in a building project, and it determines the stability and alignment of the rest of the building.
- Peter—Petros, a piece of rock—was invited to be a part of the building project, built on the Cornerstone that is Jesus Christ.
- For a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, having a stable rock to anchor to is essential. The seas can be rough and unpredictable.

*“A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, ‘Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?’ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Quiet! Be Still!’ Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.”*

*(Mark 4:37-39)*

- It was Paul who wrote “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” And Peter, the fisherman, understands that an anchor is only as good as what it’s anchored in.

- If hope is an anchor, it needs to be *in* something.
  - If your anchor doesn't reach the bottom but just hangs in the water, you're anchored in water. The wind, waves, and storms of life will toss you about.
  - If you're anchored in sand, you may be secure for a little while. Eventually, the wind, waves, and storms of life will pull you out to sea.
  - If you are fortunate enough to be anchored on a rock, "such as stands out in the sea or on a beach," you are firm and secure, safe from the wind, waves, and storms of life.
- Peter knows the value, the true hope that comes from being anchored in the Rock. Now Jesus has called *him* to be a piece of that Rock, a beacon of hope for someone in need. It's Peter's mission to share the security he's found in Christ with people in need of hope; for only with Jesus are we safe in the storm.

## *1 Peter 1:13-2:12*

- Following up his beautiful Gospel presentation in the first section, Peter sets out to articulate how and why we should live obedient lives.

*"All that follows in this letter shows how these great truths of the Christian life are to be lived out by those who believe them. As Peter gives practical advice he constantly takes us back to the basics of the Christian gospel for the reason behind such behavior. The salvation described so magnificently in the earlier section can and should result in men and women living as followers of Jesus no matter how difficult their circumstances may be."*

*(Wheaton, 1375)*

- Peter makes his case with several references to the Old Testament. Peter will quote from both the Law and the Prophets—the two parts that made up the Old Testament available to the Jewish people at this time.
- Remember, this is on the heels of Peter explaining how awe inspiring our salvation is. This kind of obedience is a response to the incredible gift of grace we've *already* received from God.

*"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed."*

*(1 Peter 1:13)*

- The word “therefore” implies a continuation of thought. Peter has just explained how the prophets “searched intently and with the greatest care” and “even angels long to look into these things.” Therefore, we need to engage our *own* minds to search and study.
- This takes self-control.
  - Without self-control, we often put off studying our Bibles and fail to make it a regular habit.
  - Without self-control, we are deceived by wild, reckless interpretations of Scripture.
  - Instead, we’re reminded to set our *hope* fully on *Christ* (or our *anchor* fully on *Rock*).
- Careful, intentional study of this faith produces good deeds and right living. What follows is the “what, why, when, and where” of Christian living. We’ll take those questions in that order.
- “What” we are supposed to do is sprinkled in throughout the next several verses. This chart compiles those things in a clearer way:

| <b>Things we do:</b>           | <b>Things we stop:</b>           |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Learn (1:13, 2:2)              | Ignorance (1:14)                 |
| Be self-controlled (1:13)      | Evil/sinful desires (1:14, 2:11) |
| Hope (1:13, 1:21)              | Deceit (2:1)                     |
| Obey God (1:14, 1:22)          | Disobedience (2:8)               |
| Be holy (1:15, 1:16, 2:5, 2:9) | Hypocrisy (2:1)                  |
| Love one another (1:22)        | Malice/Slander (2:1)             |
| Bring praise (2:9, 2:12)       | Envy (2:1)                       |
| Good deeds (2:12)              | Doing wrong (2:12)               |
| Believe (1:21, 2:7)            | Unbelief (2:7)                   |

- As he makes his list, Peter explains why we do the things we do and stop the things we stop.
- He explains the “why” by quoting the Old Testament. Peter will quote from both the Law (Leviticus) and Prophets (Isaiah) to show how all of Scripture calls for this way of living.
- We’ll see two different metaphors used here. Peter seems to struggle to organize his thoughts and even mixes the metaphors in chapter two.

|                             |                    |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Old Testament theme:</b> | <i>Law</i>         | <i>Prophets</i>    |
| <b>Book:</b>                | <i>Leviticus</i>   | <i>Isaiah</i>      |
| <b>Metaphor used:</b>       | <i>Priesthood</i>  | <i>Cornerstone</i> |
| <b>Purpose:</b>             | <i>How to live</i> | <i>How to live</i> |
| <b>Before Jesus:</b>        | <i>Empty</i>       | <i>Rejected</i>    |
| <b>After Jesus:</b>         | <i>Chosen</i>      | <i>Protected</i>   |

- He begins his defense of the Christian lifestyle by referencing the Law.

*“As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’ Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. For you know that it 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 blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”*

*(1 Peter 1:14-19)*

- To be holy means to be “set apart, set above” or different from the rest. We serve a God who is holy—He is above all other gods. Since we are called to be His children, we too must be different from the world.
- Peter quotes from Leviticus, an Old Testament book of the law that served as a manual for priests. God told the Israelites in Exodus 19:6, “you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” He desired that the *whole nation* would become priests! God would teach them how to live.
- To accomplish this, the people would need training. God set up Aaron and his sons to be the first priests, with strict rules about how to be holy and set apart. The regulations for the priests and the people are contained in Leviticus.

- God’s rule and regulations borrowed closely from the surrounding nations, but with—for the time—groundbreaking simplicity and grace.
  - While the surrounding nations guessed at what, when, and how much to sacrifice, God clearly defined the sacrifices and made them easy to offer.
  - While the surrounding nations had people serve the priests, God’s priests served the people.
  - While the surrounding nations incorporated dangerous practices that spread disease and caused disfigurements, God gave rules that promoted health and safety.
- Notice, however, that the “way of life handed down to you from your forefathers” was “empty.” If strict obedience to the Law is our goal, we will be judged by an impartial judge. We’ve already seen that on our own this won’t end well.
- There is more language from Leviticus here. In Leviticus 25:23, the Israelites were reminded that they were strangers living outside of their homeland. This side of Heaven, we too are strangers living outside of our homeland.
- Leviticus 22:21 regulated that the only acceptable sacrifice was one “without blemish or defect.” Christ serves as our perfect sacrifice.
- By including quotations from Leviticus, Peter is saying four things:
  - God demands holiness, just as He did for the Israelites;
  - Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law and was our sacrifice without blemish;
  - As it was for the Israelites, obedience is the correct response in light of God’s saving;
  - We, too, look forward to dwelling in our promised home.
- Next, Peter restates those same principles in light of what we know about Jesus Christ.

*“He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love on another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, ‘All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever.’ And this is the word that was preached to you.”*

*(1 Peter 1:20-25)*

- We conclude chapter one with a summary of everything we've been saying:
  - God authors salvation
  - Through death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
  - New birth for believers inspires obedience
  - Eternity prepared by God
- Chapter two starts with a few of those practical rules for living before we take on the next metaphor.

*“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”*  
*(1 Peter 2:1-2)*

- Peter now quotes from Isaiah the Prophet, who told of a Savior who—as our Cornerstone—would provide a firm foundation for life and salvation. He immediately mixes this new metaphor with the levitical priest metaphor he's been using.

*“As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”*  
*(1 Peter 2:4-5)*

- Peter, whose name is a constant reminder of this very metaphor, announces: “See! Becoming a kingdom of priests was impossible for Israel, but now with Jesus we can *all* become a holy priesthood! We can build on this one sacrifice because it was perfect! It never needs to be done again!”
- This is his main point. Jesus makes that kingdom of priests bigger and better than we could have ever imagined, because this time it's built on Christ Himself.
- It's almost as if Peter got ahead of himself, too excited to announce this metaphor so dear to him. He quickly backs up to explain himself.

*“For in Scripture 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 stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,’ and, ‘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 destined for.”*  
(1 Peter 2:6-8)

- This stone (cornerstone, capstone, rock) is Jesus.

*“By constant communion with Christ, the living Stone, Christians will become like him, living stones. By itself a stone is of little use, but joined with others it becomes part of a building.”*  
(Wheaton, 1376)

- He describes two types of people:
  - Those who believe
    - The believer finds the stone, Jesus, to be “precious” and “trusts in him.” They will “never be put to shame.”
  - Those who do not believe
    - The unbeliever “rejected” the stone, and it causes them to “stumble” and “fall.”
- Peter is so proud to be considered “a piece of rock.” And his passion for explaining this idea is clearly seen in his urgency to share and his command of the Scriptures that support it. He’s even used the analogy before, when he defended his faith before the Sanhedrin.

*“It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is ‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”*  
(Acts 4:10-12)

- He is undeniably overjoyed—and rightly so—to share in that name given to men: *Petros*. We are all pieces of rock built into a “spiritual house” founded on Christ.
- Having now explained his favorite metaphor in all of Scripture, Peter can return to the main idea he announced in 2:4-5. We are called to be holy.



*“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*  
(1 Peter 2:9-10)

- This chapter continually reminds us of Peter’s doctrine of election and perseverance.
  - We hear themes of election...
    - “called you” (1:15)
    - “he was chosen” (1:20)
    - “chosen by God” (2:4)
    - “a chosen and precious cornerstone” (2:6)
    - “what they were destined for” (2:8)
    - “chosen people” (2:9)
  - ...and perseverance
    - “not with perishable things” (1:18)
    - “not of perishable seed, but of imperishable” (1:23)
    - “through the living and enduring word of God” (1:23)
    - “the word of the Lord stands forever” (1:25)
    - “never be put to shame” (2:6)
    - “people belonging to God” (2:9)
- We noted in the last chapter that Peter’s high regard for salvation closely informs how he evangelizes. We’ll see that begin to come in to practice here.

*“Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such 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.”*  
(1 Peter 2:11-12)

- What Peter suggests here—he’ll talk about it in specifics later in the letter—is that Christian living is the first step of Christian missions. If we don’t live different than the world, how will they see God at work in us?

- By living lives full of hope, love, and security, and by doing good deeds in the sight of non-believers, they will have their hearts changed and believe before judgment day.
- This is the “when” and “where” of Christian living. We do it constantly and “among the pagans.”
- Peter does not advocate retreat from the world, but rather entreats us to live in the world.

*“Christians are to involve themselves in all forms of lawful human activity, and by doing that in terms of the Christian value system and vision of life they will become salt and light in the human community. As Christians thus fulfill their vocation, Christianity becomes a transforming cultural force.”*

*(Packer, 236)*

- This, too, has its origins in Leviticus. God gave his people similar structure and practices to the nations around them, but distinctly different and obviously better. By this, God intended that the pagan nations would know that the God of the Israelites was the true God.

*“Since Christians are in this very special way God’s people, their true home is with him. So in passing through this world they must show by their conduct and in their relationships that they are citizens of a better country.”*

*(Wheaton, 1377)*

- This, of course, does not permit us to join the world in all of its evils. We are to do this among the pagans while remembering to “abstain from sinful desires” and “not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.”

*“Christians are sent into the world by their Lord to witness to it about God’s Christ and his kingdom and to serve its needs. But they are to do so without falling victim to its materialism, its unconcern about God and the next life, and its prideful pursuit of pleasure, profit, and position to the exclusion of everything else.”*

*(Packer, 235)*

---

# HUMBLER TO SERVE

## Backstory: Not My Feet

- Peter is an incredibly volatile character in the Gospels. For example, in the first half of Matthew 16, he confesses Christ as Lord and is promised, “you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18). The very next story—three verses later—he is called Satan!

*“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ‘Never, Lord!’ he said ‘This shall never happen to you!’ Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.’”*

*(Matthew 16:21-23)*

- Peter struggles to understand the humility by which Jesus would save. He’s been successful in this world by being bold, loud, and driven. Peter clings hard to the ideas of success that the world has embedded in him.
- In no other story is this made clearer than when Jesus washed the disciples’ feet.

*“After that, [Jesus] poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, ‘Lord, are you going to wash my feet?’ Jesus replied, ‘You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.’”*

*‘No, said Peter, ‘you shall never wash my feet.’”*

*(John 13:5-8)*

- After a dinner, reclining with his disciples, Jesus kneels to wash their feet. Ordinarily, this was the task for the lowliest of servants.

*“The action itself was ignoble and servile, and that which servants of the lowest rank were employed in. If he had washed their hands or faces, it would have displayed great humility; but for Christ to stoop to such a piece of drudgery as this may well excite our admiration.”*

*(Henry, 389-390)*

- Of course Peter, who cared so much for the definitions of prominence the world gives, could not allow his Teacher to do such a thing.
- Jesus patiently restates the purpose for Peter: We are called to humble service.

*“Do you understand what I have done for you?” [Jesus] asked them. ‘You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”*

*(John 13:12-17)*

## *I Peter 2:13-25*

- After calling his readers to “live such good lives among the pagans” (2:12), Peter gives some practical advice on how exactly we can achieve that radical, transformative calling.

*“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.”*

*(I Peter 2:13-15)*

- This is *radical* living.
- Nero has been emperor of Rome since 54 A.D., and persecutions are occurring all across Rome. Peter is asking Christians to submit to the very people that are persecuting them.

*"The title king was often used for 'emperor' in the Mediterranean world of the first century. Because of his conduct Nero was not worthy of the highest office in the Roman Empire. Nevertheless, Peter recognizes him as supreme authority and exhorts the Christians to obey him."*

*(Kistemaker, 99)*

- Peter has come a long way since cutting off a Roman guard's ear in Gethsemane (John 18:10)!
- First century Christians exhibited this type of humble submission—even unto death—amid persecution from the very leaders Peter is describing.
  - Peter and Paul, by this kind of living, converted 49 people while in prison awaiting martyrdom.
  - Polycarp, an influential church father, refused to hide from Rome and eventually turned himself in. The stories of his martyrdom encouraged Christians around the world (The Martyrdom of Polycarp, 127).
  - Many others graciously took beatings and persecutions to the bewilderment of their captors, all modeling Jesus' humility as He went to the Cross.

*"Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king."*

*(1 Peter 2:16-17)*

- Of course, Christians are free from the shackles of this world and answer only to a righteous, impartial judge. But this does not give us license to abuse the laws of the societies in which we live. Consider Jesus' teaching His followers to pay taxes (Matthew 22:21).
- The Apostles broke this rule of submission only when the authority impacted their ability to serve and worship God.

*“But Peter and John replied, ‘Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God.”*

*(Acts 4:19)*

*“Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than men!’”*

*(Acts 5:29)*

- Still, the general rule is “show proper respect to everyone,” including
  - Believers (2:17)
  - God (2:17)
  - King (2:17)
  - Good masters (2:18)
  - Harsh masters (2:18)

*“Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable 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 beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.”*

*(1 Peter 2:18-20)*

- Let’s do a little scorekeeping, the way the world sees good and wrongdoing:
  - Scenario 1: “You receive a beating for doing wrong”
    - If you did wrong, you owe a debt. Your score: -1
    - If you receive a beating, you paid your debt. Your score: 0
  - Scenario 2: “Suffer for doing good”
    - If you did good, you are owed a payment. Your score: +1
    - If you received a beating, you paid a debt. Your score: +2
- When we *suffer* for doing *good*, God is glorified and we are commended. Peter will use this “points system” a number of times throughout the rest of the letter. Always remember, the goal of “scoring points” is to bring God glory in the sight of pagans. It’s radical, counter-culture living.
- We do this because Christ set the example for us.

*“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ‘He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.’ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”*  
*(1 Peter 2:21-25)*

- For his big conclusion, Peter quotes heavily from Isaiah, basically restating Isaiah 53:4-9.

| <b><i>1 Peter 2:21-25</i></b>   | <b><i>Isaiah 53:4-9</i></b>  |
|---|--|
| <i>“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”</i>   | <i>“Though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.”</i>  |
| <i>“When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats.”</i>         | <i>“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”</i> |
| <i>“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness.”</i> | <i>“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him.”</i>  |
| <i>“By his wounds you have been healed.”</i>  | <i>“By his wounds we are healed.”</i>  |
| <i>“For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd.”</i>                           | <i>“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.”</i>   |

- It took Peter some time—he’s “slow cooked”—but he finally seems to have grasped Jesus’ message in washing his feet.

*“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”*  
*(John 13:15-17)*





# WIVES & HUSBANDS

## I Peter 3:1-12

- We continue the discussion about submission. We've been told to submit to God, to government, and to masters (no matter how good or how harsh). Now, we hear how that idea works in a marital relationship.
- Peter begins the chapter with "in the same way," indicating that the principles of and purposes for submission previously discussed apply to this specific type of relationship, too.
- It is fitting for "wives" to be described "in the same way" as "slaves," because they were a similar class of people in the first century (Barnes, 162).

*"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 words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives."  
(I Peter 3:1-2)*

- A very specific type of marital relationship is described here. Peter is talking specifically to wives with non-Christian husbands.

*"In the middle of the first century, a wife was expected to profess the religion of her husband. If the husband adopted the Christian faith, his spouse would have to do so, too. But if the wife became a Christian, her husband would consider her unfaithful to him and his pagan religion."  
(Kistemaker, 118)*

- The meaning of "in the same way" becomes especially clear, here. These are wives who "suffer for doing good"—and that is "commendable" (2:20).
- Peter's high regard for the transformative power of salvation is on display again. He expects that through this radical, Christ-like submission even pagan husbands will glorify God.

- The major theme will remain the same. This is about glorifying God in all our relationships. But Peter takes a detour to talk about true beauty before he returns back to the main point.

*“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. For 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 Sarah, 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.”*  
*(1 Peter 3:3-6)*

- Beauty does not come from outward appearance. Those things fade. Beauty comes from your inner self, your spirit. This is unfading.
- Outward adornment is not condemned. It’s allowable to braid hair and wear jewelry, but it is silly and futile to base our ideas of what’s beautiful on fading things. Instead, hope in God makes us beautiful.
- Peter is making a bold statement on womanhood: You don’t have to make yourself presentable; God did that for you. Peter establishes the woman’s place in the covenant. You are beautiful if you share in the Spirit of God; in this way you are heirs (daughters) to the covenant of Abraham (and Sarah).

*“The Greek word which is translated ‘gentle’ occurs only four times in the New Testament; two instances are self-descriptions of Jesus; one is a beatitude spoken by Jesus; and the last one is Peter’s [here]. Peter exhorts the female readers to display the same gentle spirit Jesus had during his earthly ministry.”*  
*(Kistemaker, 121)*

- He goes out of his way to establish women’s place in the covenant, because the idea of women being equal in anything was absurd in the first century.

*“It was an important advance made in society when the Christian religion gave such a direction as this, for everywhere among the heathen, and under all false systems of religion, woman has been regarded as worthy of little honour or respect. She has been considered as a slave, or as a mere instrument to gratify*

*the passions of man. It is one of the elementary doctrines of Christianity, however, that woman is to be treated with respect; and one of the first and most marked effects of religion on society is to elevate the wife to a condition in which she will be worthy of esteem."*

*(Barnes, 162)*

- For this reason, the husbands are told to give special understanding to their wives.

*"Husbands, 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."*

*(1 Peter 3:7)*

- It's almost as if Peter says first to the wives, "You are beautiful and included in God's redemptive plan," then turns to the husbands to say, "See to it that she feels beautiful and included in God's redemptive plan."
- He begins this section as he did for the wives with "in the same way." This is, again, a call to glorify God by the way we submit to others. He reiterates that women are heirs *with* men in salvation.
- The comment on "the weaker partner" reflects women's generally smaller, weaker biology.

*"The word weaker refers to physical stamina and not to intellectual abilities, moral courage, or spiritual strength. The adjective weaker is comparative and implies that husbands are physically stronger."*

*(Kistemaker, 124)*

- The last phrase ties a bow on the section for husbands and wives. The point of the wives' submission was to bring God glory in the sight of non-Christian husbands. The point of the husbands' serving is to bring God glory in the strength and unity of their prayers.
- The structure can be understood this way:

**Wives, submit so God is glorified**

*Wives, you are part of God's family*

*Husbands, they are part of God's family with you*

**Husbands, serve so God is glorified**

- Now Peter finishes up this whole section on radical relationships.

*“Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay 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 and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.’”*

*(1 Peter 3:8-12)*

- “All of you” calls back to all of the relationship structures we’ve covered the last two chapters:
  - God and mankind
  - Christians and non-Christians
  - Kings, governors, and their constituents
  - Brotherhood of believers
  - Slaves and good masters
  - Slaves and harsh masters
  - Husbands and wives
- We are given practical tips for use in each of these relationships.
  - Live in harmony
  - Be sympathetic
  - Love as brothers
  - Be compassionate
  - Be humble

## Backstory: Hate My Wife & Children

- Aside from the recorded instances where Peter is frustrated by Jesus (we saw two of those rebukes in the last Backstory), there must have been a lot more.
- Peter, who cared so deeply about being first and prominent, must have *hated* Jesus’ aversion to crowds. Every time the crowds of followers would start to get large, Jesus would say something like “eat my flesh” (John 6:55-66) and they would all go away.

- One such occasion happened at the home of a “prominent Pharisee” (Luke 14:1).

*“Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ‘If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.’”*

*(Luke 14:25-26)*

- These types of things must have sent Peter into fits. Here they are in a *prominent* place with *large crowds*, and Jesus does this?
- This statement in particular would have been a tough one for Peter to hear. Not only is he *living* with his brother Andrew, he also has a wife!

*“As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.”*

*(Mark 1:29-31)*

- According to Paul, Peter’s wife traveled with him on missionary journeys.

*“Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas [Peter]?”*

*(1 Corinthians 9:5)*

- Here’s Peter standing with his brother and his wife and Jesus says he cannot be a disciple unless he hates them both. Thankfully, it seems from 1 Peter 3 that Peter understood what Jesus was getting at. We live our lives according to one relationship, our relationship with God. This one relationship calls us to be servants in all other relationships.

*“Discipleship means a person’s readiness to place his or her claims above those of both family and self.”*

*(Marshall, 1004)*

- Peter gets it, and he's organized every relationship in his life in a way that glorifies God, not himself.
- His wife may have spent many nights alone while he sat in a foreign prison and endured beatings. It's no wonder that Peter detours to encourage women as God's children and heirs, maybe with his wife in mind. He encourages Christian men to support and encourage their sisters while he faces death every day.

# PREACH THE GOSPEL

## Backstory: Fishermen or Fisher of men?

- Peter is initially introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew, where he receives his new name (John 1:44). It seems, however, that while he considered Jesus a “Master,” he didn’t become a full-time disciple until sometime later in Jesus’ ministry.

*“One day as Jesus was standing by the [Sea of Galilee], with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water’s edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.”*

*(Luke 5:1-3)*

- After his first meeting with Jesus, Peter goes back to his day job: fishing. He is washing his nets, signifying that they had finished their early-morning fishing.
- Here, Jesus finds him and gives him a call to full-time discipleship.

*“When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, ‘Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.’ Simon answered, ‘Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.’”*

*(Luke 5:4-5)*

- Although Peter wasn’t immediately a full-time disciple, he still considered Jesus his “Master.” And although Jesus’ advice made no sense to an accomplished fisherman, he was willing to obey Him. This was the wrong time of day in the wrong part of the sea. If they didn’t catch anything earlier, they weren’t going to catch anything now. The fish just weren’t biting.

*“When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, ‘Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!’ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, ‘Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men.’ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.”*

*(Luke 5:6-11)*

- Peter witnesses the power of God before his very eyes, and falls before Jesus. Jesus calls him to leave his job as a fisherman and become a fisher of men.
- The call to be a fisher of men was a vivid image. Peter was a successful, lifelong fisherman. He understood the hard work it took and had perfected the methods.
  - He knew the right place (moved to Capernaum; Mark 1:29)
  - Knew the right time (night/early morning; Luke 5:50, John 21:3)
  - Knew the right equipment (maintained his nets; Luke 5:2, John 21:11)
- Becoming a successful fisherman took years of study, training, and practice. Still, Jesus demonstrated the need for divine intervention. Peter applied all this knowledge to his evangelistic work. He would study, train, and practice; but ultimately he knew to rely on God.

## *I Peter 3:13-22*

- We’ve been saying that Peter has a high regard for salvation. The saving work of Jesus Christ is so incredible that...
  - The prophets searched carefully to learn of it (1:10)
  - Even angels long to look into it (1:12)
  - When pagans see it, they will glorify God (2:12, 3:2)
- He speaks again about the hope that fills Christians, and the power that hope has in the world.



*“Who is going to harm you 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 set apart Christ as Lord.”*

*(1 Peter 3:13-15)*

- Faith in Christ fills us with such hope that we do not need to fear any attempts at harm or evil. We are chosen and guarded, our victory is sure! We have nothing to fear; instead we look to Christ as Lord.

*“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with 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.*

*(1 Peter 3:15-16)*

- This is Peter’s model for evangelism:
  - Be *prepared*.
    - Just like fishing takes careful preparation, study, and training so we are to approach evangelism with preparation, study and training.
    - Often Christians’ excuse for neglecting evangelism is, “I don’t know what to say.” It is our responsibility to be prepared. Study the Scriptures so we know what to say.
  - Live so people will *ask*.
    - Peter knew where the fish were and what they were eating. He put himself in close proximity to those fish and dropped his nets.
    - In the same way, Peter encourages us to live good lives “among the pagans” (2:12) so they might see our deeds and be caught up in the grace of God.
    - This assumes that we’re doing the good deeds, living in obedience.
  - Be *gentle* and *respectful*.
    - Fish feed at dawn, so early morning hours were prime work hours for Peter. He knew the right time and place to do his work to be effective.
    - The work of evangelism, too, requires us to know the time and place. There are many forms of evangelism that are ineffective because the preacher has failed to do it gently and respectfully, considering the time and place.

- Peter’s model for evangelism is *not* an excuse for Social Gospel. It is dangerous and wasteful to read these verses as license to simply live good lives and never share the Gospel.

*“People who were identified with the Social Gospel very often engaged in ministries among the poor, but there was a problem. They did not seek to convert people to faith in Christ as the Savior of lost sinners. They did not teach that the Bible was without error and the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.”*

*(Greenway, 124)*

- It is not enough to simply live good lives. Peter—bold and outspoken as he is—would never encourage his readers to keep the message of Jesus Christ to themselves. This would be like going fishing and never pulling the net back into the boat!

*“Christians should respond to opportunities to speak boldly for the Lord Jesus Christ. When Peter tells the readers to be ready, he means that they not only should be willing but also should have the ability to speak for Christ. Therefore, they must know the teaching of the Bible and Christian doctrine so that they are always ready to give an answer.”*

*(Kistemaker, 134)*

- According to Acts, Peter was jailed three times for sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and *at least* one other time not recorded in Scripture (when he was martyred by Nero). To interpret Peter’s words “to everyone who asks” and “with gentleness and respect” as reasons to avoid speaking boldly for Christ is a gross misinterpretation of what Peter learned from Jesus and himself modeled dutifully.
- Peter saw Jesus model evangelism. Here is what he saw:
  - Jesus preparing Himself for missions
    - Consider how from a young age He showed a command of the Scriptures and an interest in the temple, how He regularly retreated to pray and refresh, and how He lived in obedience to God.
  - Jesus’ gentleness and respect for the hurting
    - Consider how He treated the woman caught in adultery, the woman at the well, and children to name only a few.

- Jesus doing life among the pagans
  - Consider how He stayed with Zacchaeus and reclined with tax collectors and sinners.
- Jesus patiently spending time with people
  - Consider how He taught in ways people could understand, but patiently persisted with His disciples—who often misunderstood His message—and the religious leaders—who couldn’t comprehend His message.
- Jesus boldly teaching where He goes
  - Consider how He taught anywhere and everywhere; in synagogues, boats, homes, mountainsides, fields, and streets.
- Christ excelled in His earthly ministry by His gentle spirit, and when He washed Peter’s feet He called the disciples to that model of ministry.
- Peter describes that triumph of humility next.

*“Is it better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for 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 also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed 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 saved through water, and this 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 and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

*(1 Peter 3:17-22)*

- This passage contains two difficult parts.
  - First, Jesus “went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed”
  - Second, Noah’s family was saved through water, “and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also.”
- What does it mean that Jesus “went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago?” There are three acceptable interpretations.

*“a. Clement of Alexandria, about A.D. 200, taught that Christ went to hell in his spirit to proclaim the message of salvation to the souls of sinners who were imprisoned there since the flood (Stromateis 6.6)*

*b. Augustine, about A.D. 400, said that the preexistent Christ proclaimed salvation through Noah to the people who lived before the flood (Epistolae 164)...*

*...e. Contemporary commentators teach that the resurrected Christ, when he ascended into heaven, proclaimed to imprisoned spirits his victory over death.” (Kistemaker, 144-145)*

- In other words...
  - A first interpretation suggests that while His body was in the grave for three days, Christ’s spirit announced to the spirits in Hell that He had won salvation for God’s chosen. This is the simplest way of understanding the Apostle’s creed: “was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to hell (where he announced His victory to the spirits in prison). The third day he rose again from the dead.”
    - This is an acceptable interpretation, but it ignores the context in I Peter that suggests Christ has already been “made alive” before this preaching occurs.
  - A second interpretation suggests that Christ was present long before His earthly ministry, and so was able to save God’s chosen even before His crucifixion.
    - This is an acceptable interpretation, but it again ignores the context that this happens after Christ was “put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.”
  - A third interpretation suggests that after Christ’s resurrection, He announced to all heaven and earth, including the spirits in prison, that He had defeated sin and death.
    - While the other interpretations are acceptable, we will assume this interpretation.
- The progression of Peter’s argument makes this most clear for us:
  - Christ was put to death
  - Christ was made alive
  - Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison
- Thus, this preaching occurred *after* the resurrection. Since Scripture never describes a second chance at or second way to salvation, we understand this not as preaching a message that could save, but an announcement that Christ *had* saved those God had chosen from the beginning of time, even from the time of Noah (Romans 3:25).

- Why is Noah mentioned, specifically (here, II Peter 2:5, and II Peter 3:6)?
  - It may be that Noah’s time, where it seemed the whole world was wicked, feels common to Peter’s audience. They may have found some comfort in knowing Jesus triumphed despite the wickedness of society. If He did it for Noah, he could do it for Christians in Rome.
  - Peter might see Noah as a proof for his argument. Noah endured suffering and was blessed because of it, just as Peter has been arguing.
  - Peter might simply like the story. He knew about boats. He had experienced God saving him from a storm (Mark 4:39), and had been pulled from dangerous waters by Jesus Himself (Matthew 14:31).
- Noah is “saved through water.” The water that brought destruction to the rest of the world raised up his family in the ark. Because the waters came, Noah and his family were saved.
- By writing “saved through water,” Peter is not teaching that the act of baptism saves. In fact, he taught the opposite when he met Simon Magus and others in Samaria who had been baptized but did not truly believe.

*“When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.”*  
*(Acts 8:14-16)*

- Noah was “saved through water” because the water that destroyed the rest of the world raised him and his family to safety in the ark. Water meant chaos and death, but God provided a vehicle for salvation.
- Baptism symbolizes that same dying and rising. Death will destroy the world, but the resurrection of Christ is the vehicle by which we are raised to eternal life.

*“The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the great fact which makes real and possible all that baptism symbolizes, and it is only by this means that we are saved.”*  
*(Wheaton, 1381)*

- Peter taught that baptism was a promise of the forgiveness of sins.

*“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.’”*

*(Acts 2:28-29)*

- Peter teaches that baptism was for the believer and their children. He sees this baptism as a re-instatement of God’s covenant with Abram, where circumcision was a sign that Abram’s children were included. Paul teaches this concept, too.

*“In [Christ] you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.”*

*(Colossians 2:11-13)*

- The symbol of circumcision—done on the 8<sup>th</sup> day to symbolize a child’s inclusion in the covenant with God—is replaced by a spiritual circumcision; baptism. This is “done by Christ,” as we are raised with Him in faith.

*“Should infants, too, be baptized? Yes, infants as well as adults are in God’s covenant and are his people. They, no less than adults, are promised the forgiveness of sin through Christ’s blood and the Holy Spirit who produces faith. Therefore, by baptism, the mark of the covenant, infants should be received into the Christian church and should be distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision, which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.”*

*(Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 74)*

*“In 1 Corinthians 7:14, Paul resolves the question of whether God accepts a marriage in which only one partner has become a Christian by invoking the certainty that the children of such a marriage are relationally and covenantally ‘holy,’ that is, are dedicated to and accepted by God in company with their one Christian parent. So the principle of parent-and-child solidarity still stands, as Peter also indicated in his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:39). But if infants share covenant status with their parent, it is fitting, other things being equal, to give*

*them the sign of that status and of their place in the covenant community, and it would be unfitting for the church to withhold it. This fitness is demonstrated by the fact that when circumcision was the sign of covenant status and community inclusion, God commanded it explicitly (Gen. 17:-14).”*  
(Packer, 215)

- Peter thinks of baptism as a promise of God’s forgiveness. This is confirmed in his dealings with the Samaritans in Acts 8. They were baptized before they truly believed and received the Holy Spirit. Once they had received the Holy Spirit, Peter did not re-baptize. The Holy Spirit simply confirmed what was promised to them in their baptism.





## LIVING IT OUT

*I Peter 4*

- I Peter 4 is probably the most practical chapter in Peter’s letters. In it we get very clear rules for how to live in light of what Christ has done for us.
- First, we are encouraged to leave our lives of sin behind.

*“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 not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.”*

*(I Peter 4:1-3)*

- We are given a long list of sinful behaviors we ought to avoid. These are called “sin,” “evil human desires,” and “what pagans choose.”
  - *Debauchery* is overindulgence in temporal pleasures, typically sexual. This word is a heading for the ones to follow.
    - *Lust* is sexual desire. Jesus said if you look at someone lustfully, you have committed adultery in your heart (Matthew 5:28).
    - *Drunkenness* results in using alcohol to find pleasure.
    - *Orgies* implies wild partying, usually abusing alcohol and God’s rules for sexual activity.
    - *Carousing* is reckless and wild behavior, often incited by drunkenness
    - *Detestable idolatry* is any thing or idea that takes first place in our lives before God. All idolatry is detestable.
- Sinfulness is a lack of self-control or restraint. It’s *giving in*. It’s *lawlessness*. God has given believers a Spirit of Wisdom and Truth. We are meant to live thoughtful and careful lives of obedience, not mindless and reckless lives of sin.

*“They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.”*

*(1 Peter 4:4)*

- If we remember the language of Leviticus cited in 1 Peter 2, we live differently than the pagans because we are “holy,” or “set apart.” The goal of this living is to glorify God, for as the pagans see the stark contrast of our lives, they will desire to know where we find our hope.
- Debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and idolatry are hopeless activities. The pleasure is short-lived. When Christians live lives of hopefulness, even in times of suffering, we glorify God among the pagans.

*“But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason 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.”*

*(1 Peter 4:5-6)*

- Peter speaks of the result of the Christians suffering. At the end, Jesus is our judge.
- The pagan world may have judged the Christian harshly, but God looks at the heart. We will not go down to death, but will live by the Spirit.

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

*(1 Peter 4:7-8)*

- In contrast to a life of sin that is mindless and reckless, we are called to live a life that is “clear minded and self-controlled.”
- “Love covers a multitude of sins” is not an excuse to go on sinning. Peter is not arguing that as long as we love, we can persist in a multitude of sins.

*“This verse has been used to argue that love can earn forgiveness of sins, not only for the one who displays it, but also for the one who receives it as well. This is not consistent with other biblical teaching. The most likely meaning is that true love will overlook its neighbour’s faults. It could also be taken to refer to*

*God's love covering over our sins, which gives the motive for us to love one another."*

*(Wheaton, 1382)*

- Instead, we see this as another example of Peter's idea of evangelism. It needs to be done with "gentleness and respect." We are considerate about the slow process of sanctification. Peter was "slow cooked," making plenty of blunders along the way. As we disciple one another, we are slow to anger and abounding in love as people learn to live like Christ.
- We are able to love like this because Christ showed us this kind of love (I John 4:19).

*"Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever 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."*

*(I Peter 4:9-11)*

- The ways in which we show love take various forms, and each of us excels in different areas. We call these "gifts."
- Paul lists a few of those gifts in Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12:
  - Prophesying
  - Serving
  - Teaching
  - Encouraging
  - Generosity
  - Leadership
  - Mercy
  - Wisdom
  - Knowledge
  - Faith
  - Healing
  - Power
  - Discernment
  - Tongues

- Peter’s short list includes speaking and serving, both the foreground and the background. Both types of gifts are important. We have a tendency to elevate gifts in the foreground—pastors, musicians, elders, speakers—and neglect the gifts in the background—custodian, administration, cook. We need to see all gifts as important.
- None of these lists are meant to be comprehensive. The point in each place is to suggest that we have to use whatever gifts and abilities God has given us to glorify Him and build up one another.
- The church has often made spiritual gifts overly complicated. It is often addressed too narrowly: you need gift xyz, or you don’t have any gifts. Instead, both Peter and Paul articulate that *everyone* in the church has a spiritual gift and all of them are important for use in the church. We ought to learn what our strengths are and put those strengths to use for the glory of God.

*“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 the sufferings of Christ, 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. 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, ‘If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’ So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.”*  
*(1 Peter 4:12-19)*

- Peter closes the chapter with a summary on all he’s been saying about suffering.
  - We can expect it. Christ suffered, why wouldn’t Christians?
  - We have been chosen to be part of the family of God.
  - Christ is the only way to salvation.
  - We should be obedient to God for all He’s done for us.

## Backstory: Apostle to the Jews

- Both Peter and Paul call us to put our gifts to use for God’s glory. Paul calls us to do this with “sober self assessment” (Romans 12:3). We ought to think honestly and with humility about what our gifts and strengths are and how they can be used.
- Peter had the gift of speaking, that’s for sure. As he preached the Gospel, thousands upon thousands believed in Jesus.
- Peter was the first to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-45). But he realized that Paul did that much better.

*“As for those who seemed to be important—whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance—those men added nothing to my message. On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles.”*

*(Galatians 2:6-8)*

- These men recognized their strengths and weaknesses. Peter didn’t always do well ministering to Gentiles, so he stuck to his strengths.
- This meant that Paul would make some of the biggest waves in the early church, and Peter took a bit of a backseat. But prominence was no longer important to Peter; he cared only about glorifying God.
- However, this does not mean Peter got out of witnessing to the Gentiles entirely. I & II Peter are written from Rome (Gentiles) to Christians in Rome (Gentiles). We need to use our strengths to bring glory to God, but also develop our weaknesses so they might become strengths!





---

# MAKING DISCIPLES

## Backstory: Disciple Multiplication

- Jesus taught Peter how to make disciples. Jesus chose 12 men to work closely with. They saw how he lived, heard what he taught, and got extra time with the Teacher.
- There were a lot more than 12 people that followed Jesus around. His choosing of 12 specific people was intentional.

*“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, who he also designated apostles.”*

*(Luke 6:12-13)*

- Jesus was incredibly generous and patient with these 12 men. They were often confused by His messages (Matthew 13:36, Matthew 16:9-12, Mark 9:32, Luke 18:34, John 12:16, John 13:7, John 16:17, John 20:9). They acted irresponsibly or greedy on several occasions (Matthew 14:30, Matthew 16:22-23, Matthew 18:1, Mark 10:13, Mark 10:37-39, Mark 14:68-71, Luke 8:24-25, Luke 10:54-55, John 20:25).
- Peter experienced firsthand that discipleship took time and training. Jesus had equipped the 12 disciples to do that same kind of disciple making.

*“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure disease, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He told them: ‘Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them.’ So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.”*

*(Luke 9:1-2, 6)*

- Jesus sent the disciples out to do the same kind of work He was doing and to share His message with the world.
- After the disciples had been trained in this work, though, Jesus had them train others in the same kind of work.

*“After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, ‘...Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’ But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you.’”*

*(Luke 10:1-2, 4-11)*

- Jesus gives the very same charge to go out and preach His message, but this time there are 72 instead of 12. The number of disciples prepared to give a reason for the hope they have in Christ has grown six times!
- Jesus showed that the most effective way to make disciples was for teachers to pour into the lives of students. When the students were prepared, they were sent out to be teachers of new students. By this, the number of disciples grows exponentially.
- This takes careful training and time.
- When Peter received the Great Commission, he knew what Jesus meant by “make disciples...teaching them.”

*“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”*

*(Matthew 28:18-20)*



- Peter received a special charge from Christ to do that same kind of caring and training after Jesus resurrected.

*“When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ he said, ‘you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Feed my lambs.’ Again Jesus said, ‘Simon son of John, do you truly love me?’ He answered, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Take care of my sheep.’ The third time he said to him, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ He said, ‘Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Feed my sheep.’”*  
*(John 21:15-17)*

- Jesus commands Peter to feed and take care of His sheep. The sheep belong to Jesus, but Peter is called to teach and train them in the way Christ taught and trained Peter. This is the kind of discipleship we are called to.

## *I Peter 5*

- In this final chapter, Peter calls on the elders in each church to take charge of putting all these things into practice. He wants to set up a discipleship system where mature believers teach and train young believers. This is how Peter has seen effective training in Christian learning and living.

*“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 revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*  
*(I Peter 5:1-4)*

- Elders, or mature believers, ought to oversee the church and protect it.
- Peter calls himself “a fellow elder” and commands them to “Be shepherds,” using the same word Jesus did in John 21. Peter sees this call to feed and

take care of God’s flock as a command for *all* Christian leaders, not just Peter specifically.

- Just like the 12 and the 72 were sent out with instructions to be content and trustworthy, so these elders are given some of the same rules for serving.

*“The term elders here refers to official position in the Church and not to age as in verse 5. It includes those who have some sort of authorized pastoral function and responsibility.”*

*(McNab, 1141)*

- It is worth noting that of all the relationships Peter describes, this is one of two where a Christian is the dominant figure in the relationship. Husbands have submissive wives and elders oversee the church.
- Both husbands and elders take incredible humble postures as they serve in their roles.

| <b>Role</b>    | <b>Duties</b>                       |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Husbands (3:7) | Considerate, respectful, co-heirs   |
| Elders (5:1-3) | Willing, content, serving, examples |

- This is the radical, upside-down nature of Christ’s Kingdom. In all relationships, we are humble servants—even in leadership!
- There are specific things that these church leaders should *not* do. This list is useful today for recognizing poor—or even false—teachers in the church:
  - Not greedy for money. If a ministry leader makes decisions for the sole benefit of his or her bank account, they are acting inappropriately. They ought to be “regarding the sheep more than the fleece” (Henry, 763). A faithful Christian leader strives to meet the needs of the people, not have his or her needs met by the people.
  - Not lording it over those entrusted to you. If a ministry leader imposes hardships on his or her students out of selfish ambition, they are acting inappropriately.

*“The elders, however, ought to shun every desire to enrich themselves. Should they yield to this desire, they would commit the sin of greed...They must find their satisfaction in serving Christ, not in serving Money.”*

*(Kistemaker, 192)*

*“Lording it is often the attitude of the worldly superior. Christian leaders, rather than domineering and manipulating others for their own ends, are to be an example, giving what they can contribute to them in the way of advice and character-building.”*

*(Wheaton, 1384)*

- The “Chief Shepherd” is Jesus, who will appear again at His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.
- Elders receive the crown of glory, or treasures in Heaven, that will last forever.

*“Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”*

*(1 Peter 5:5-7)*

- Discipleship is most effective when mature believers teach and train younger believers. For this reason, the young men are called to submit to their elders. This is the order God has had in place from the beginning.
- Peter restates the goal of all our relationships: we submit and serve in humility, for this is how Christ called us to live.
- The advice is 1 Peter 5:7 in fitting for Christians today, in an age where depression and anxiety are so familiar. We bring our anxieties before God not because He’s all-powerful—though that is certainly true. We bring our anxieties before God because He cares for us. He offers rest, peace, empathy, and deep love.

*“Remember that you will never be entirely neglected. Father, mother, neighbour, friend, those whom you have loved, and those to whom you have done good, may neglect you, but God never will. You may become poor, and they may pass by you; you may lose your office, and flatterers may no longer throng your path; your beauty may fade, and your admirers may leave you; you may grow old, and be infirm, and appear to be useless in the world, and no one may seem to care for you; but it is not thus with the God whom you serve. When he loves, he always loves; if he regarded you with favour when you were rich, he will not forget you when you are poor; he who watched over you with a*

*parent's care in the bloom of youth, will not cast you off when you are old and grey-headed. If we are what we should be, we shall never be without a friend as long as there is a God."*

*(Baker, 206)*

- God's first response to our anxiety is not power, it's care.
- Peter closes the letter with a summary, briefly touching on many of the major themes he's articulated earlier.

*"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. 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.*

*(1 Peter 5:8-11)*

- We are reminded of several things:
  - Christian obedience takes self-control and careful thought. We ought to be different than the world.
  - Still, we live among the pagans and Satan's temptations are always close.
  - We know that Satan's advances can never steal our faith, for our faith is firm and sure.
  - We know our faith is sure because the God of all grace is the one who called us and will restore us to strength and steadfastness.
  - The sufferings we endure are short and insignificant compared to the glorious riches of Heaven.
- Peter signs off, noting his location and his companions.

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

*Peace to all of you who are in Christ."*

*(1 Peter 5:12-14)*

- We meet a few people here, and all of them confirm much of what historians have recorded. We saw both Irenaeus and Eusebius claim Peter and Paul were working together in Rome at this time in history. We also showed how Peter and Paul had resolved their dispute recorded in Galatians 2. The presence of Silas and Mark further confirms Peter and Paul working together and the resolution of past disputes among these early church leaders.

*“Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.’ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.”*

*(Acts 15:36-40)*

- Both Mark and Silas were companions of Paul. Here, they are companions of Peter. This may be further evidence that Peter and Paul are together. This would also suggest that not only have Peter and Paul resolved their dispute from Galatians 2, but Paul and Mark have resolved their dispute from Acts 15.
- This is the same Mark who wrote the Gospel of Mark.
- Peter writes, “She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, send you her greetings.” There has been much debate—both over who “she” is and where “Babylon” is.
  - Older commentators (i.e. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown) typically consider “she” to mean Peter’s wife. Peter calls her “chosen together with you” the same way he reminds husbands that wives are “heirs with you” in 3:7. These commentators also suggest “Babylon” is a major city in Egypt, where many Jews lived.
  - Modern commentators (i.e. Wheaton, Kistemaker) typically consider “she” to refer to the church located in “Babylon,” who they also see as a reference to Rome. This reading seems to be most accurate considering the historical citations and Scriptural context.

*“Peter, who mentions persecution in nearly every chapter of his epistle, died a martyr’s death near Rome. According to tradition, he was crucified upside down. In short, Peter wrote this epistle near the end of his life, when he probably stayed in the imperial city.”*

*(Kistemaker, 209)*

- Greeting with a kiss was common for the time. It has been a concern for Peter that Christians be united in love. He has called for this kind of deep love and unity in every chapter of this letter:
  - Have “sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart” (1:22).
  - “Love the brotherhood of believers” (2:17).
  - “Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble” (3:8).
  - “Above all, love one another deeply” (4:8).
  - “Greet one another with a kiss of love” (5:14).
- Peter’s experience of reconciliation on the beach in Tiberius with the risen Lord set the example for reconciliation for him and Paul, Paul and Mark, and for Christians around the world.

# AUTHORITY & TRUTH

## Backstory: A More Beautiful State

- One of Peter’s most formational experiences occurred on the “Mount of Transfiguration.”
- To be *transfigured* means to change in appearance or form and become more beautiful, pure, and radiant.
- Peter was selected to be one of three disciples who saw Jesus in this state.

*“After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, ‘Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: ‘This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!’ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what ‘rising from the dead’ meant.”*

*(Mark 9:2-10)*

- In this mysterious and awe inspiring story, two people talk: Peter and God. True to form, Peter has to comment—even though “he did not know what to say!” God announces that Jesus is the Son of God, and that the world should listen to what Jesus says.
- This account is from the Gospel of Mark. We’ve seen that Mark served as Peter’s interpreter during their time ministering together. There is a belief that Mark’s Gospel is made up of eyewitness accounts described to him by Peter.

*“Tradition indicates that Mark, with the aid of Peter, wrote the Gospel named after him. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, writes that Mark was Peter’s interpreter and composed the Gospel.”*

*(Kistemaker, 209)*

- If this is the case, it makes for an interesting reading. The Transfiguration is also told in Matthew 17 and Luke 9, but Mark is the only Gospel that includes the command, “Listen to him!” It could be that *listening* was a lesson that was particularly memorable for quick-to-speak Peter.
- Jesus is seen with Elijah and Moses. Elijah is often representative of “The Prophets” and Moses of “The Law.” We saw Peter make a case in his last letter that Jesus fulfilled both the Law and the Prophets. The Mount of Transfiguration literally embodied what he already knew to be true: Jesus is the Messiah.

## *The Resetting*

- The authorship of II Peter has come into questions since 240 A.D. Because its first mention isn’t until the third century, critics suppose it to be a forgery or a *pseudepigraph*, a writing in the style of a deceased man meant to honor him.
- In *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius wrote in the 340 A.D. that while II Peter was not part of the canon of Scripture, it was regarded by many as Scriptural.

*“One epistle of Peter, that called the first, is acknowledged as genuine. And this the ancient elders used freely in their own writings as an undisputed work. But we have learned that his extant second Epistle does not belong to the canon; yet, as it has appeared profitable to many, it has been used with the other Scriptures.”*

*(Eusebius, III.III.I)*

- The reluctance of the early church to treat II Peter as the inspired Word of God has given pause to first century and modern scholars alike. However, several councils have weighed such evidence and have agreed on it as Scriptural since the Council of Laodicea (360 A.D.).



*“Peter’s authorship of the letter is also held to be in doubt by some because the early church seemed hesitant to receive it into the [New Testament] canon. The fact remains that they finally did so, and this happened at a time when Gnostic writers were circulating definitely bogus writings claiming Peter’s authorship.”*  
(Wheaton, 1386)

*“Already in New Testament times, the church rejected pseudonymous writings...Should a forger compose a letter in the name of an apostle, his epistle would be considered suspect and would be denied canonicity. The church rejected pseudonymous writings bearing Peter’s name (for example, the Gospel of Peter, the Acts of Peter, the Teachings of Peter, and the Revelation of Peter) and regarded them as uninspired documents.”*  
(Kistemaker, 218)

- Forgeries were already common in the early church. It was difficult to validate authorship from teachers you rarely, if ever, saw face to face. The early church ruthlessly weeded out such forgeries—as Paul commanded in II Thessalonians 2:2.

*“At the Reformation Erasmus rejected it, but Luther entertained no doubt as to its genuineness. Calvin felt some hesitancy in accepting it because of apparent discrepancies between it and 1 Peter...Further, while it was on the ground of dissimilarity between the two Epistles in their style, diction and, to some extent, contents that John Calvin and others hesitated to accept it, we cannot ignore the fact that there is a strong similarity between the two writings in these matters. For instance, words and phrases rarely found in other writings are common to both Epistles.”*  
(McNab, 1143)

*“And yet, when I examine all things more narrowly, it seems to me more probable that this Epistle was composed by another, according to what Peter communicated, than that it was written by himself, for Peter himself would have never spoken thus.”*  
(Calvin, 423)

- Despite hesitancy throughout church history, II Peter remains a part of our canon today and evidence for the Apostle Peter as its author is numerous. Wording and phrasing is similar. Personal references and experiences are accurate. Lesser critiques like a different writing style between the smooth I Peter and choppy II Peter can be easily explained by the absence of Silas and Mark in II Peter.
- We have no problems accepting Peter as the author of this second letter. It can be dated closely to the first. Since it seems persecution has grown and Peter’s death seems close, we assume a date roughly 67 A.D.
- We call it his “second” letter because he refers to it as such (II Peter 3:1), and because he knows his death is near at hand (II Peter 1:14).

| <b>Authority</b>    | <b>Year</b> | <b>Decision on II Peter</b> |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Muratorian Canon    | 190         | Excluded                    |
| Clement             | 214         | Included                    |
| Origen              | 240         | Disputed                    |
| Eusebius            | 325         | Disputed                    |
| Council of Laodicea | 360         | Included                    |
| Council of Hippo    | 393         | Included                    |
| Council of Carthage | 397         | Included                    |

## II Peter 1

- In II Peter, we hear a sound Gospel teacher warn of the dangers of false gospels. Peter, in his last days, encourages his readers to turn to the Word of God for truth. Any teaching that deviates from God’s Word is destructive.

*“Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”*  
*(II Peter 1:1-4)*

- Peter begins this second letter the same way he did the first: we were chosen by God and are guarded by God from unbelief. We call these doctrines *election* and *perseverance*.
  - “received a faith”
  - “him who called us by his own glory”
  - “great and precious promises”
- See chapter 2 of this study guide for more detail on election and perseverance.
- Peter also restates many of the characteristics of obedience found in his first letter. Once again, this obedience is a response to God’s grace in choosing and guarding His children.

*“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.”*  
(II Peter 1:5-7)

- This closely resembles I Peter 1:13-23.

| <b>II Peter 1:5-7</b> | <b>I Peter 1:13-23</b>                      |
|-----------------------|---|
| Goodness              | As obedient children, do not conform        |
| Knowledge             | Prepare your minds for action               |
| Self-control          | Be self-controlled                          |
| Perseverance          | Not of perishable seed, but of imperishable |
| Godliness             | Be holy in all you do                       |
| Brotherly Kindness    | Sincere love for your brothers              |
| Love                  | Love one another deeply, from the heart     |

- Peter’s theology in both letters provides a logical progression: You were chosen, you are protected, you respond with obedience, you glorify God.
- This progression also works backwards. If you’re obedient, it is assurance that you are guarded; and if you are guarded, it is assurance that you were chosen by God. Obedient living is how we can know we are God’s chosen people. We should look for increasing obedience, or sanctification, in our lives. Peter calls this “making our calling and election sure.”

*“For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.”*  
(II Peter 1:10-12)

- Peter is very clear here. If your obedience is increasing, you are increasing your knowledge of our Lord Jesus. This is because the more you learn of the Savior’s love, the more you desire to obey Him.
- If you are not growing in obedience, it is because you have forgotten what the Savior did for you.
- We ought to desire obedience, because it is proof of the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives; and if the Holy Spirit is at work in us, we will never fail but will have eternal life.

*“In sanctification, the Holy Spirit ‘works in you to will and to act’ according to God’s purpose; what he does is prompt you to ‘work out your salvation’ by fulfilling these new desires.”*  
(Packer, 170)

- Peter makes sure to start *both* I & II Peter with this detailed Gospel message. What Christ did for us is true love, and it demands a response true to kind.
- After making his customary pronouncement of the Gospel and its effect on Christian living, Peter gets on with his letter. He intends to help his readers guard against false teachings.
- Understanding the true Gospel means understanding the Scriptures.

*“I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.”*  
(II Peter 1:13-15)

- Peter realizes he will soon die. It is fitting that he describes death as “departing,” or a more literal translation “exodus.” He has seen the resurrection of Christ and knows there is a place for his own resurrected body in heaven.
- He may already be in prison, where he and Paul preached the Gospel to 49 people before they were martyred. With his final days, he wants Christians to remember the truth of the Gospel.
- Imagine a CEO of a company. This CEO was a worker in the company when it was small, and has been a part of the company as it’s grown to a large size with many branches on several continents. He cares deeply for the product they make. He knows the quality of the product is important to the success of the business. Any distortion to the product or cheap alternatives will destroy everything the company is built on. As this CEO retires, he pens an open letter to the company, calling on them to stick to the principles that made the company great in the first place.
- This is Peter, the retiring CEO. He has spent his life working for the Kingdom of God, proclaiming the Gospel he holds in such high regard. He is one of few remaining to have seen the risen Christ. Peter knows that human nature will want to distort the Gospel and chase after other things. So he writes to the remaining Christians, calling them to hold fast to the truth of the Word of God.
- He begins this open letter with the “company history,” of sorts. He shares his personal testimony about the Messiah and what He accomplished.

*“We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’ We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.”*

*(II Peter 1:16-18)*

- Peter shares his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, where he saw Jesus in all His glory; where he was surrounded by the Holy Spirit; and where he heard the very voice of God. It was here that he saw Jesus literally embody the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets.

*“And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”*  
*(II Peter 1:19-21)*

- Peter’s experiences make his testimony powerful, but it’s only powerful so long as it’s true.
- Peter invokes the Old Testament prophets. If you pay attention to them, you will see how Jesus Christ fulfilled all of what they prophesied. Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world!
- This is not a story Peter wrote, or a story that any human wrote. It’s God’s story, given to men by the Holy Spirit.
- The words of men have no authority. But the Word of God has full authority.

---

# FALSE TEACHERS

## II Peter 2

- In chapter one, Peter laid the groundwork for this coming argument: The Old Testament Law and Prophets explain what the eyewitness apostles saw to be true.
- The Old Testament and New Testament writings of apostles make our Bible today. Peter is arguing that Scripture, the very Word of God, is the only way to learn what's true. The ideas of men apart from God are deceitful.

*“Peter explains in detail why he finds it necessary to write in this vein. Believers need constant reminders of the importance of spiritual progress. Peter knows he has not long to live and, as an eyewitness, wishes to stress that the faith we share is founded on the facts of history. Furthermore, these events of Jesus’ life are a fulfillment of what the prophets foretold. Mention of them leads to a long warning about the false prophets who will arise in the church just as they did among the OT people of God.”*

*(Wheaton, 1391)*

- In chapter two, Peter launches into a condemnation of the false teachers that have abandoned or misinterpreted Scripture for their own benefit.
- In I Peter, we saw that a church leader should not be greedy or power-hungry (I Peter 5:2-3). Now, Peter worries that these very attributes have enticed and misled teachers in the early church.
- It is worth noting that the book of Jude contains much of the same text as II Peter 2:1-19. More on this can be found in the addendum to this study guide.

*“But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.”*

*(II Peter 2:1)*

- Distortions of the Gospel have been present since the very beginning, and we can expect them in our day, too. Peter writes that there *were* false prophets among the people, just as there *will be* false teachers among you.
- Jesus foretold of wolves in sheep’s clothing that will mislead people to false conversions (Matthew 7:15-23), and of the many false gospels that would pop up over time (Matthew 24:5).
- Thankfully, Jesus and the apostles gave us ways to expose these lies. Peter has already shown that true Christian leaders avoid greed and power, and that Scripture is the only Word of Truth.

*“Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.”*

*(II Peter 2:2-3)*

- These false teachers are motivated by greed and exploitation, the very things Peter condemned in I Peter 5:2-3.
- Peter again uses Noah as an example of righteousness in the face of persecution.

*“For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority.”*

*(II Peter 2:4-10)*



- Peter proves his point with *Scripture*, our source of truth. He cites three Old Testament stories:
  - Genesis 3 – The Fall of Man
    - Adam and Eve sinned, enticed by the Serpent—Satan, an angel. Revelation 12:4 suggests a third of the angels were thrown out of Heaven with Satan.
  - Genesis 6 – The Flood
    - God spared Noah and his family—the only God fearing people on earth—from a destructive flood that destroyed a wicked generation.
  - Genesis 19 – Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed
    - God rescued Lot from the wicked men of Sodom and Gomorrah and destroyed the cities for their wickedness.
- With these Scriptural citations, Peter has proved, “the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment” (2:9).
- The argument is, “These teachings lead to destruction. Why? Because Scripture says so.”

*“Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.”*  
(II Peter 2:10-12)

- The early church seemed to struggle with overemphasizing the flesh or overemphasizing the spiritual.
  - One common error was believing grace meant a Christian could sin as much as they wanted. Paul had to condemn this in almost every church he wrote to:
    - Romans 6:1-2
    - I Corinthians 10:23
    - Ephesians 5:3-6
    - Colossians 3:5-6
    - I Thessalonians 4:7-8
    - Peter calls these false teachers “brute beasts, creatures of instinct.”

- Another common issue was overemphasizing the spiritual. Paul and Peter both recognized the futility of this thinking.
  - The Samaritans in Acts 8 become followers because of “great signs and miracles” (Acts 8:13), but Peter realized they had not truly been saved (Acts 8:16).
  - In I Corinthians 14, Paul warns the church not to overemphasize tongues—spiritual language. He encourages them to be edified by prophetic words, or the words of the Scriptures.
- We are inundated by both of these flawed gospels today.
  - Consider pushes by the church to be inclusive of all lifestyles, putting our fleshly natures before Scripture. They have their interpretation in the will of man.
  - Consider emphases on signs and wonders, miracles, and spiritual realms by hyper-charismatic movements.
- As we face gospels like these that deviate from God’s Word, remember Peter’s last words here.

*“They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood! They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man’s voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.”*  
*(II Peter 2:13-16)*

- Peter backs up his argument with yet another Scripture.
  - Balaam’s story is told in Numbers 22-25. He was a diviner, leading dangerous spiritual practices.
  - Balaam represents both spiritualism and fleshly indulgence.
    - Balaam was a diviner that practiced mediumship and false prophecy.
    - According to Joesphus, Balaam enticed the Israelites to sin, seducing them with Moabite women (Antiquities of the Jews, IV.VI).

*“These men are springs without water and mists driven by storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by*

*appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit,’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.’”*  
(II Peter 2:17-22)

- We get yet another Scriptural citation, this time from Proverbs 26:11.
- Peter also seems to echo Jesus’ rebuke of Bethsaida and Capernaum—his home towns!

*“Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”*  
(Matthew 10:21-24)

- Peter’s concern is the same as Jesus’: If you knew about Jesus’ power, how could you still reject Him? For this reason Peter writes, “It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs” (2:21).
- The judgment here may seem harsh, but this is an important message. Any false gospel is not lasting, and it is not saving. Only the true Gospel of Jesus Christ is lasting and has the power to save.

## *Backstory: The Test of Time*

- The true Gospel of Jesus Christ has stood the test of time. For thousands of years it has stood up to criticisms and persecutions.

- Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:18 that the gates of hell would never overcome the church.
- This promise must have given Peter great peace as he faced trials and persecutions for the Gospel. As Jesus promised, it has literally stood the test of time.
- On one particular occasion, Peter and the Apostles had been jailed by the high priest for preaching this Gospel. They were brought before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest himself. Peter spoke on behalf of the apostles (fittingly) and delivered a beautiful account of the Gospel.

*“Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. ‘We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,’ he said. ‘Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.’ Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than men! The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.’”*

*(Acts 5:27-32)*

- This enraged the Sanhedrin, but a Pharisee gave some wise advice: Let’s see if this movement lasts.

*“When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. Then he addressed them: ‘Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.’”*

*(Acts 5:33-39)*

- False teachers are nothing new. Even before Jesus, many came claiming to be the Messiah. Theudas had 400 followers, and Judas the Galilean led a band of people. Both of them were killed, and their movements came to a swift end.
- Josephus even records that Judas the Galilean had followers who died for his cause, but no teaching of his was lasting.

*“And besides this, the sons of Judas of Galilee were so slain; I mean of that Judas who caused the people to revolt, when [Quirinius] came to take an account of the estates of the Jews, as we have shown in a foregoing book. The names of those sons were James and Simon, whom Alexander commanded to be crucified.”*

*(Antiquities of the Jews, XX.V.II)*

- This Judas, a false teacher, so convinced his followers that they were willing to die for what they believed. But what they believed did not save them. The movement amounted to nothing.
- In this chapter, Peter has warned us not to fall for those same false teachings. Instead, believe in something saving and lasting.
- The Sanhedrin put the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the test: If this lasts, it's of God. It has lasted!
- Jesus' followers were willing to die for him, too. But for followers of Jesus, in dying there is life! Peter has seen the resurrection, and in it we have hope for eternal life with our Savior and King!



---

# THE SECOND COMING

## II Peter 3

- Peter concluded chapter two echoing Jesus' words of warning to Bethsaida and Capernaum in Matthew 10:21-24. Jesus warns those cities about the coming day of judgment.
- It is fitting, then, that near his own end and anticipating the end of these false teachers that Peter describes the Second Coming of Christ.

*“Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.”*

*(II Peter 3:1-2)*

- Peter once again encourages the people to be thoughtful, to stimulate wholesome thinking.
- He also encourages the people another time to recall the Scriptures—the Prophets and the Apostles.

*“An effective antidote to false doctrine is to recall and dwell on the teaching already received.”*

*(McNab, 1149)*

- Peter's ideas of the Second Coming are obviously informed by what he's heard Jesus say. Much of what he teaches here mirrors Jesus' own teaching on the Second Coming. We will read Peter's teaching from II Peter 3 with Jesus' teaching from Matthew 24.

*“First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, ‘Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation”*

*(II Peter 3:3-4)*

*“Jesus answered: ‘Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.”*

*(Matthew 24:5-6)*

- Peter refers to the Old Testament yet again, and likens the day of judgment to the judgment during Noah’s time.

*“But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.”*

*(II Peter 3:5-10)*

*“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But*



*understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.”*

*(Matthew 24:36-43)*

- The day of Christ’s coming is a mystery. He will come like a thief in the night, or like the flood waters came in the time of Noah.
- Why does God wait to return? Is He slow? Of course not! He is not slow, rather He is patient. He is patient so that His people might have ample opportunity “to come to repentance.” God’s waiting is not evil or lazy, but incredibly gracious!

*“Since God’s promise of another intervention in human affairs cannot be rejected, Peter gives two factors which explain why he is delaying such intervention as long as he likes: time is of no consequence to him and he is giving time for people to come to repentance.”*

*(Wheaton, 1394)*

*“Any seeming delay therefore is no indication of divine heedlessness. Any seeming delay is rather to be interpreted as dictated by merciful compassion. His purpose is one of love and mercy. His delay is an increased opportunity for salvation. It is not because God has forgotten but because He loves that the coming is delayed.”*

*(McNab, 1149)*

- This is his answer to the scoffers. The critics in 3:4 asked, “Where is your God?” Peter shows, with Scriptural evidence, that God is patient before He comes in judgment.

*“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”*

*(II Peter 3:11-14)*

*“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.*

*I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”*

*(Matthew 24:45-47)*

- Both Peter and Jesus encourage us to live obedient lives *now* as we wait for the Master to return. God has given us work to do, and we ought to do it. He has called us to make disciples. Peter has shown that this is done by right living and Gospel preaching. We need to study, train, and practice our gifts so we can glorify God in all we do. The goal of our lives is to glorify our God.
- When Christ returns, we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth, prepared for us by our Savior. Peter calls it “a home of righteousness” because no part of it is touched by sin or curse.
- Peter signs off citing Paul.

*“Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.”*

*(II Peter 3:15-16)*

- From this, we know that Peter...
  - Affirms Paul
    - “dear brother,” “wisdom that God gave him”
    - This coincides with what Paul wrote in Galatians 2:7-9.
  - Knows Paul’s letters (plural)
    - “He writes the same way in all his letters”
  - Is familiar with specifics of Paul’s letters
    - “just as our dear brother Paul also wrote,” “speaking in them of these matters,” “his letters contain...”
    - He may be referencing Romans 2:4, “Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance?” This verse reflects the same theology as Peter writes, “Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation” (3:15).

*“It is impossible to say with certainty which of the Pauline letters Peter refers, but a reference to the Epistle to the Romans seems most probable.”*

*(McNab, 1150)*

- Finally, Peter concludes with what could be considered his thesis statement.

*“Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.”*

*(II Peter 3:17-18)*

- At the end of his life, Peter desires that Christians *learn*. The last thing he writes in his letters is an exhortation to *grow in knowledge*.
- This isn't just any knowledge, though. We are specifically called to learn more about “our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
- *Knowing* Jesus is what kick-starts all faith and obedience. Peter as already shown this knowledge makes us productive and effective in our faith (1:8), and that forgetting about our Savior leads to spiritual blindness (1:9).
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ isn't information we file away. Peter knows we need it (1:1), are motivated by it (1:8), and need it constantly told to us (1:12-13). In this way, our knowledge *grows* (3:18) and we fend off the heresies and distortions of greedy false teachers.

*“Throughout, his aim is for his readers to cultivate a Christian mind (wholesome thinking).”*

*(Wheaton, 1394)*

- As we conclude this study, may it not mark an end to your growing knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. May it refresh your memory and enflame your passion for your Savior (I Peter 1:8-9). May it spur you on to increasing obedience and sanctification (II Peter 1:8). May it create in you a hunger for His Word (I Peter 2:2-3). May it prepare you to share this good news with those who need it (I Peter 3:15).
- Thanks be to God for this gift of grace, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ.



# ADDENDUM

---

## LASTING IMPACT

### *Jude*

- Most of Jude (Jude 4-16) and II Peter 2:1-19 are noticeable similar.
- Understanding the author and intent of Jude gives us further insight into the dating and first century implications of II Peter.

*“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance. Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.”*

*(Jude 1-3)*

- Jude (or Judas, as it is sometimes translated) identifies himself as the “brother of James,” so we can deduce he is the half-brother of Jesus (born to Mary and Joseph). A lot can be learned about Jude from several quick references to him in Scripture.

*“Isn’t this [Jesus] the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?”*

*(Mark 6:3)*

- It seems that Jesus’ half-brothers initially rejected his divinity.

*“Jesus’ brothers said to him, ‘You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.’ For even his own brothers did not believe in him.”*

*(John 7:5)*

- It seems that both of Jesus’ brothers eventually became missionaries. His brother James became a prominent leader among Christians in Jerusalem.
- Because of James’ prominence, Jude cites himself as his brother. Neither James (see James 1:1) or Jude describe themselves as brothers to Jesus, likely out of humility and in recognition of Jesus’ divine nature.
- It seems Jude became a Gospel preacher himself after Jesus’ ascension.

*“Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas?”  
(1 Corinthians 9:5)*

*“While, during His earthly life, the brethren of Jesus did not believe in Him, they are found among the disciples in the beginning of Acts, and James became a foremost leader of the church in Jerusalem. This short letter preserved in the New Testament has been widely regarded as a genuine writing of the less well-known brother, Jude.”  
(Robertson, 1161)*

- Jude does not address his letter to any church or city in particular, this complicates the dating of the letter.
- Much has been made comparing the obvious shared message of Jude 4-16 and II Peter 2:1-19, shown here together:

| <b>Jude 4-16</b>   | <b>II Peter 2:1-19</b>   |
|--|--|
| For certain men whose <b>condemnation was written about long ago</b> have <b>secretly slipped in</b> among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and <b>deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord</b> . | But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will <b>secretly introduce</b> destructive heresies, even <b>denying the sovereign Lord</b> who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their <b>condemnation has long been hanging over them</b> , and their destruction has not been sleeping. |

| <i>Jude 4-16</i>   | <i>II Peter 2:1-19</i>  |
|--|---|
| <p>Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. <b>And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.</b></p>   | <p><b>For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;</b> if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others;</p>   |
| <p>In a similar way, <b>Sodom and Gomorrah</b> and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.</p>  | <p>If he condemned the cities of <b>Sodom and Gomorrah</b> by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what was going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.</p>             |
| <p>In the very same way, these dreamers <b>pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings.</b> But <b>even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’ Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand and what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals—these are the very things that destroy them.</b></p> | <p>This is especially true of those who follow the <b>corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority.</b> Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to <b>slander celestial beings;</b> yet <b>even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations</b> against such beings in the presence of the Lord. <b>But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand.</b> They are <b>like brute beasts, creatures of instinct,</b> born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.</p> |

| <i>Jude 4-16</i>   | <i>II Peter 2:1-19</i>  |
|--|---|
| <p>Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into <b>Balaam’s error</b>; they have been destroyed in Korah’s rebellion. These men are <b>blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm</b>—shepherds who feed only themselves.</p>  | <p>They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and <b>blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you</b>. With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood! They have left the straight way and wandered off to <b>follow the way of Balaam</b> son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man’s voice and restrained the prophets’s madness.</p> |
| <p>They are <b>clouds without rain, blown along by the wind</b>; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom <b>blackest darkness has been reserved forever</b>.</p>  | <p>These men are <b>springs without water</b> and mists <b>driven by a storm</b>. <b>Blackest darkness is reserved for them</b>.</p>  |
| <p>Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: ‘See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.’ These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they <b>boast about themselves</b> and <b>flatter others for their own advantage</b>.</p> | <p>For they mouth empty, <b>boastful</b> words and, <b>by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people</b> who are just escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.</p>   |



- There are generally four schools of thought here:
  - The Holy Spirit worked through two writers in different places to write nearly identical letters, evidence of the infallibility of God’s Holy Word. This is, of course, plausible. Scripture is God-breathed. But God does not get things *close*, He gets things *right*. If this was a work of the Holy Spirit, it would be more likely that these two texts would be identical rather than similar.
  - A second thinking assumes there is another document that predates both II Peter and Jude that these two authors borrowed from. However, this “original document” has never been produced or proven.
  - Commentators like Kistemaker suggest Jude wrote his letter first, and Peter quotes from it. He argues...
    - Jude is shorter, and an author is more like to expound on a text than abbreviate it (Kistemaker, 221).
    - II Peter contains references to Paul and to James, so it is not out of the question that he also would reference Jude (Kistemaker, 222).
    - Peter deleted the reference to Enoch—a book that was not included as Scriptural—to make it more accepted in the early church.

*“A close examination of the text of II Peter 2:11 reveals a break at the place where Peter deleted the reference to the apocryphal book [Enoch]. In fact, the verse itself presents exegetical difficulties and must be understood with the help of Jude 9. Conclusively, this text shows that the source of II Peter is Jude’s epistle.”*  
 (Kistemaker, 222)

- Commentators like McNab suggest Peter’s letter was first, and Jude adapted a tract version of it at a later date. We will assume this position.
- Peter died circa 68 A.D., while Jude lived until circa 98 A.D. There would have been more time and reason for Jude to re-state Peter than vice versa.
- McNab argue that verb tenses in the original Greek suggest that Peter is predicting false teachings that were *coming*, while Jude is addressing false teachings that are *here*.

*“The real difference between the two is that between prediction and fulfillment. Peter predicts the advent of the false teachers and his principal verbs are in the future tense. He employs the present tense in describing the character and*

*conduct of the libertines, but their presence and disastrous teaching he puts in the future. Jude, on the other hand, refers to these same corrupters as being already present in the midst of God's people and doing their deadly work."*

*(McNab, 1144)*

- Jude's conclusion is also telling.

*"But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. They said to you, 'In the last time there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.' These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit."*

*(Jude 17-19)*

- Jude intentionally cites the apostles. This reference seems to be a clear citation of II Peter 3:3, "In the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires."
- Taken this way, Jude has heeded Peter's warnings:
  - "I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I love..." (II Peter 1:12-13).
  - "I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles" (II Peter 3:1-2).
- Regardless of the order, date, or author the message remains the same: Keep our minds engaged in the Scriptures to avoid the destructive temptations of the world.
- Being wise and prepared—expressing the salvation gifted to us by God through Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit—is what allows us to work in the world for God's glory.

*"But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without*

*fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power  
and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and  
forevermore! Amen.”*

*(Jude 20-25)*

- Let this study be not only a call to study and prepare, but to action and evangelism.







*[www.firstcrcoostburg.org](http://www.firstcrcoostburg.org)*

**OOSTBURG CRC**

*[youth@firstcrcoostburg.org](mailto:youth@firstcrcoostburg.org)*