



1 Peter Week 1

Pray

Read 1 Peter 1:1-2

v.1 – I think that it is important for us today to look at who Peter is and why he wrote this letter. Peter was a disciple of Christ. He was one of the twelve disciples that Jesus handpicked. He was also one of the 3 disciples that Jesus loved. Peter was there when Christ was crucified, and he denied Christ 3 times. Peter was afraid of what people would do to him if he said he was one of Jesus' disciples. Yet he was also very bold in his faith at times as well. Peter was one of the first to see the empty tomb when Jesus had been raised from the dead. At Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church in the book of acts, Peter preached and became a leader in the early church. In fact Peter's name in Greek (petros) means rock, and he is referred to as the rock upon which the church is built. Peter was instrumental in the church growing and leading many people to Christ. I tell you all this because it is important for us to understand where Peter is coming from when he writes this letter. Peter is writing to churches in Asia Minor, in modern day Turkey. Peter calls these people elect exiles. These Christians were not literal exiles most likely, but Peter was using exile figuratively likely meaning that as Christians we all are spiritual exiles in this world longing for our heavenly home. Being an elect exile simply means that we were chosen by God, who initiated salvation, first at the death and resurrection of Christ, then in our hearts through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. These Christians Peter is writing to are citizens in the Roman empire. They were most likely Gentiles, though there were probably some Jews scattered among them. They were most probably second class citizens. These Christians were suffering persecution, as we will see later on in the book. Peter is writing to these churches to remind them to endure, to hold fast to their faith.

v.2 – When we continue on to verse 2 we see 3 phrases that we are going to take a look at.

The first is **“according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,”** Now we could go off on a tangent and explore very deeply the meaning of elect and foreknowledge, but we will have to save that for another day. Peter here is saying quite simply that God foreknew those who are “elect exiles.” Perhaps a better way to look at it is that God foreordained these Christians, and all Christians, God purposed in His heart long ago that we would be saved. This is something we should rest assured in and welcome. God loved us long before any of us were even born and He was making plans for each of us to come to know Him!



The second phrase that we need to look at in verse 2 is, **“in the sanctification of the Spirit.”** When you get saved, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside you. He is your helper, and He sanctifies us turning us from sinners into people who look more like Christ. The Holy Spirit sets us apart. Before Christ we are not able to live a holy life. When we trust in Christ we are then set apart and made holy by the work of the Holy Spirit.

The third phrase Peter uses in verse 2 is this, **“for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with His blood.”** When we become Christians we are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, we are cleansed from our sins and we are set apart for obedience to Christ. Being a Christian means we die to our old way of life and live for Christ, and obey God’s call on our lives. So basically verse 2 plays out like this, we are called by God who long ago loved us and chose that we would come to know Him. We are given the Holy Spirit to set us apart and we are cleansed by the blood of Christ and saved to become more like Christ as we follow the purpose of God for our lives.

As we begin our study of 1 Peter we need to understand who Peter was, a handpicked, beloved disciple of Christ, who hasn’t always been perfect but who was instrumental in the development of the early church. Peter is writing to people who need some encouragement and he starts off his letter to them by reminding them that their salvation is a work of Father, Spirit and Son.