

**A PERSONAL  
VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

**1PETER**

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

Peter is an apostle, a man on a mission from the Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. After looking at the Greek, I realized that the term “strangers” is just referring to those in foreign lands. (I usually think of a stranger as someone unknown to me.) Stranger also makes me think of someone out of place. The next verse indicates that they are believers—that means they are out of place, away from home while here on planet earth. When I looked at my Bible map, these people lived in the area from Turkey westward.

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

“Elect” – That controversial word to so many. Simply means chosen. How? “According to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” When I checked the Greek, it means simply what it says—foreknowledge, knowing in advance. God’s foreknowledge is complete. ALL was known to Him before creation ever took place. When understood in its simplicity, it gives the perfect balance to *chosen* and *having a choice*. (See journal on Romans 8:29-30)

Sanctification is the process of being made pure and holy. We can’t get there on our own efforts. It’s only through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives that we can become more holy—more like Jesus. If left to our own efforts, any progress we make in any area becomes a source of pride in our lives—not holiness.

What does this sanctification produce? Obedience—not excuses, not inconsistency, not just in part.....but complete obedience.

What made all this possible? The shed blood of Jesus Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, the sacrifice for my sin.

Peter sends wishes for their GRACE and PEACE to be multiplied. Again, the order is important; you can’t have the **peace** of God without first experiencing the **grace** of God. I’ve always heard grace defined as unmerited favor, which is so very true. There is a definition given in good ole Webster’s that I like: “Divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong.” Seems to go hand in hand with sanctification, doesn’t it? I usually think of peace as more of a state of mind/emotion (serene, quiet, resting); but it also designates a relationship between parties—be it countries or individuals. In keeping with the thoughts on sanctification and grace, I think you could also apply this to our relationship with God as a believer “sprinkled by the blood of Christ.” That relationship has been *reconciled* and is in harmony, not conflict, with the Father.

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

Peter is expressing praise and adoration for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Peter’s emphasis is on the Father, which is as it should be according to

the hierarchy established by God for the family. The father is in the “highest” position. The son is subservient to the Father. This gets hard for my simple mind, so I just accept it.

**Isaiah 55:9**--For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

We know that the Father and Son are one—yet They are different. Jesus came to do the will of the Father—to be obedient. There is a defining difference in their position in the Godhead.

The Greek uses the word *compassion* in defining mercy. Back to Webster’s—Kindness in excess of what may be expected or demanded by fairness; a disposition to forgive, pity or be kind. It’s the Father’s mercy that is being praised here since He is the one that raised Jesus from the dead. Emphasis is made that His mercy is abundant, plentiful, more than needed. We had no reason/right to expect this gift of sacrifice on our behalf. (There are so many examples of His mercy towards Israel in particular in the scripture. Then again, there are so many examples in my own life.)

“begotten us again” – given us new life, a new beginning, made us born again. The word begat/begotten is used in showing parental lineage. We are “begotten again” by Him as His children.

The “lively hope” is the promise of eternal life with Him based on our acceptance of the provision that Jesus made with His death, burial and resurrection as stated in the next verse.

**1Pet. 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,**  
“heaven” = God’s presence

Because we are His children, we are His heirs. We have a right to inherit His riches and wealth and blessings. This inheritance is incorruptible (contains no errors or alterations; without decay), undefiled (pure, not contaminated or polluted), and doesn’t fade away (it is sure, the same as when it was first established). Not only that, it is “reserved in heaven.” God is guarding, protecting and watching over this inheritance--for all believers, children of the King (you and me).

**Rom. 8:16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

**Rom. 8:17** And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

**1Pet. 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

We are kept (guarded and protected). How? By the power of God (unlimited, without equal) through faith (belief and assurance) unto salvation (deliverance from the consequences of sin). If this faith is given to us by the Father, and He is

the one guarding and protecting us, it stands to reason (in my mind anyway) that the believer's faith is secure; it can't be altered. When God's timetable for the end of time comes into play, this truth will be revealed (unveiled, made known) to all. (See Topical Study – Predestination, Salvation and Security.)

Many people don't feel that we can be secure in our salvation, but I think this verse is a very strong argument for that security. Philippians 1:6 is another powerful verse for security – "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ." Salvation is God's good work in us; He will finish what He starts. We get our thinking messed up because people **claim** to know the truth and even participate as part of the family for awhile--and then walk away from it. John makes it very clear, that those who are part of God's family will remain a part of the family.

**1John 2:19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

**1Pet. 1:6** Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

Why are they rejoicing? Because of the inheritance that is being reserved in heaven for them—their eternal salvation, dwelling with the Savior forever. Does this mean life will be without sorrow or trouble or hurt as we wait to receive our inheritance? No. Sometimes we are faced with hard times "for a season." It was interesting to check out the Greek for "temptations." The words used were putting to proof through trial or testing or temptation--an experiment. What is the purpose of an experiment? To test a theory or prove an accepted truth. These manifold (various types) temptations are necessary to reveal who we are and what we actually believe. They reveal the positive and weak areas of our lives—our strengths and/or areas of need/weakness.

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

Our faith is in continual need of purification; it's on trial; it needs proved. We think of gold as very precious. The more it is refined by fire, the purer it is; the more valuable it becomes. When our faith is purified through "manifold temptations," it is strengthened and purified in order to be enduring and glorifying to God. It will carry us through to provide praise, honor and glory to Jesus Christ when He returns.

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

Peter is talking to "foreign" believers who had never seen Jesus, yet they loved Him and believed Him. Their only revelation of Jesus was through the testimony of other believers, those who knew Him and walked with Him, His disciples. That is a truth that needs to permeate our every word and action. Our lives are the first Bible most people read. We need to be so careful to portray an accurate picture of the love of Jesus in our lives. The only way we can hope to be successful in this endeavor is to know Him as intimately as possible (be in the

Word) and walk with Him (make choices and serve others according to His Word).

Their joy in the Savior was “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” They had a hard time putting into words the delight and joy in their heart. The desire of their heart was to praise and magnify Jesus.

**1Pet. 1:9** Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

What will be the result of their purified faith? Their salvation. Faith is personal. Faith will have an end when we are in the presence of the Savior. We will be able to see Him and touch Him and commune with Him face to face. Oh that it were today!!!!

**1Pet. 1:10** Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come unto you*:

**1Pet. 1:11** Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

These verses are a bit hard for me. I think the “grace that should come to you” is referring to the provision of our salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus. They didn’t seem to be able to connect that the Messiah who would come would be the one who would suffer for our sins. They were eager to connect the coming of the Messiah with his glorious kingdom. Again, it’s the same dilemma for me as I study the scripture. I know that God never changes and His word is true. So, when I go to study the truths in the scripture that don’t seem to agree with each other, I am enquiring and searching diligently—but there is something I am missing. It’s certainly not missing in His word. Just like the prophets of old, I am always eager to focus on the truth that is more promising and uplifting. I am so eager for the day when I finally understand all the connections. I always want to know more of the details. Even the prophets wanted to know what and when. They were well aware that it was the Holy Spirit that gave them their prophetic revelations.

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

It was revealed to the prophets that they were speaking of things that would apply to a future generation. Peter is talking to believers of that generation. The “things” they were speaking of was the gospel that was preached to them (Peter’s audience) through the power of the Holy Ghost. The same Holy Ghost who was sent from heaven to be our Comforter and Guide and Teacher until Jesus returns. The angels are interested in this amazing process by which Jesus provided for redemption of His creation. I think they are trying to figure out how He could love us so much and why we would ever choose to reject this most precious gift.

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

“gird” – fasten, secure, equip, prepare

I’ve looked up the Greek for “loins” which gave me no help. Good old Webster equated the loins with “reins” in humans, which equates with the kidney, which is where my thoughts first went. In the Bible I’ve been taught that those terms referred to our deepest thoughts and desires—which makes sense to me in this verse. Peter is telling the believers to secure, equip and prepare their innermost thoughts and feelings to be sober (clear of mind, not under outside influence) and to hope (anticipate with pleasure, expect) to the end (completion of the process of God’s program) for the grace (the wonderful, undeserved, unimaginable existence) that will be ours when Christ returns to claim His kingdom.

**1Pet. 1:14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:**

We are to wait as obedient (attentive, compliant and submissive) children (aware of our position). We are new creations, and shouldn’t give in to the desires of the flesh, as we did in the past in our ignorance of the truth. (It was interesting when I checked the Greek for “lust” that one definition was “a longing, especially for what is forbidden.” I think it is true that we have a built-in sense of right and wrong and that left to our sin nature will always want the forbidden.)

**1Pet. 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;**

**1Pet. 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.**

God, Who is holy, is the One Who has called us. He never gives us a command that He will not equip us to obey. He has given us the Holy Spirit for just that purpose. There goes the old saying, “The devil made me do it.” We have no excuse. We are to be holy—physically pure and morally blameless. Jesus set the example.

**Lev. 20:7** Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I *am* the LORD your God.

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

I had to remind myself that Peter is talking to believers here. He is making the statement that we are all on level ground at the feet of the Father. Each man and woman will be judged according to his/her work. Thankfully, as a believer, I can rest on the finished work of Jesus on the cross and can stand before God clothed in His righteousness. As believers, our judgment will be for rewards.

**1Cor. 3:13-14** Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

I have always thought of “fearing the Lord” as referencing an attitude of awe and reverence; but the Greek used here is the word for “dread, terror, alarm, and

fright." *Sojourning* indicates that we are just passing through; we are resident foreigners. But why should we sojourn in "fear" as believers? It can't be fear for our own future. It can be fear of the awesome power of God and His righteousness in judgment of our nation, our unbelieving loved ones, and the unbelieving world in general. It should motivate us to spread the gospel and teachings of the Word to as many as possible. When God passes judgment during our sojourn here, we will be affected just as those around us are affected—just as they are recipients of good things that come because of His love for His children on this earth (i.e., the rain and sunshine, the harvest, prosperity, etc.) As the balance in America shifts more and more to mocking God's Word and doing what is right in our own eyes—we should fear, but not as those without hope and a sure salvation.

**1Pet. 1:18** Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received by tradition from your fathers*;

**1Pet. 1:19** But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

We have been redeemed—bought with a price—but not with material things that will eventually decay. From what were we redeemed? The empty way of life that was handed down to us through the traditions of our fathers. The empty way of life that had been handed down to these believers included:

- 1) idolatry
- 2) adherence to a set of laws that made life a chore and not a joy
- 3) belief in a religious system rather than the God who created them and loved them and wanted to provide for them as His children.

How were we redeemed? At what price? By the precious blood of Christ, the perfect, spotless Son of God who became our sacrificial lamb---because He loves us. It's hard enough to understand now, but I'm sure it will be even more amazing to us when we actually experience for ourselves what Jesus willingly gave up to redeem us. The angels are already aware of that; no wonder they are "looking into these things."

**Titus 2:14** Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

**Gal. 4:4-5** But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

**Rev. 5:9** And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

(10/06) In talking about verse 18 with a friend recently, it hit me that the traditions we pass on to our family are important. Those traditions can just as surely and should promote a way of life that honors God—the complete opposite of a "vain conversation" that promotes rebellion and/or rejection of God.

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

“foreordained” – from the Greek to know beforehand

“manifest” – became clear, revealed, made visible

My paraphrase – Christ was known as The Sacrificial Lamb without spot and blemish, the Messiah, before the world was even created. (10/06) I’ve often wondered why God created the world since He knew we would rebel against Him and many would never accept Him as Lord even after He sacrificed His only Son to redeem us and clothe us in His own righteousness. The only reason I can come up with is His unexplainable love and desire for fellowship with us.

His position as the Messiah was made clear when He came in the flesh as the Son of God to become the sacrifice for our sins. (10/06) It’s always easy to read the gospel and apply it broadly to men in general or the body of believer’s as a whole. I was struck again when reading this time that it was “for you”—me, the individual.

These last times (I think) is a term that refers to time on earth in general from the ascension of the Lord after the resurrection until He comes again as King of kings.

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

“by him” – through Jesus Christ

God the Father brought Jesus back to life after His death on the cross. (10/06)

The resurrection is God’s public affirmation of the acceptance of His Son’s willing sacrifice of Himself in payment for my sin.

Because of this wonderful miracle these people had come to believe, to trust in God. They recognized that Jesus had been raised to a position in glory, and they had been persuaded and convinced and had confident expectation that God would fulfill His promises. He would provide their salvation for eternity if they would just accept the sacrifice of His Son for their sins.

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

“purify” – make clean, cleanse from defilement

“unfeigned” – without hypocrisy, genuine, sincere

“unfeigned love” - the Greek for love is not specified; “see that ye love” – the word for love is agapao

How do we purify our souls? By obedience to the truth through the Spirit at work in us, which will produce in us a sincere unconditional love of ALL our brothers and sisters in the faith. It sounds so simple, but is oh so hard. Just to be obedient to the truth is a constant struggle. Part of that obedience is to “love others as ourselves.” That is a desire of my heart; but when the rubber hits the road regarding choices in that direction, I often fail. I’m so selfish. I truly feel like the Lord has given me a servant spirit, yet selfish choices win out over and

over again. What's even worse is that I'll often make the best choice in serving someone else in His name, but I'll make the poor choice when it comes to my time of personal interaction with Him. You would think it would be just the opposite. I'm just so glad that the Lord doesn't give up on me and that He loves me in spite of me. I truly want to be total clay in His hands, but I'm not sure that time will ever come until He takes me home.

I just realized this verse is worded as a compliment for what they have accomplished, yet a warning to continue in that love fervently, intently, with a purposeful mindset. Maybe there is hope for me yet on this earth.

Another thought just hit me—The decision to love one another is just that—a decision, a choice, a mindset. It's not to be based on someone's looks, position in society, or whatever. We are supposed to love ALL the brethren—and that is the emphasis here, love of fellow believers.

**1Pet. 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.**

Corruptible – perishable, decayed

Those who believe in Christ have been born again, given a new life, a new beginning. When we sinned in Adam, the natural fellowship that we had with God in the Spirit, was broken. Not only that, the unit of our body, soul and spirit began to decay, to die. I've heard it defined this way:

Spirit = God consciousness

Soul = self consciousness

Body = world consciousness through the senses

Through faith in Jesus, we return to a spirit of fellowship with the Creator and a reunion of body, soul and spirit that will live for eternity. How is that possible? By declaration of God, through the Word, His Son, and the loving sacrifice He made to make that life possible.

**John 1:1-3** --In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**1Pet. 1:24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:**

"glory" – good opinion, praise, honor, approval

Peter is comparing our bodies to the grass and any status we achieve in the flesh to the flower of the grass. They are both temporary. Peter seems to be referencing Isaiah in this verse.

**Is. 40:7-8** The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

**1Pet. 1:25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.**

"preach" – announce good news, glad tidings

God's Word, on the other hand, will endure forever, *ad infinitum*, without end. It is by the authority of God's enduring, unchanging word that the gospel (good news of Jesus' provision on the cross—His death, burial and resurrection) is preached to any of us. We tend to put a negative connotation on being "preached to." Actually it is just a term that means to share the good news.