

Sunday, May 7, 2023 pm

STUDIES IN 1 PETER (31)
Peter's Concluding Remarks
1 Peter 5:9-14

We have devoted a number of lessons to a study of 1 Peter over the past 2½ years. This book is very timely as a reminder to prepare for living in a society that is becoming increasingly more hostile against Christians and their faith. Today, we conclude our study of 1 Peter.

I. Brief review of 1 Peter

- a. Peter was writing to brethren throughout the region known as Asia minor. Several areas of that region are mentioned in 1:1.
- b. He begins by reminding them of the hope they have through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- c. Then in 1:6, we find our first mention of the “various trials” that would grieve them. As we have noted throughout this study, this is a book written to brethren who were facing persecutions for their faith. While it had not reached its most severe forms, we find persecutions in their early forms – being ridiculed and falsely accused for their faith, some localized “punishments” (e.g., imprisonment, beatings, even executions in some cases, etc.), loss of status within society, and societal rulings that would lead toward making the Bible and Christian faith illegal. At the time of this writing much of these persecutions were localized, but Peter writes as if they were going to spread even more.
- d. The primary focus of this letter is to prepare brethren for these sufferings. Some of the subjects we have addressed include:
 - i. We have a hope of heaven (1:3) and faith (1:4-9)
 - ii. They were to “gird up their minds” and be sober (1:13) meaning they had to be resolved that they would endure
 - iii. They were not to conform to society, but to strive to be holy, even as He is holy (1:14-16)
 - iv. 1:22, notes that in purification of our souls by obedience, we ought to love one another fervently with a pure heart. This is the first reminder that we need each other as we face a hostile world. Throughout our study of 1 Peter we have noted the importance of the local church and how we are **MUST BE THERE** for each other.
 - v. This includes a proper attitude toward each other and society (2:1-3)
 - vi. WE must live as “sojourners and pilgrims” (2:11) having honorable conduct among the Gentiles so that as they speak against you, your good works may cause some to glorify God instead (2:11-12). Several times in this letter, we are challenged to live decent lives with proper attitudes. We do NOT respond in kind to mistreatment!
 - vii. We are called upon to submit, whenever possible – to governing authorities, to masters, wives to their husbands, with husbands honoring their wives (2:13-3:7)
 - viii. 3:8-12 – Peter calls for us to be united as brethren and to treat each other properly
 - ix. 3:15 – we are to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts and always be ready to give an answer.
 - x. 3:17 – as we prepare to suffer, let it be for doing good and not for evil. We have an ultimate example in suffering – Jesus (3:18-19).
 - xi. 4:3ff – we are living changed lives, from what we were before. This in itself will provoke ridicule by some.
 - xii. 4:7 - we are warned that in time the end would come, therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. We need to be praying to God.
 - xiii. 4:8-11 – again we are reminded how we are to treat each other – with love, hospitality, using our abilities to our very best with a goal to bring glory to God.

- xiv. 4:12-16 – when we suffer, let it be because we ARE doing good and not because of evil in our lives. If you suffer “as a Christian” glorify God in that.
 - xv. 4:17 – know that judgment IS coming and all will answer.
 - xvi. 5:1-4 – Peter discusses the service of elders in shepherding the “flock of God”. Godly leaders can be a tremendous source of strength in troubling times.
 - xvii. 5:5-6 – We are again reminded of our need to submit to our elders and to one another with humility.
 - xviii. 5:7 – cast all your cares on Him, for He cares for you
 - xix. 5:8-9 - Finally, we are called upon to be sober and vigilant (alert) and aware of Satan our enemy. KNOW that he is the one who has brought about these sufferings (do NOT blame God). Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that you are not alone in your sufferings.
- e. AND that brings us to our concluding text.

II. Concluding observations

a. *The same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood –*

- i. Consider that in about 30 years, the gospel had spread throughout the empire, and that without the modern conveniences we enjoy. Colossians 1:6, 23; Cf. Romans 10:18, 1 Thessalonians 1:8- sounded forth in every place (while this is likely regional, the point is the gospel was spreading). The “great commission” was being fulfilled (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19-20)
- ii. And it had an impact on society and reaction from those who rejected the Christian faith (both other religions and the unbelievers).
- iii. Consider this also as a “fellowship of believers”.
 - 1. Peter mentions the brotherhood. Found only here and in 1 Peter 2:17 in the NT. This is a reminder that there are Christians everywhere.
 - 2. Consider this as we partake of the Lord’s Supper each week –. While the Lord’s Supper is to be offered when we assemble together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 11:10ff), there is a sense in which on each Sunday, every faithful saint throughout the world partakes together. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 notes that we, though many, are one body and one bread, for we ALL partake of that one bread. Paul is writing to the Corinthians from Ephesus and notes that WE ALL partake of that one bread. To me, this is justification for offering the Lord’s Supper Sunday evening for those who were unable to attend Sunday morning. NOTE: It is NOT justification to partake of it anywhere while not assembled with the saints. Scripture is CLEAR that it is to offered when we are assembled together.
 - 3. There is a powerful quote about The brotherhood throughout the world in the Truth for Today Commentary¹. The statement is found on pgs. 286-87. (Time permitting, we will read this.)

b. *But may the God of all grace... -*

- i. This is Peter’s “benediction” about God - Peter’s concluding prayer for God’s favor.
- ii. **He reminds them that God is “God of all grace”** – He is a gracious God. We are continually reminded of His grace – 8 times in this letter alone, beginning with Peter’s salutation (1:2). It is because of God’s grace that we have a hope of salvation (cf. Ephesians 2:4-9).
- iii. **He called us to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus** – these brethren had responded to the gospel invitation, which is the emphasis of being called. 2 Thessalonians 2:14 reminds us that we are called by “our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

¹ Warden, Duane. Truth for Today Commentary – 1 & 2 Peter and Jude. Resource Publications, Searcy, AR, ©2009. Pp. 286-87.

- iv. ***After you have suffered awhile*** – that which he has emphasized throughout this letter. Of note here, it is only “*awhile*”. Suffering for Him will not be forever. With proper perspective it is, “our light affliction” – 2 Corinthians 4:17 which is but for a moment. Romans 8:18, they are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.
- v. **His prayer is that God would**
 - 1. ***Perfect*** – to prepare or make ready. This is a word that means to make one whole or complete. Used in Matthew 4:21 where James and John were ***mending*** their nets as Jesus called them. 1 Corinthians 1:10 where in unity we are to be “***perfectly joined together***” in the same mind and judgment. 2 Corinthians 13:11 – become ***complete***. We need to continue to be striving toward maturity. More on that in 2 Peter 1:5-11.
 - 2. ***Establish*** – ground us, make us more firm, or to confirm. This would be the idea of “taking root” so that you will not be easily swayed away from the truth, EVEN as you face persecutions. Romans 16:25 Paul concludes his letter alluding to “*him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ.*”
 - 3. ***Strengthen*** – to make stronger or more able (found only here). As we mature in the faith, we ought to be able to endure more (cf. Hebrews 5:14 which speaks of strong meat being able to be “digested” by the mature.
 - 4. ***Settle us*** – to lay on a foundation that is firm and cannot be moved. Cf. Matthew 7:25 – where we will be when we hear His teachings.
- c. ***To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen*** – again, we are reminded that God is worthy of our praise. It ought to be our desire that His reign be eternal and that it will overcome all the sufferings, persecutions and evils that surround us in this world.
- d. ***By Silvanus, our faithful brother...*** I have written to you briefly – likely a reference to Silas, Paul’s travel companion. It is very likely that Paul and Peter would have interacted from time to time. It is interesting that in Acts, if it is him, he is called “Silas” (13x), but Silvanus is found 4x, usually in introductory notes (2 Cor., 1 & 2 Thess., and here as a concluding thought). In some way he aided Peter with this letter, likely as a courier.
- e. ***Exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand*** – do we stand in God’s grace?
- f. ***She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you*** – a final salutation. Exactly what Babylon is, is uncertain. Many believe it to be Rome, as the Capital of the Roman Empire. There is likelihood that when used in Revelation, this is what it is referring to (if you take a later date for the book). Other thoughts include a church in Mesopotamia (where the real Babylon was), or it is said there was a city on the Euphrates by that name. For our purposes, Peter is sending greetings from there – either the church, or a lady from there that they would have been familiar with.
- g. ***Mark also greeted them*** – Mark was likely the gospel writer. He is worthy of further study. Mark is believed to have been close to Peter. The gospel attributed to him was likely based upon that interaction (as Luke was to Paul). He was a cousin of Barnabas who began with Paul and Barnabas on Paul’s first preaching journey but returned home abruptly (Acts 12:25-13:13). He would later go with Barnabas as they began preaching in Cyprus (Acts 15:39). Evidently, later they were reconciled as Paul found him useful and faithful (Philemon 24 & 2 Timothy 4:11). Peter viewed Mark in much the same way as Paul viewed Timothy. In our text, Peter calls Mark, “my son” (5:13).
- h. ***Greet one another with a holy kiss*** – this would have been a common greeting in the first century. Paul mentions it in 4 of his letters (Rom. 16:16, 1 Cor. 16:20, 2 Cor. 13:12, 1 Thess. 5:26). Peter mentions it here. It would be equivalent to a handshake, or perhaps a hug here in America. NOTE: There are still parts of the world, especially the Middle East that still greet each other with a kiss on the cheek. This is supposed to be a demonstration of friendship and perhaps some trust. Remember that Peter as often challenged them to treat each other properly. In greeting one another there was

- to be an acceptance that was from the heart with true Christian love (the word is agape). Compare this with the “holy kiss” Paul mentions. There is nothing sensual in it.
- i. **Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus** – it was common to begin and/or conclude letters with blessing of peace. A focus of our faith is to pursue peace. Hebrews 12:14 reminds us to *pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord*. Peter had actually addressed this earlier in 1 Peter 3:11 quoting from Psalm 34:12-16, “*Let him seek peace and pursue it*” In summary we want peace: With God, Jesus, one another, with all men as much as depends on us, and even within ourselves. That is how to lead of meaningful life.
 - j. **Amen**. A Greek translated word that means, “So be it.”

And thus we conclude Peter’s first letter to these brethren. It is an encouragement, and as with so much of the New Testament, it is as timely today as it was back 2000 years ago. Let us take courage as we deal with a world that seems to be becoming increasingly more like the corrupt Roman society that Christians of the first century lived in. And if we find ourselves facing troubles in this life, let us turn to this letter and read it again and again. Think about that and I commend this lesson and this letter to you.