

CCF Study Notes
Tuesday 7 AM Study
14 November 2006
1 Peter 1

Before beginning to read from 1 Peter, let us spend time in prayer, considering how we ought to live in these trying times. Let us ask God to help us do the following:

1. **Know** who we are as pilgrims in this world,
2. **Bless** the Lord for our salvation in Jesus Christ,
3. **Rejoice** in Jesus even in the midst of our trials,
4. **Find assurance** of our salvation in the words of Scripture,
5. **Live holy and fruitful** lives,
6. **Reach** out to those who have stumbled, and
7. **Love** our brothers and sisters in Christ sincerely and fervently.

We learn more about the apostle Peter than any other apostle from the gospels and Acts. We could review everything we know about Peter and stand even more amazed at Peter's letters, at the work that Jesus did in the life of a humble fisherman. Many claims and traditions surrounding the apostle Peter can be disproved by the words of this book. This book is another very practical letter written to Jewish believers throughout Asia Minor, believers who were suffering great persecution.

(1:1-2) This letter opens with the greeting, the address, and the writers' introduction, as usual. Something stands out in each of these items. The greeting speaks of multiplied grace and peace being given to the hearers. The address takes time to identify what makes these pilgrims special: their election, their sanctification, their obedience, and their baptism. These pilgrims stand in a special relationship to all three members of the Godhead. The writer introduces himself in a very terse and humble style: Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Both the writer and those to whom the letter is addressed are distinguished by the work of Jesus Christ in their lives. That is what sets us apart! Identity is such an issue for many people today. Who are we? Verse 2 describes us so well, describing what it means to be a pilgrim. (Hebrews 11:13-16)

(1:3-5) Peter invokes a blessing upon God for the hope we are born to, the inheritance reserved for us in heaven, and the salvation which will be revealed to us at the end, having been kept through faith until that time. We are born again, made heirs and kept until the day of our salvation. Salvation is spoken of in three tenses. In one sense we were saved when Christ died for us – in the past. We are saved now, being kept by the power of God. We are saved in the last time when the fullness of our salvation is revealed. Consider how these words speak to the persecuted church! We are ultimately secure in Christ! Can you take hold of these things and appropriate them for yourself: a living hope, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and our salvation, ready to be revealed? These are ours in Christ!

(1:6-9) How is it that suffering can be the cause for rejoicing? The genuineness of our faith is being tested. Our faith is indeed the most precious thing we have here on earth. At the revelation of Jesus Christ our faith will be to His praise, honor and glory. There is something wonderful and joyful about believing in that One whom we cannot see, but whose presence is so evident in our lives.

(1:10-12) Those Jewish believers held to the absolute truth of the scriptures written by the prophets in Old Testament times. Most of the Old Testament was, in fact, written down by those who would be designated prophets – whether it be Moses, or David, Samuel, or one of the other “seers”. These were the poets and historians and rulers of their day in Israel, who wrote down God's word. Like these Jewish believers, we can find the assurance of our salvation in the words of scripture. They wrote things they did not completely understand – things for our benefit. They, like those who preach the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit, brought the good news about salvation through Jesus Christ.

(1:13-16) So how should we live in view of this salvation which is ours through faith in Jesus Christ? We must keep these things always in mind, not allowing ourselves to be bound up by lesser thoughts and philosophies. We should be sober, no acting drunken. We should rest our hope fully on God's grace, no putting stock in anything else. We should be obedient children, not spoiled brats. We should not conform to those lusts that once held us. We should be holy in all our conduct, because God is holy.

(1:17-21) We are to live in the knowledge that we will answer to Jesus Christ for what we do on earth. We will not be held accountable to earthly traditions or earthly judges, but to Jesus Christ, who has washed us with His own blood. Here we see the important teaching that Jesus was not “Plan B”. Before the foundation of the universe God knew that His Son would come to earth to die for sinful people like you and me. Our faith and hope are in God – not merely in the latest religious fad. When Jesus was raised from the dead He guaranteed eternal life to us. Our hope is in God – not in some religious system or the traditions of men.

(1:22-25) The guiding principle of our life is the same as always: sincere, fervent love of the brethren. This was the command Jesus gave His disciples. Our love is sincere and fervent because it is eternal. When we reach out in love to mortal creatures we love, knowing that one day we will be separated from that creature by death. When we love those who are not born again, we love knowing that death will part us from that person forever. When we love our brothers and sisters in Christ we need not fear separation. Only those who put their hope in that which is eternal can expect to find eternal peace. Temporary trouble cannot break eternal bonds!

P.S. Recordings and notes for these studies are available at <http://www.jstoker.name> . A podcast is available at <http://feeds.feedburner.com/CCF-T-Podcast> .