

Introduction to 1 Peter

Sunday School - Sleater Kinney Road Baptist Church - 03/26/17

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1. Point of the Book:

- 1 Peter was written for this reason:¹
 - (1) To remind and encourage Christians what God has done for them, and
 - (2) in light of that, encourage them to trust God, grow and live Godly lives
 - (3) in the midst of trials and sufferings,
 - (4) which *all* Christians *have been called* to endure for good and holy reasons

¹ Karen Jobes observed, "The apostle explains the significance of Jesus' suffering and how those who follow him must live out their faith," (*1 Peter*, in BECNT [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005], 1).

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- This is a book for *real* people, living *real* lives, facing *real* problems, in a society and culture that *really* hated Christ and everything His Gospel stands for
- Peter is a very practical man:
 - He wrote 1 Peter to tell us *why* trials and suffering comes our way
 - He wrote 2 Peter to tell us *why* false teachers and deceivers come our way
- Peter gives us a Christianity completely different from the glossy, pop-Christian shallowness that characterizes the evangelical world in the US
 - Peter lives in a world that is *very* hostile to Christ and the Gospel
 - So do the people he writes to
 - That background informs the way he writes, what he emphasizes, and the warnings he gives
- Peter is a very serious man, a very sober man, a very concerned man - and he says all Christians should be, too
 - This seriousness, this soberness, this practical and “real” mindset is the worldview, the lens, through which he views the world and the faith
 - It should be ours, too

2. Historical Background and Context:

- Peter wrote his letter during a time when the Roman officials were *only beginning* to realize that Judaism and Christianity were *not* the same thing²
- There were two phrases to Christian persecution in the first three hundred years after Christ:
 - (1) Jews viewed Christianity as a perverted sect, whose heresy would bring God’s wrath on Israel
 - Jesus **was not** the promised Messiah - he was a criminal
 - Christians were false teachers, leading good Jews away from the synagogue and the sacred Scriptures
 - Christians were taking good Jews and making them heretics

² See especially Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, combined ed. (reprint; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 1:31-36.

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- They must be stopped, and zealous Jews who help stamp out this heresy will receive God's approval (e.g. Paul's own testimony)
 - This is the background to Paul's persecutions by the Jews during his missionary journeys; this hostility and his notoriety led to his accusation and arrest in Jerusalem
- (2) Romans who began to realize that Christians were *not* the same as Jews - they were a distinct group
 - Rumors circulated that Christians were cannibals (e.g. **"eats my flesh and drinks my blood;"** Jn 6:52-56)
 - Christians were considered to be atheists, who believed in only *one* God, not a pantheon³
 - They didn't fit into society, and groups which are different are always "weird" and "dangerous," *subversive*, even
 - Christians also didn't have the longevity and recognition that Judaism did; they weren't only weird, they were weird and *new*
 - All of these things led to official, state-sponsored persecution beginning with Nero (ca. 64 A.D.) and continuing at random intervals over the next roughly 240 years

3. Date Written:

- Peter probably wrote this book in the early 60s (A.D.), shortly before he was killed for his faith under the Roman Emperor Nero⁴
 - Eusebius reports Peter was killed under the Neroian persecution⁵
 - Clement of Rome reported Peter was martyred, but doesn't say how or when - he only says it was because of "unrighteous jealousy"⁶

³ See Gonzalez (*Story of Christianity*, 1:14-16).

⁴ See D. Edmond Hiebert's comments in his introduction (*1 Peter*, revised ed. [Winona Lake, IN: 1992], 27-28). Other conservative scholars, such as J. Ramsey Michaels, are less sure about the date of Peter's death (*1 Peter*, in WBC, vol. 49 [Waco, TX: Word, 1988], lvii-lxi). They urge caution.

⁵ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25.

⁶ Michael Holmes (ed.), "The Letter of the Romans to the Corinthians - Commonly Known as First Clement," 5.4, in *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989), 31. This bit about Peter appears in a long "hall of faith" section from Clement about how great and Godly men have always suffered because of unrighteous jealousy.

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4. Peter on Peter:

- Peter calls himself as “**a witness of the sufferings of Christ,**” (1 Pet 5:1)
 - He, along with James and John, “**were eyewitnesses of His majesty,**” and heard God’s voice “**borne from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain,**” (2 Pet 1:16-18).
 - Peter is describing the transfiguration
 - This was clearly a *profound* moment in Peter’s life, even though he didn’t understand what was happening at the time
 - Jesus’ clothes became, “**as no fuller on earth could bleach them,**” (Mk 9:3)⁷
 - He saw Moses and Elijah, the two greatest OC prophets, reappear on earth and speak to Christ (Mk 9:4)
 - He saw God show Himself on earth in the form of a cloud (Mk 9:5); the first time this happened since His glory left the temple (Eze 8-10)
 - He heard God speak from out of the cloud and testify, “**This is my beloved Son; listen to him!**” (Mk 9:7)
 - I don’t think we can overestimate the impact this event had on his life (cf. the Apostle John’s introduction - 1 Jn 1:1-4)
 - I also think it means Peter deserves to be *heard* and *obeyed*, whether we like what he has to say, or not!
 - He is also an apostle (1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1)
 - He considers himself to be Christ’s slave (δοῦλος; 2 Pet 1:1)
 - If you don’t consider yourself to be a slave for Christ, than you:
 - *don’t* have the same view of Christ Peter does
 - have a *higher* view of yourself than Peter does
 - have a *different* idea of what the Christian life is than Peter does
 - This letter will either change your mind, or leave you without excuse!

⁷ It is likely Mark drew a great deal of his information from Peter (cf. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.15, 3.39.15). Mark is infamous for being shorter than the other three Gospels, but including *more detail* for the accounts he *does* mention. This is no exception; no other synoptic Gospel mentions the extra detail about the glowing radiance of Jesus’ clothing. It has the ring of direct testimony from a true eyewitness (i.e. Peter)!

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- He dictated the letter, but Silvanus apparently wrote it; “**by Silvanus**” (1 Pet 5:12; cf. Acts 15:22, 1 Thess 1:1)
- He knows Mark, the Gospel writer (1 Pet 5:13)
- He may have written the letter from Rome (i.e. “**Babylon**,” 1 Pet 5:13)⁸

5. Audience:

- Perhaps Jews (διασπορά⁹)
- Old Covenant references suggest a Jewish audience,¹⁰ or perhaps Peter was just applying OC language to the church
 - 1 Pet 1:2 (“**sprinkling**”), 1 Pet 2:5 (“**holy priesthood**,” etc.), 1 Pet 2:9-10 (“**holy priesthood**,” “**were no people**,” etc.)
- Unbelievers are referred to as “**Gentiles**” (1 Pet 2:12, 4:3)
- It is likely this was addressed to a mixed group of Christians:¹¹
 - This was a circular letter (1 Pet 1:1) for the Christians around present-day Turkey, “**in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia**,” (1 Pet 1:1)

⁸ For an argument that Babylon is actually Rome, see Edwin A. Blum *1 & 2 Peter*, in EBC, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: 1981), 253-254. See also Hiebert (*1 Peter*, 26-27).

⁹ BDAG admits this *could* simply be term for Christian living “far from their heavenly home” (s.v. “1914 διασπορά,” 2).

¹⁰ Eusebius believed Peter preached to the Jews only (*History*, 3.1.2.; 3.4.2.).

¹¹ See especially Michaels (*1 Peter*, xlv-xlvi).

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- We have no idea how these people became Christians
 - Paul only visited the provinces of Asia and Galatia
 - He wanted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit (probably through a prophet) told him, "No!" (Acts 16:7)
 - He eventually went to Macedonia, after receiving a vision of a man begging for the Gospel (Acts 16:9-10)
- These people *probably* became Christians from the preaching at Pentecost; pilgrims from all over the diaspora heard about Jesus and saw the signs and miracles from the apostles (Acts 2:5-13)¹²
- Paul planted many of these churches on his missionary journeys, so the congregation is likely a mix of Israelites and former "god-fearing"

¹² This is David deSilva's analysis, and I think it is spot on. "The New Testament texts offer very little information, however, about the growth of Christianity in Bithynia-Pontus and Cappadocia. No stories are told of apostles visiting these regions—in fact, Paul and his team are said to have been prevented from missionary work in Bithynia, being sent to Macedonia instead (Acts 16:7). The one New Testament tradition that might account for the spread of Christianity to these regions is the story of Pentecost in Acts 2. Jewish pilgrims from many different regions, including specifically Pontus, Cappadocia and Asia (Acts 2:9), were present in Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost, and they are remembered to have been profoundly affected by Peter's proclamation of Jesus. While the author of Acts records the exponential growth of the Christian group in Jerusalem, it is likely that many if not most of these converts returned to their own countries at some point. These converts no doubt would have engaged in evangelism there, founding assemblies of Christians across the Mediterranean," (*An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods and Ministry Formation* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004], 841-842).

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Gentiles

- Peter assumes an established polity with dual elders¹³ (1 Pet 5:1), and a dedicated and numbered flock (1 Pet 5:2); in effect, a NT church
- Peter says these believers used to be ignorant of God (1Pet 1:14) and were ransomed from their **“futile ways inherited from your fathers,”** (1 Pet 1:18)
- Their hope is in God because Jesus has been raised from the dead, implying their hope *was not* in God before (1 Pet 1:21) - curious, if the audience were faithful, former Old Covenant Israelites
- In the end, it really doesn't matter what the audience's ethnicity was:
 - The letter was written to churches scattered across the region
 - The churches are full of Christians, some Jewish, others not
 - Every believer is a member of the New Covenant, inaugurated by Christ's blood, which was poured out for many - Jew and Gentile alike (cf. Mk 14:24-25)
 - Christianity is the fulfillment of the OC, so it's not surprising that Peter uses OC language and allusions to make some *very important* points about your life as a member of the New Covenant¹⁴
 - The less you know about your OT, the less you'll understand the NT
 - One passion I try to impart is a love and understanding of the OC Scriptures

6. Peter's Theology - Implicit Issues:

a. Trinity:

¹³ I suppose you *could* make an argument that the plural “elders” (Πρεσβυτέρους) is simply a reference to the collective single pastors in all the churches. However, the Book of Acts knows nothing about a single-elder model in churches.

¹⁴ Karen Jobes' point is excellent here; “Whether converts from paganism or Judaism, the letter's recipients needed to understand their new covenant relationship with God in Christ and the implications of that relationship for transformed living. Nevertheless, faith in Jesus, the *Jewish* Messiah, brought converts into the religious world of Judaism, not of pagan religions. Therefore, whether Peter's readers were formerly Jews or Gentiles, Peter addresses them indiscriminately from within the traditions of biblical Israel, in which the author was thoroughly steeped,” (1 Peter, 24).

Eusebius remarked that Peter “proclaimed the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of the New Covenant,” (History, 3.4.1.). David deSilva wrote, “It reflects the Christian appropriation of Jewish titles, not the actual ethnicity of the addressees,” (Introduction, 842).

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- Peter refers to Father, Son and Spirit as distinct Persons with harmonious roles in a believer's redemption:¹⁵
 - Believers were "**chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood . . .**" (1 Pet 1:2)
 - God is distinct from Christ (2 Pet 1:1)
- God is the Father of Jesus Christ (1 Pet 1:3)
- God the Father spoke to His Son at the transfiguration (2 Pet 1:17-18)
- The Holy Spirit moved men to speak for God (2 Pet 1:20-21)
- The Spirit is the "**Spirit of Christ**" (1 Pet 1:11) who led the prophets to predict "**the sufferings of Christ,**" (1 Pet 1:12)
- Christ was "**destined before the foundation of the world**" by God (1 Pet 1:19-20 - *this is a divine passive*)
- Through Christ, we have confidence in God (1 Pet 1:21), who raised Christ from the dead, *so that* (ὥστε) you'd have this faith and hope in God
- Christians offer spiritual sacrifices to God *through* (διὰ) Jesus Christ (1 Pet 2:5)
- Christ died in order to bring us to God (1 Pet 3:18)
- God calls Christians to His eternal glory *by* (ἐν¹⁶) Christ (1 Pet 5:10)
 - Bible study is like detective work
 - The Trinity is not an invention pressed onto the Bible; it's a conclusion drawn **from all the facts inside** the Bible

b. High View of Scripture:

- Peter believes Scripture is the product of men speaking from God, when they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:20-21)
 - The Bible is God speaking, and the Spirit moved those men to write what God wanted them to write
 - You can't get more basic than this!
- The OC prophets understood that their prophecies came from "**the Spirit of Christ within them,**" (1 Pet 1:11)
- The OC prophets were "**holy,**" (2 Pet 3:1-2)
- Peter quotes from:

¹⁵ See the language from the 1833 *New Hampshire Confession of Faith*, Article 2.

¹⁶ Some translations render the preposition as "in."

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Isaiah	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 40:6-9 (cf. 1 Pet 1:24-25)- 28:16 (cf. 1 Pet 2:6)- 8:14-15 (cf. 1 Pet 2:8)- 53:4-6 (cf. 1 Pet 2:23-25)
Psalms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 118:22 (cf. 1 Pet 2:7)- 34:12-16 (cf. 1 Pet 3:10-12)
Hosea	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 2:23 (cf. 1 Pet 2:10)
Proverbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 11:31 (cf. 1 Pet 4:18)- 26:11 (cf. 2 Pet 2:22)
Gospels ¹⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mt 17:18 (cf. 2 Pet 1:17)
Genesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ch(s). 6-8, 19 (cf. 2 Pet 2:4-7)

- If you don't believe the Bible you hold in your hands is a divine book, written by men moved along by the Spirit, then you *don't agree with Peter*
 - If you disagree with Peter, **you're wrong!**
 - If you know a Pastor, bible teacher or Christian who disagrees with Peter, **they're wrong!**

c. Fulfilled Prophecy as a Great Encouragement:

- Fulfilled prophecy is a great encouragement to the believer
 - You're a partaker of something even the prophets looked for and wondered about; **"they were serving not themselves but you,"** (1 Pet 1:10-12)
 - **David didn't have the benefits and knowledge of God you have today, as a member of the New and better Covenant!**

¹⁷ 1 Peter was written *before* some of the Gospels. Most conservative scholars date the synoptic Gospels sometime in the 60s A.D., with Luke occasionally being pushed to perhaps 70 A.D. (For these dates, see any responsible, conservative NT introduction).

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- **“He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake. Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God,”** (1 Pet 1:20-21)
 - To Peter, if you’re a Christian, you were part of Christ’s plan from before the world even began (1 Pet 1:18-21)
 - *This is encouraging news for any Christians*
 - *It’s news that allows you to hold on in the midst of a very difficult life*
 - False teachers and unbelievers are part of God’s plan, and have (in some way) have been *destined* or *appointed* to be this way (1 Pet 1:9; cf Deut 13:3, Jude 4)
- Everything that happens, **every single thing**, is part of God’s plan and providence - and it is all a holy reason, whether we understand that or not¹⁸
 - We live in a world ruled by God, controlled by God, orchestrated by God:
 - *Because this is true*, Satan will lose
 - *Because this is true*, even false teachers are only operating with God’s permission
 - *Because this is true*, what you’re going through is not outside of God’s plan and control, but *part of* His plan and control
 - For Peter, suffering and hardship is only comprehensible within the framework of a God who *completely* in control of this world, and whose providence we as His creatures must trust with our lives
 - Fulfilled prophecy is a comforting thing - it helps us keep going, knowing *the rest* of prophecy will be fulfilled, too!

d. The Permanence of Salvation:

¹⁸ The Belgic Confession (1619), Article 13, reads, “We believe that this good God, after he created all things, did not abandon them to chance or fortune but leads and governs them according to his holy will, in such a way that nothing happens in this world without his orderly arrangement . . . We do not wish to inquire with undue curiosity into what he does that surpasses human understanding and is beyond our ability to comprehend. But in all humility and reverence we adore the just judgments of God, which are hidden from us, being content to be Christ’s disciples, so as to learn only what he shows us in his Word, without going beyond those limits.”

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- To Peter, if you are a Christian, you have been (1 Pet 1:2):
 - (1) chosen according to the predetermination of God,
 - (2) made holy, set apart and sanctified by the Spirit, so that
 - (3) you would be obedient to Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood
- Because this is true, Jesus' resurrection from the dead is the basis for your hope (cf. 1 Pet 1:18-21)
- His resurrection has given you an inheritance in God's kingdom which (1 Pet 1:4-5):
 - (1) will never die
 - (2) will never be defiled
 - (3) will never fade away
 - (4) is being guarded in heaven for you (*the verb is perfect*; τετηρημένην)
- Christ's blood has ransomed you from your former "**futile ways**," (1 Pet 1:18-20)
- You have been born from imperishable seed by (διὰ) the word of God, which is the Gospel (1 Pet 1:23-25)
- If you don't have certainty about your soul, then you won't be able to persevere through persecution:
 - **Tyndale example**
- For Peter:
 - this world is controlled by God,
 - our salvation is authored by God, and
 - applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
 - this produces obedience to the Gospel through the sprinkling of Christ's blood
 - your salvation is not your doing,
 - and God has given birth to you by the imperishable seed of the Gospel
- Again, this *is not* an isolated doctrine - it is one strand which intertwines with countless others to provide a sure foundation for how to serve God while your neighbors hate you and the God who saved you

e. Peter on Jesus:

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- Peter's favorite titles for Jesus:

Lord	5x	1 Pet 1:3, 1 Pet 3:15, 2 Pet 1:1, 2 Pet 1:14, 2 Pet 1:16,
Lord and Savior	4x	2 Pet 1:11, 2 Pet 2:20; 2 Pet 3:2; 2 Pet 3:18
God and Savior	1x	2 Pet 1:1

- How can you suffer and bring glory to God, while following Christ as your perfect example . . . and *not* reverence Christ as Lord, as Savior, as God?
 - Peter's Christianity is not shallow, not slick and not cheap - **it is deadly serious**

7. Peter's Theology - Explicit Issues:

a. Suffering:

- When Peter mentions "suffering" and "persecution" he really isn't talking about oppression by the state - there is no state-sponsored persecution in the early 60's
- He's probably talking about passive oppression by family, friends, neighbors and by society in general (cf. 1 Pet 4:4-5, and entire Book of Hebrews)¹⁹
 - This is the stuff of everyday life, and it can wear you down
 - On the horizon, looming like stormclouds, is the growing threat of persecution by the state
 - If you live like a faithful Christian, you will be different from the pagan world around you

¹⁹ "[T]he author focuses on one central pastoral problem—helping these Christians endure in the face of their neighbors' negative reactions to their obstinate perseverance in the Christian faith . . . The Christians find themselves maligned as though they were deviant and vice-ridden, unworthy elements of society. They have fallen victim to their society's social-control techniques of shaming, labeling and marginalizing, all reflective of their neighbors' attempts to cajole them back into conformity with the local customs and values (see especially 1 Pet 4:1–4)," (DeSilva, *Introduction*, 843).

Likewise, D.A. Carson and Douglas Moo remarked, ". . . the evidence from 1 Peter itself does not point to an official persecution. What is implied, rather, is the hostility Christians were known to have faced from the general Roman population," (*An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005; Kindle ed.], KL 15668-15669).

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- People (friends, family, neighbors, your little orbit of society) will not understand that, and will use means to cajole you back into conformity
- Some of these means will be gentle and friendly, others will *not* be so friendly - **there is a direct parallel to our current culture wars today**
 - Society will always attempt to shame you into embracing secular “orthodoxy”²⁰
- Peter emphasizes God’s grace in salvation
 - Predestination, calling, fulfilled prophecy, permanence of salvation, etc.
- *so that* you’ll be able to endure the struggles of real life as a Christian (“**in this you rejoice,**” 1 Pet 1:6)
 - You’ll suffer trials **so that** your faith will be perfected, and you will be praised when Jesus returns (1 Pet 1:6-7)
 - **“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you,”** (1 Pet 4:12)
 - Expect trials (*fiery trials!*) to come
 - Expect them to test you, to refine you, to exercise you to greater godliness (cf. 1 Pet 1:7, 4:12)
 - *This is not Joel Osteen’s Christianity!*
 - If you’re a Christian, **you will** persevere to the end and obtain the salvation of your soul (1 Pet 1:9 - i.e. glorification)
 - If you do right, and suffer for it, you gain God’s approval (1 Pet 1:19-20)
 - You have been called to suffer, because Christ suffered as an example, and you’ve been called to follow in His footsteps (cf. **Lk 9:23-26**, 9:57-58)
 - This is *not* approval for salvation:
 - it is approval for a “job well done” as God’s servant and slave for righteousness,

²⁰ “The hostility, therefore, was primarily directed at shaming the Christians into returning to a more ‘respectable’ way of life, one that affirmed the traditional gods, the traditional values of the region and the order of household and society, and secondarily to dissuading new conversions,” (deSilva, *Introduction*, 844).

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- and as a testimony to the unbelievers or false brethren who persecute you
- Do not return evil for evil, but *bless* your persecutors, instead (1 Pet 3:8-9)
 - As you're being persecuted or reviled,
 - reverence Christ as Lord and *do not* respond in kind to your enemies,
 - so that when they ask you why you're so cheerful,
 - you can give them the Gospel (1 Pet 3:13-16)²¹
 - You deliberately suppress the urge to "fight back" so that you can be a testimony to those who torment you and persecute you
 - You can only do that *if* you are reverencing and sanctifying Christ as Lord in your heart (recall how often Peter uses that title!)
 - *How can you do this if you doubt your own salvation?*
 - *How can you do this if you doubt God is in complete control of this world, even of those who persecute you?*
 - *How can you do this if you don't regard Jesus as God, Savior and King - somebody worthy to suffer for?*
 - You cannot!
- Peter believes that suffering for the Lord is a *normal* part of the Christian life, and you ought to expect it
 - Christ suffered unjustly, and *you* will suffer unjustly (1 Pet 3:18-4:1) - **"arm yourselves with the same thought"**
 - Suffering for Christ is *proof* that **"the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you,"** (1 Pet 4:14)
 - Peter is careful to distinguish between suffering because of your own sin, and suffering for Christ's sake (1 Pet 4:15, 19)

²¹ 1 Peter 3:15 is often taken out of context as a proof-text for Christian apologetics. That isn't its purpose; it is a call for Christians to suffer in a godly fashion, so they can explain *how* they do it when unbelievers ask. Of course, an absolute commitment to God as Lord and Jesus as Lord and King is essential for this.

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- This is one thing Job's friends didn't understand
- If you suffer for Christ, you suffer **"according to God's will"**
- **How can you, as a Christian, keep going on in the midst of so much suffering and fiery trials?**
 - **"Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will do right and entrust their souls to a faithful Creator,"** (1 Pet 4:19)

b. Growth in Holiness:

- For Peter, because part of being a Christian is suffering for Christ, this means a Christian **must** be committed to personal growth in holiness:
 - God's plan to provide salvation for you, **individually and specifically**, is the motivation for your perseverance (1 Pet 1:10-13)
 - He has granted you spiritual life
 - Called you to His own glory
 - Granted you great and precious promises
 - Allowed you to escape from corruption in the world (2 Pet 1:3-4)
 - Therefore:
 - Add to faith - **virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, love** (2 Pet 1:5-7)
 - If you have a desire to do these things, you will confirm you *have been called and chosen by God to salvation* (2 Pet 1:10)
 - **The opposite conclusion is implicit!**
 - Peter says it is his mission to remind his readers of all this as long as he's alive (2 Pet 1:12-15)!
 - **"Therefore . . ."** (1 Pet 1:13-16)
 - Be sober and serious
 - Prepare your minds for action ("**gird up your minds**")
 - Set your hope *firmly* on Christ's return as you do these things
 - God is Holy, and you must be holy in everything you do in life ("**in all manner of conversation;**" KJV)
 - If you have been saved, you'll love your fellow Christians
 - **"So put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander,"** (1 Pet 2:1)

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- You need to live holy lives as a testimony to the unbelievers (“**Gentiles**” - 1 Pet 2:11-12)
- Husbands must treat their wives properly and give them honor, or their prayers will be hindered (1 Pet 3:7)
- Jesus will come and destroy this evil world and punish the wicked . . . so *how do you think you ought to live, then?!* (2 Pet 3:11-13)
 - Make sure that, when Jesus returns, you won’t be ashamed (2 Pet 3:14)

c. Warning Against False Teachers:

- False teachers were around in the Old Testament, and they’ll be around now, too
 - Peter says we should expect false teachers *in local churches* (2 Pet 2:1)
 - We should expect people to be deceived by these false teachers (2 Pet 2:2)
 - They live to entice “**unsteady souls,**” (2 Pet 2:15, also 2 Pet 2:18) by promising “**freedom,**” (2 Pet 2:19)
 - This makes Peter’s commands for personal holiness even more important!
 - We should expect these false teachers to disgrace the Gospel (2 Pet 2:2)
 - They’re motivated by greed as they lie to you (2 Pet 2:3)
 - They revile God, Jesus and the holy angels (2 Pet 2:10)
 - They’re like stupid animals who follow their own depraved instinct, and God will destroy them like stupid animals, making them suffer wrong for their wrongdoing (2 Pet 2:12-13)
 - They revel in their shame (2 Pet 2:13)
 - Their eyes are full of adultery and their lust for sin is insatiable (2 Pet 2:14)
 - They know the right way, but they’ve forsaken it (2 Pet 2:15)
- God will punish them, just as surely as he punished Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Pet 2:4-10) - and save you from them, too

d. Practical Life for Real Christians:

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- Peter is very concerned about what *real* life looks like for *real* Christians who live in the *real* world
 - Slaves should be submissive to their masters, as a testimony for Christ
 - **“Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to the kind and gentle but also to the overbearing. For one is approved if, mindful of God, he endures pain while suffering unjustly,”** (1 Pet 2:18-19)
 - *Note this* - sometimes God wants us to endure unjust punishment **so that we glorify Him** as we deal with this suffering with a Christlike attitude
 - Wives should be submissive and Christlike to their unbelieving husbands, so their own example might win the husband to Christ (1 Pet 3:1-2)
 - Christians theoretically aren’t supposed to marry unbelievers (cf. 2 Cor 6:14)
 - But, Peter is a practical person, and so is God - *real life is messy*
 - Because you’re part of a life and death spiritual battle, and because you will suffer unjustly just like Jesus did, live holy lives and be *deadly serious* about your Christian life:
 - **“The end of all things is at hand; therefore keep sane and sober for your prayers. Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins,”** (1 Pet 4:7-8)

e. Christians as a Community of Believers:²²

- Christians are in exile, dispersed throughout the world (cf. 1 Pet 1:1, 17)
 - This means this world is not our home, and we shouldn’t live like it is our home

²² Simon Kistemaker wrote, “Peter employs the term *church* nowhere in his epistle. Yet, he uses a variety of expressions to describe God’s people,” (*James, Epistles of John, Peter and Jude*, combined ed. in NTC [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996], 14).

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- We're waiting for a new and better world, a new earth, and a new creation (i.e. "heaven"), ruled by the Good and Perfect King, Jesus Christ
- Christians are "**brothers**" (1 Pet 5:12) who are "**in Christ**" (1 Pet 5:14) together with you
- All believers are individual living stones (or building blocks), who collectively make up a "**spiritual house**" (1 Pet 2:5)
- Christians are part of a collective, corporate, "**holy priesthood;**" a "**royal priesthood**" (1 Pet 2:9) whose job is to mediate Christ to the world (1 Pet 2:5)
 - Christians are part of a chosen people who belong to God, whose job is to "**declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light,**" (1 Pet 2:9)
 - You used to be a foreigner who belonged to nobody, but now you belong to God (1 Pet 2:10), because He gave you His mercy
- Every Christian's job is to offer *spiritual sacrifices* to God through Jesus Christ, in the same way an OC priest offered physical sacrifices (1 Pet 2:5)
- Christ is the Shepherd and Guardian of Christian's souls (1 Pet 2:25); the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4)

8. Outline of 1 Peter:²³

1. Greetings (1:1-2)
2. Blessed be God the Father! (1:3-9):
 - a. Great things He hath done! (1:4-5)
 - b. Rejoice in His mercy during trials (1:6-9)
3. You enjoy what the prophets wrote about (1:10-12):
 - a. The prophets wondered when this would happen (1:10-11)
 - b. You enjoy what they wrote about (1:12)
4. Therefore, be holy! (1:13-21):
 - a. Be serious and set your sight on Christ's return (1:13)
 - b. Be holy, because God is holy (1:14-16):
 - i. So, fear and respect God while in exile (1:17)

²³ I'll probably revise this preliminary outline as I preach through the book. For now, however, this is where I'm at!

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- ii. You were ransomed from idolatry by Christ's perfect sacrifice (1:18-19)
 - iii. Christ came for your sake (1:20)
 - iv. Christ's resurrection and ascension are your confidence and hope (1:21)
5. Being holy = loving fellow Christians (1:22 - 2:10):
- a. You have been purified by the Gospel, so love one another (1:22-25)
 - b. You must want to grow in Christ (2:1-3)
 - c. You are part of a holy priesthood which offers spiritual sacrifices (2:4-6):
 - i. Don't disobey the word, like unbelievers (2:7-8)
 - ii. Be a kingdom of priests (2:9-10)
6. Practical Life (2:11 - 4:19):
- a. Be holy as a testimony to unbelievers (2:11-12)
 - b. Respect secular authorities as a testimony to unbelievers (2:13-17)
 - c. Slaves must respect their masters and follow Christ's example (2:18-25)
 - d. Conduct for wives (3:1-6)
 - e. Conduct for husbands (3:7)
 - f. Endure persecution as a testimony to unbelievers (3:8-22):
 - i. Bless those who persecute you (3:8-12)
 - ii. Endure this as a testimony for Christ (3:13-17)
 - iii. Christ is our example (3:18-4:2)
 - iv. Exhortation to holiness (4:3-6)
 - g. Love and serve one another (4:7-11)
 - h. Expect persecution (4:12-19):
 - i. You share in Christ's sufferings (4:12-14)
 - ii. Suffer for Christ, not your own sin (4:15-18)
 - iii. Trust God as you suffer (4:19)
7. Exhortation to Pastors (5:1-11):
- a. Tend the flock (5:1-4)
 - b. Be humble (5:5-7)
 - c. Resist the devil and endure to the end (5:8-11)
8. Closing Remarks (5:12-14)