

Twelve Lessons

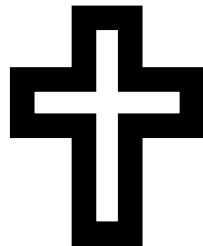
on

I Peter

Compiled and Written

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INTRODUCTION TO I PETER – LESSON 1

I Peter 1:1,2

Introduction: According to Scofield there are three divisions: Christian suffering and conduct in the light of full salvation in chapter 1:1-2:8, the believer's life in view of his sevenfold position and of the vicarious suffering of Christ in chapter 2:9-4:10, Christian service in the light of the coming of the Chief Shepherd in chapter 4:10-5:14.

Lesson Goals:

1. To see the situation that motivated the writing of this letter.
2. To gain an understanding of the plan of salvation from God's perspective.
3. To get assurance and comfort through a better understanding of God's sovereignty.

Definitions of Important Terms and/or Phrases:

1. Election –The gracious and free act of God by which He calls those who become part of His kingdom and special beneficiaries of His love and blessings (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
2. Foreknowledge –The unique knowledge of God which enables Him to know all events, including the free acts of man, before they happen (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
3. Sanctification – The process of God's grace by which the believer is separated from sin and becomes dedicated to God's righteousness. It is accomplished by the Word of God (John 17:7) and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:3-4). Its results are holiness, or purification from the guilt and power of sin (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).
4. Sprinkling of blood – A ceremonial act of consecration. God often commanded that an unclean object be sprinkled with water, olive oil, or blood (Lev. 14:48-52; Num. 19:18-20). Sprinkling signified that an impurity had been recognized and then cleansed. In symbolic recognition that blood would be required to cleanse man's sinful heart, the Old Testament priests would sprinkle the blood of an unblemished lamb around the altar (Lev. 3:7-8) (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).

I. GOD'S PARTNERS IN SUFFERING – Nero was the emperor of Rome. In order to cover his own crime of burning part of Rome, he found a scapegoat in the Christians. Tremendous persecutions of Christians followed. The epistle of 1st Peter was written to show the Christian how to walk and live in the midst of suffering.

A. The Writer – “*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.*” Peter's name means a stone.

1. Qualifies himself – he not only establishes his identity but establishes his authority, “an apostle”. The word “apostle” means one “sent forth” or “sent off” on a mission. The Greek word *apostello*, “to send off,” and the Latin word *mitto*, from which our modern term “missionary” comes, are exact equivalents.
2. Four qualifications for apostleship:
 - a. Must be a contemporary of Jesus from Jesus' baptism until his ascension (Acts 1:21-24).
 - b. Must be an eyewitness of the resurrected Christ (Acts 1:22).
 - c. Must be specifically chosen by God to be an apostle (Acts 1:24).
 - d. Must be given the gift (charisma) of apostleship (I Cor. 12:28). Note: The office and the gift are no longer in existence.

B. The Readers – “strangers” (*parepidemos*) – an alien alongside, a resident foreigner, a pilgrim separate, to establish a border between.

1. Vagabond – Has no home
2. Stranger – Away from Home
3. Pilgrim – On his way Home.
 - a. We are in the world but not of the world – We are alongside.
 - b. The word “Pilgrim” teaches that we are to live separate, not as monks, but constantly trying to reach this world by being “alongside” them.
 - c. The word “Pilgrim” – expresses the thought of being “out of place here” – of belonging elsewhere but of necessity staying here. This characteristic is necessary – Our surroundings are one of distastefulness of lawlessness, dwindling of life, and the very oppression of satanic forces in the world. All these make the pilgrim homesick but there is an overwhelming commitment of reaching people for God that makes him stay.
4. The Pilgrim life is a paradox to the world's commitment.
 - a. The worldly man is committed to himself, to pleasure, and materialism.
 - b. The pilgrim is committed to Christ, to others, and to himself as an instrument God can use.

5. "Scattered" – *diasporas* – term describing a Jew living outside of Palestine but in the context the pilgrim that is in the world living outside of heaven. *Diasporas* – through sowing

II. GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION – Peter believed in the Trinity – Notice all three mentioned in vs. 2. We must recognize the Sovereignty of God. Since God is omniscient (knowing everything), and since He is omnipotent (having all power), and since He is sovereign, I conclude that He can do anything He wants to do that is consistent with His character. God has a plan and He decreed that plan. He didn't ask, nor does He have to ask, anyone.

A. Election – "elect" – select, chosen, favorite, pick out, to select out of a number.

1. "According" – *kata* – dominated, controlled, or determined.
2. "Foreknowledge" – *prognosin* (pro or previous) *gnosin* (knowledge) therefore previous knowledge.
 - a. "Prognosticate is a derivative which means the sharing of knowledge of future events."
 - b. The prognosis depends upon the operation – being well or dying depends on the operation.
 - c. Foreknowledge does not mean that God chose them because He knew in advance that they would respond to His call, but simply that God took the initiative and chose them before they had done anything to deserve it.
3. Election is a work of God the Father in setting the sinner apart from among mankind.
4. Election serves notice that we gain entrance at the Invitation and Timing of God.
5. Why is the Doctrine of Election given in the Scripture?
 - a. The doctrine of election establishes salvation as an act of God from beginning to end, eliminating human works altogether in the pursuit of salvation – Rom. 8:30 – "*Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*"
 - b. The doctrine of election assures us the impossibility of apostasy or falling from salvation. How could one of God's elect fall – Romans 8:35 – "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*"
 - c. The doctrine of election promises us the providential intervention of God in behalf of His children – Rom. 8:28 – "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*"
 - d. The doctrine of election assures us that God's hand rests upon the nations of the world, guiding history to the climax which God has determined for it – Rom. 8:21-22 – "*Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*"

B. Sanctification – vs. 2 – "...through sanctification of the Spirit" – This is a work of the Holy Spirit in the trinity to set the sinner apart from his unbelief to the act of faith in the Lord Jesus.

1. The act of faith is spoken of here by the word "obedience."
2. The Holy Spirit "sets apart" the sinner from his unbelief and gives him faith to believe. The Holy Spirit enlightens the sinner to the Word of God – Rom. 10:13.
3. "Obedience" – Greek word "*hupakoe*" – Attentive hearkening, compliance, submission, make obedient, to bear under (as a subordinate) to listen attentively by implication to heed or conform to a command or authority.
 - a. POINT: Rebellious people do not get saved!
 - b. Simply – The Holy Spirit breaks the will of the sinner to come to the end of himself and believe that the blood is his only hope of salvation – II Thess. 2:13.

C. Sprinkling – "...and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" – When the sinner acts in obedience to the Spirit and believes in the Lord Jesus as Saviour, he is cleansed in the precious blood of Jesus.

1. Acts 6:7 – "*a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*"
2. Heb. 9:19 – "*For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people.*"
3. Peter used the phraseology and typology of the Levitical ritual where the priest sprinkled the people with the sacrificial blood. Remember, Peter is writing to the *diaspora*, believing Jews living in Asia Minor. They knew the Old Testament, and they understood that the high priest on the Day of Atonement took blood with him when he went into the Holy of Holies, and that he sprinkled the blood seven times on the mercy seat. Now the Lord Jesus Christ has taken His own blood to the throne of God and has sprinkled His blood there.

Conclusion: The three steps taken by the three Persons of the Triune God.

1. God the Father chooses the sinner to salvation. The basis for election is the foreknowledge of God.
2. God the Spirit brings the sinner thus chosen to the act of faith. The means of election by which it is carried out is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.
3. God the Son cleanses him in His precious blood. The purpose of election is obedience to Christ.