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NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY SERIES

1 PETER

By Pastor Ray Viola

Dear Saints in Christ Jesus,

These notes were taken from our Old Testament and New Testament Bible surveys at Koinonia on Wednesday and Sunday evenings. The intention was to give an overview of the entire Bible and see how the two testaments “connect.” Within the notes, practical truths were brought out because we know that the study of Scripture without application is like a vehicle without gas...going nowhere.

If the Holy Spirit can use these simple truths to draw you closer to Jesus Christ and develop a more mature love of God the Father, then this booklet will have accomplished its task.

May the blessing of God be shed upon you as you receive, with meekness, His engrafted Word.

Selah,

Pastor Ray

- * Portions of these notes were downloaded from Quick Verse and Online Bible study notes.
- ** A special thanks to Pastor Chuck Smith for notes from his teachings that were used in this study.

1 PETER

Chapter 1

1:1 First of all, note with me that any minister is to be a representative of Jesus Christ. The word “**apostle**” here means, “a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders”. There are capital ‘A’ apostles, meaning the original 12 and Paul, and there are small ‘a’ apostles, meaning missionaries or church planters or believers in general.

Peter’s epistles weren’t written to a specific church but to the Jewish believers in general. “**Pilgrims**” refers to the Jews who had been scattered from Judea by the Diaspora. James also wrote to these Jewish saints, “the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (**James 1:1**).

Paul was considered the apostle to the Gentiles, while Peter was the apostle to the Jews.

1:2 The word “**elect**” means chosen by God. The Greek word used for “**foreknowledge**” means both, “to have previous knowledge of” and “to predestinate”. Thus, since God knows everything, He knew all who would come to Him through Jesus Christ.

However, since God is sovereign, He also chose for salvation all those who would come to Him.

Eph 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...

Remember, though, that within the sovereignty of God is human responsibility (**Phil 2:12-13**).

“**Sanctification**” means “set apart for a sacred purpose or religious use”. It is “**the Spirit**” of God who sets us apart in the world and from the world for the service of our Master Jesus Christ. This setting apart is “**for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**”.

God’s “**grace**” always precedes His “**peace**”. Peter expressed in both epistles the desire that they both be multiplied to the saints. The phrase “**begotten us again**” means “born again”. Peter mentioned it again later on in this chapter. Jesus used this phrase when He spoke to Nicodemus in **John 3:3-7**.

1:3 “**A lively (or “living”) hope**” - I like that! Only the gospel of Jesus Christ offers to us a most certain hope.

Rom 15:13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

A person who is outside of Christ has no hope (**Eph 2:12**).

- 1:4** The next time you're feeling poor, meditate on this verse!
- 1:5** God's power keeps us from straying from Him. The Greek word for "**kept**" describes the protection offered by a military guard to prevent hostile invasion. This is a tremendous truth here! It means that the only way that the devil can get a foothold in our lives is when we ask Jesus to step aside in order that we might do our own thing. We can have great confidence in the keeping power of Christ by abiding in Him. We can have great confidence in "the way of escape" that Jesus provides for us when we are being tempted (**1 Cor 10:13**).
- Rom 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes...
- 1 Cor 1:24** ...Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.
- 1 Cor 2:5** that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.
- 1:6-7** Note that God considers our faith "**more precious than gold**". Do you? James, concerning trials of faith wrote:
- James 1:2** My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various temptations,
- :3** knowing that the trying of your faith produces patience.
- :4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
- The trials that God allows in our lives aren't intended to destroy us, but to improve our faith and confidence in Him. The testing of our faith is an important part of our Christian development and maturity. The word "**trials**" ("**temptations**") here suggests the proving of one's true value or genuineness. Remember how Jesus told Peter that his faith would be tested (**Luke 22:31,32**)? Peter did not have the depth of faith that he thought he did, and the test that resulted in his denial of Jesus proved that.
- * Note that Peter's failure did not disqualify him from service or usefulness.
- The Greek word for "**heaviness**" (KJV) means sadness or grief. The trials of faith mentioned here are never with ungodly, immoral things, for God does not tempt us with evil (**James 1:13**). That's the work of the flesh (**James 1:14**) or the devil. Whenever the enemy can draw or entice us into the arena of the flesh, he will make mincemeat out of us every time. That's why we are admonished to "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (**1 Peter 2:11**).
- What is tested can be our faithfulness to God's calling or our motivation. Sometimes it may be a testing of honesty (a tempta-

tion to dishonesty), or a testing of sacrifice (a temptation to selfishness). At other times, our tests are like Abraham with Isaac (**Gen 22:1-13**), as Jesus begins to detect an idol in our hearts. **Proverbs 10:1** talks about a foolish son being a source of grief to his mother, so it could be the trial of a prodigal child or spouse. There are also trials of health or finances.

- 1:8** Even though we've never seen Jesus, we love Him and rejoice in our belief in Him.
John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."
- 1:10-11** Note that when Jesus came in "the fullness of time" (**Gal 4:4**), He was the grace of God manifested in human form. Jesus' coming was the prophetic fulfillment of the grace of God that would bring salvation to the world (**John 1:29, 3:16,17**). The redemptive purpose of Christ recorded here was His "sufferings" (**Psalms 22:1-18, Isaiah 53**), and the "glories that follow", speaking of His resurrection from the dead (**Acts 2:25-36**).
- 1:13** The words "gird up" literally mean to "be prepared". To be girded up is a metaphor derived from the practice of the Orientals, who in order to be unimpeded in their movements were accustomed, when starting a journey or engaging in any work, to bind their long flowing garments closely around their bodies and fasten them with a leather belt. **Ephesians 6:14** tells us that we are to gird about our loins with truth.
We are also exhorted to be sober, vigilant, alert:
1 Thess 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.
:7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.
:8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. Observe the wonderful balance of Scripture here. We are secure in our faith in Christ, and yet, until we are in glory, we are to be prepared and pursuing Jesus and His will for our lives on a day-to-day basis.
- 1:14** We are called to walk in obedience. Observe that before we were saved, our behavior was in ignorance. Now, in Christ, we can no longer claim to not know what God requires of us.
Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no

provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Eph 4:22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man, which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, :23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

:24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

1 Peter 4:2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

1:15-16 Our calling is a holy calling, saints. Holiness is the will of God for each and every believer.

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

We mentioned hope earlier. Observe how a lively hope and holiness are connected:

1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure.

1:17 “**Fear**” is “awe” or “reverence”. We should be in awe of our glorious God! We should fear offending Him rather than man.

Heb 12:28 ...let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

Matt 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

1:18-19 We were “**redeemed**” as though purchased in a slave market by Christ. The word “redeemed” here suggests, “liberation by payment of ransom.” But Jesus didn’t pay for us with “**silver or gold,**” but with His own blood.

Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood...

“**Aimless conduct**” (or “**vain conversation**”) refers to an empty manner of living. The traditions of man can be bondage. Not only can religious traditions be vain, but King Solomon wrote about the vanity of living our lives in pursuit of things under the sun instead of living our lives in pursuit of the Son, Jesus Christ (**Eccl 5:10, 6:7, 12:1,6-8,13**).

A “**blemish**” is an acquired defect; a “**spot**” is an inherited, congenital defect. Jesus had neither (**1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 3:5**).

1:20 The plan of redemption existed before the foundation of the world was laid. One possible rendering of **Revelation 13:8** is, “...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

- 1:22** “**Sincere** (or, “**Unfeigned**”) **love**” is love without hypocrisy. It is love without an agenda or ulterior motive. No masks.
 * In both **first** and **second Timothy 1:5** we find references to an unfeigned faith.
 Note also that obedience to the truth of God’s word by yielding to the power of the Holy Spirit has a purifying effect, not only upon our lives, but it also effects our fellowship with one another.
- 1:23** Here we find the phrase, “**born again**” which literally means, “to be born from above.” Jesus explained the necessity of this to Nicodemus (**John 3:3-7**), and John wrote how this takes place.
John 1:11 He came to His own, and His own received Him not.
:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
:13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
James 1:18 Of His own will He brought us forth with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.
 * That is why it is so important for us to bring the gospel to every creature, because “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (**Rom 10:17**)
 Peter’s calling in the world was simply to preach the gospel.
Prov 11:30 And he who wins souls is wise.
Matt 4:19 Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
- 1:24,25** This is a quote from **Isaiah 40:6-8**. Though we may fade away, our hope in heaven does not fade away.
2 Cor 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.
 * Remember that the gospel means, “Good news!”

Chapter 2

- 2:1** In coming to Jesus, there is the “**laying aside**” of the former things. The Greek for “laying aside” is a word that is used to describe a person removing one’s clothing. In other words, disrobe the old man. We do not have to live the way we used to!
2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 Among those things that we are to lay aside are:
 “**malice**” - badness, that is, (subjectively) depravity, or (actively) malignity.

“guile” - deceit, trickery, decoy. This describes a person who deceives others in order to attain his own ends; an impurity of motive. We are now citizens of the Kingdom of God and are to walk in the light, not in darkness.

“hypocrisy” - This means to ‘play the part’. In other words, to use the name of Christ as a cover up for one’s own intentions or motives. Jesus warned us about the leaven of the Pharisees, which was hypocrisy (**Luke 12:1**).

“envy” - ill will, jealousy, spite.

“evil speaking” - This literally means to ‘talk against’ in all its many forms, e.g., to backbite or to defame another person, slander, gossip, etc. These have no place in a Christian’s vocabulary, and fewer things are as destructive to fellowship as this sin.

2:2,3 Here’s another passage relating to the new birth, for as a newborn needs its mother’s milk to grow and be healthy, so too does a new believer need to feed on the Word of God to be healthy. The word **“pure”** (**“sincere”**) here means “unadulterated without the slightest mixture of contamination.” The word for **“desire”** is a strong word, which has the same idea as the deer panting after the water brooks in **Psalm 42:1**. David exhorted, “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good.” (**Psalm 34:8**) Have you tasted of the Lord’s goodness? Jesus tasted death for us (**Heb 2:9**) that we might taste His forgiveness and His goodness. **Psa 111:4** He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.
* The goodness and graciousness of God are not reasons to be passive in our walk, but incentives to draw nearer to Him.

2:4 This verse and the verses that follow make it pretty apparent to me that neither Peter nor any of the other apostles interpreted the exchange with Jesus at Caesarea Philippi as meaning that Peter was the rock of the Church (**Matt 16:15-18**). Jesus called Peter, “Petros”, which means a “little stone”, and then said that upon the “petra”, “giant rock”, He would build His Church. The Church is not built upon the man, Peter, who Christ called a little stone, but upon Jesus Christ Himself, who is the **“living stone, ... chosen by God and precious”**. (“Precious” is one of Peter’s favorite words.) However, this living Stone was **“rejected indeed by men”**. **Luke 23:35** And the people stood looking on. And the rulers also with them sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”

- 2:5** The Church is not a building of bricks and mortar, not an organization, but a living organism with hearts and minds and souls. What are our **“spiritual sacrifices”**? Our entire lives (**Rom 12:1,2**); praise and thanksgiving (**Heb 13:15**); tithes, offerings and giving to others in need (**Phil 4:18,19**); prayer and the lifting up of our hands to Him (**Psalm 141:2**).
- 2:6-8** These verses contain a collection of quotes from **Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, and Isaiah 8:14**.
 The church is built upon the solid foundation of Jesus Christ. Jesus, not Peter, is the **“cornerstone”** on which our faith is built. **Eph 2:20** having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, **:21** in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, **:22** in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
 Note that **“he who believes”** in Jesus will not be **“confounded”** (**“put to shame”**), but Jesus said, “he who does not believe will be condemned.” (**Mark 16:16**) There is no middle ground. There is no neutral zone. Jesus is either the accepted or the rejected stone (**Matt 21:42, Acts 4:11**).
John 3:18 He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
:19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.
John 3:36 He who believe in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.
 A believer’s life will be one of victory!
1 John 5:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
- 2:9** Observe who we are in Christ, saints! We are **“His own special (‘peculiar’) people”**. We have been purchased at a great price (**1 Peter 1:19**), and **“called...out of darkness”**.
Psalm 107:14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their chains in pieces.
 One reason we have been called by God **“into His marvelous light”** is to be light unto His glory.
Matt 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

2:10 All that we are in Christ is because of God's most wonderful "mercy".

2:11-12 Many times in the Bible the Church is addressed as "beloved" or "**dearly beloved**" because that is our Lord's heart toward His bride.

Verse 11 deals with spiritual warfare in the form of "**fleshly lusts**", and a cross reference to this verse is:

2 Cor 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

* It is important to mention that fleshly lusts are more than bodily, physical drives. Fleshly lusts describe human nature apart from God. Our flesh will never be redeemed for it is wicked to the core (**Jer 17:9**). It cannot be removed; therefore, it needs to be denied (**Rom 13:14, Gal 5:24**).

Paul likewise addressed the Christians in Philippi as "dearly beloved", and exhorted them to be steadfast in holiness.

Phil 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

We are called "**strangers and pilgrims**" twice in the New Testament (**Heb 11:13**), describing temporary residents. It's like having a visa to visit earth for a while, but our real home is in heaven. We don't belong to this world any longer (**John 17:16**). Beware of feeling comfortable here on earth, because "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (**Matt 6:21**)

Honesty and "**good works**" are what every Christian should put on display before men (**Matt 5:16, Heb 10:24, James 2:14-18**).

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

The true believer, however, will be misunderstood and maligned, just as Jesus was (**Matt 10:24,25, John 15:18-21**).

2:13-14 These verses must be read in connection with **Romans 13:1-7**. Jesus said that we are to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (**Luke 20:25**). We are to be model citizens.

* It is important for us to remember that as difficult as this command may be for us, there are brothers and sisters in Sudan, Iraq, etc., that have these same verses in their Bibles too. At the time Peter wrote these verses, Nero, a Christ-hating and wicked man, was in power.

However, we draw the line in obedience to the government when it commands us to disobey a command of God (**Acts 5:29**).

1 Timothy 2:1-3 tells us that we are to be praying for our elected officials, and when we do this we are doing something that is pleasing to God.

- 2:17** One of the ways that we shine as lights is by observing these simple exhortations. Actually, if we **“fear God”**, we will **“honor all men”**, love one another, and honor the elected officials because this is the will of God.
- * Honor doesn't mean overlooking sin issues, as demonstrated by John the Baptist with Herod (**Matt 14:3-4**), and Paul with the Corinthian believers (**1 Cor 5**).
- 2:18-20** These verses, put in contemporary language, tell us how we are to handle ourselves in our careers or on our jobs, particularly when the person that we are accountable to is not the nicest or fairest guy in the world.
- 2:21** Interestingly, Jesus left us the examples of suffering and servant-hood (**John 13:1-15**), both of which our flesh hates to the core because the flesh never wants to submit (especially to suffering), and always wants others to serve us. Remember how James writes about the example of suffering?
- James 5:10** My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering affliction and of patience.
- John 13:15** For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.
- :16** Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; neither is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.
- :17** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. As we follow Jesus, we in turn are to be examples of Christ-likeness in the world.
- 1 Tim 4:12** Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.
- 2.22,23** Jesus Christ is our example of the way we should respond when persecuted or mistreated. How we need God the Holy Spirit to give us revelation insights into the practical application of these verses.
- 2:24** Note that Jesus Christ completed the total work of atonement for us. He died for us in order that we might now live righteously in this present world (**Titus 2:11, Rom 6**). Peter will revisit this

theme in chapter four.

- 2:25** In both the Old and New Testaments we are likened to sheep. (For example, see **Psalm 100:3, 119:176, Matt 9:36**.) If you don't understand the connection, read the insightful little book, "A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm". Jesus is our "great **Shepherd**" (**Heb 13:20**) "**and Bishop**" ("**Overseer**") of our souls. It's so beautiful to know that Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost." (**Luke 19:10**)

Chapter 3

The question is asked from time to time, "What advice do you have for winning my unsaved spouse to Jesus Christ?" The answer from heaven is found in these few verses.

- 3:1-2** As Jesus submitted to the will of the Father all the way to the cross (**Phil 2:8**), Christian wives are to likewise submit to their husbands, even if he is unsaved. Some women think that because they are Christians and their husbands aren't, that makes them the head of the house. Not so. She may indeed be the salt and light (**Matt 5:13-16**) of the house, but not the head (**1 Cor 11:3, Eph 5:24**). However, submission to a husband, saved or unsaved, never means involvement or participation in ungodly, unholy activity. As in any area of submission, the line is drawn when we are told to disobey God (**Acts 5:29**). Peter wrote that if these spouses will not listen to what their Christian wives are saying, the best thing to do is live a godly, Christ-fearing life. ("**Conduct**" is also translated, "conversation", meaning behavior.) Christ-like actions speak louder than any words. The same principle holds true on the job or at school (**Eph 6:5-7**). We are called to be vessels of honor and living epistles. Let the Spirit of God flowing through you be the tract that every person reads every single day.
- 3:3-6** Peter here stresses the importance of the beauty within the heart. Not that outward beauty and looking attractive for your husband is unimportant. That "**meek ("gentle") and quiet spirit**" will be much more effective in evangelizing your unsaved spouse than the 'Turn or Burn' post-it notes in his lunch box! Remember what **Proverbs** says about dwelling with a brawling and contentious woman (**21:9,19, 25:24**). Sarah's obedience to Abraham is cited as an example of righteous submission. However, he wasn't a perfect man. One day he

simply told Sarah to pack up, for they were going to the Promised Land. 'Where is it?' she probably asked. Her husband's reply was likely, 'I do not know; I'll tell you when we get there.' On other occasions he lied to pagan kings about her, putting her in dangerous and unholy situations (**Gen 12:10-15, 20:2**).

By submitting to her unsaved husband, the Christian woman is in actuality submitting to the Word of God. That is why Paul said that a marriage and children of that marriage are sanctified by the faith of the believing spouse (**1 Cor 7:14**).

True beauty in the eyes of God for either gender is in the heart, not in the outward appearance.

1 Sam 16:7 "... For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Paul wrote that the Christian woman was not to dress in ways that were reflective of the loose morals of the women of the day (**1 Tim 2:9-10**).

- 3:7** A saved husband is to dwell with his wife according to "**understanding**" ("**knowledge**"). If a man of God fails to do this, his prayer life will be hindered. One thing that interferes the flow of God's Spirit in husbands' prayers is the incorrect, insensitive ways they dwell with their wives. Husbands, nothing will hinder our prayer life more than problems in our relationship with our wives. (See the instructions for the husband in **Eph 5:25-31**.)
- 3:8** The "**one mind**" that we are to have is the mind of Christ of **Philippians 2:3-8**. That is the unity of the Spirit, having the servant's mind of Christ, not total unanimity of opinion or style of ministry. The overflow of the mind of Christ will be a holy love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of their church affiliation. Having "**compassion**" carries the idea of being tenderhearted and understanding.
- 3:9** Like the Sermon on the Mount teaches us, we are never to return evil for evil or insult for insult (**Matt 5:38-44**). We are to overcome evil with good (**Rom 12:17,20,21**). We are to combat light with darkness. We are indeed to bless and pray for the very people that try to make life miserable for us (**Rom 12:14**), just as Jesus did on the cross (**Luke 23:33,34**), and Stephen did while being martyred (**Acts 7:59,60**).
- 3:10-12** I like how Peter uses Scripture as the basis of a good life. He quotes from **Psalms 34:12-16**. Do you want to have a long life,

filled with good days? Read the verses and ask the Lord to make them real in your life! Do not miss the point that Peter makes here between obedience to the Word of God and effective prayer lives (**verse 12**). There can be confidence in prayer when our lives are aligned with the Word of God. As we abide in the truth (**John 15:7**) and walk in the light as He is in the light (**1 John 1:7**), we can come boldly to His throne of grace for help in time of need (**Heb 4:16**).

- 3:13,14** Once again Peter returns to the theme of the possibility of suffering **“for righteousness’ sake”**. Scripture teaches that suffering for Jesus’ sake is a cause for great joy (**Matt 5:10-12, Acts 5:40-42, Acts 16:22-25**). Now really guys, was being called ‘a Jesus freak’ all that bad?
- 3:15** Literally, this verse means that we are to be solely concentrating on being devoted to Jesus Christ. When we are being persecuted for standing for Jesus or His truth, we are to quietly trust Him in the matter.
Observe here that we called upon to **“be ready to give”** to every man **“a reason for the hope”** that we have in Jesus. When we are asked questions about our faith, we should be ready with a sound and reasonable answer.
It is our responsibility to study the Word of God to show ourselves “approved..., rightly dividing the word of truth.” (**2 Tim 2:15**) We must be Spirit-filled and prayed up. When we do share the Word, it must be with reverence, meekness, godly fear, and confidence that it is **God’s Word!!** We are to speak the truth in love (**Eph 4:15**). We should be conducting ourselves so that people in the world are compelled to ask what makes us different.
- 3:16** How important it is for us to maintain a clear, **“good conscience”** before the Lord. None of us can walk perfectly, but we must purpose to perfectly walk before the Lord and man. In order to maintain a good conscience we must pulling down vain imaginations that exalt themselves against the truth of God’s Word (**2 Cor 10:5**); we must be washed in that truth (**Eph 5:26**) and conform our lives to it (**Rom 12:2**). We must keep short accounts with the Lord, confessing our sins (**1 John 1:9**) to our Great High Priest (**Heb 4:14**), and as needed, to one another (**James 5:16a**). Our lives are to be above reproach so that when accusations are being made against us, when the ‘detective work’ is done, it will reveal that the accusations against us were false. That is what it means to be “blameless” (“perfect”).

3:17 Please mark this down in your heart. There are times when it is the will of God for believers to suffer for doing the right thing (**2 Tim 3:12**). So many people are suffering because of doing the wrong things; however, Christians at times are called upon to suffer for doing the right things (**1 Peter 4:16**). Remember, Jesus left us an example for suffering (**1 Peter 2:21**).

3:18 This verse states explicitly that Jesus only had to suffer “**once for (the) sins**” of the world. Calvary does not need to be repeat-ed, which is one of the heretical teachings in the Catholic Mass. Jesus died for our sin debt, but He also died to bring us into fellowship with the Father. Note that here the Spirit of God is the Person in the Trinity who is credited for the resurrection of Jesus.

3:18-20 The facts stated here are:

1. Christ, “**put to death in the flesh**”, but made alive in the Spirit, “**went and preached**”.
2. This preaching of Christ in the Spirit was “**to... spirits**”.
3. Those spirits were “**in prison**”. The Greek word used for “prison” (“phulake”) denotes a place of custody, not a place of punishment.
4. These spirits “**formerly were disobedient**”. This states why they were held in prison.
5. The time of their disobedience is stated. It was while the “**longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah**”.

So, it was the Spirit of Christ who was preaching through Noah to the souls of those that are now in prison because of their disobedience to his call to repent and walk in righteousness.

3:20,21 True “**baptism**”, like circumcision, takes place in the heart. Unless we are born again and have allowed the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts (**John 3:3,5-7**), any ritual is meaningless and only a form of godliness without real substance. Water baptism doesn’t wash away our sins, the blood of Jesus does (**1 John 1:7**).
Heb 9:22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

3:22 Something that jumps out of the page here on this verse is how the heavenly beings submit to the authority of Jesus Christ. In the account of **Matthew 14**, we see how nature submitted to the authority of Jesus. Question - Do you and I submit to the authority of Jesus?

In coming to Jesus, there is also the need to abide in Him (**John 15:4**) and follow Him. Scripture says, “He who says he abides in Him ought to walk just as He walked.” (**1 John 2:6**) Doing the will of the Father was the daily food of Jesus (**John 4:34**). May we, by the grace of God, follow His example.

Chapter 4

4:1-3 These verses are similar to the thought of Paul in **Romans chapter 6**. The thought is what is known theologically as the process of sanctification or separation which is primarily a separation unto God, that results in a separation from the world system. Note that Peter speaks of two wills here, “**the will of the Gentiles**” and “**the will of God.**”

A part of the battle in the Christian life is that of the suffering of “**the flesh**” in order to cease from sin. The Christians’ flesh is wicked and will never cease craving its lusts. Paul taught about the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh (**Gal 5:16,17**). In Christ, we have been set free from a life that is lived after the flesh. By faith, we are able to resist those fleshly lusts that war against the souls (**1 Cor 10:13**).

In the parable of the sower, Jesus taught that the lust for other things choke the word and cause it to become unfruitful (**Matt 13:22**). The list in **verse 3** describes our present world system.

As we renew our minds with the Word of God, and then apply the truth of God’s Word by the power of the Spirit of God, we experience victory and delight in our walk with Jesus. John wrote that having this hope in Jesus, we purify ourselves “even as He is pure.” (**1 John 3:3**) A person who is walking after the flesh (as recorded here and in **Gal 5:19-21, Eph 5:3-5, 1 Cor 6:9-10**), has no assurance at all that they are born again.

4:4 Many of you have experienced first hand the truth of this verse. The Spirit-filled Christian is a mystery to the unsaved. They cannot understand how we can have a life that is so wonderful apart from partying and other crazy things that we used to do for fun.

4:5 There is a day of reckoning for each and every human being. **Heb 9:27** And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.

4:7 For 2000 years, the Bible has been saying that Jesus “**is at hand**”. That means that He is near to us personally, as well as

that His visible return to this earth is imminent. Just as sure as Jesus came the first time to atone for sin, He is coming the second **time** (**John 14:3**) without sin to bring us to the Father (**Jude 24**), and then set up the Kingdom of God on the earth with Jerusalem being the capital.

These last days are a call to sober living and prayer (**1 Thess 5:6,17**). We need to be spiritually alert . We need to be clear-headed and clear minded, thinking and living Biblically. Prayer ties the armor of God together (**Eph 6:13-18**). In fact, without prayer, the armor cannot be truly effective.

- 4:8** “**And above all things ...love**”. **1 Corinthians 13** says it best; for apart from agape love, any exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, any demonstration of faith or charity is nothing. Love is the badge that every Christian is called to wear (**John 13:34,35, Matt 22:37-39**). It is “the fruit of the Spirit” (**Gal 5:22-23**), which “has been poured out in our hearts” (**Rom 5:5**). Love not only covers a multitude of sins (**Prov 10:12b**), which is exactly what Jesus did by shedding His blood for us on Calvary (**Heb 9:22**), it also prevents a multitude of sins as we stay in fellowship with one another and provoke one another to love and good works (**Heb 10:24-25**).
- 4:9** Paul (**Rom 12:13**) and the writer of **Hebrews (13:2)** also speak of this gift of hospitality and how vital it is in the body of Christ. Our homes are to be places where our friendships in Jesus develop. Note that the word ‘hospitality’ contains the word ‘hospital’. Our homes are mini clinics for others in the body of Christ to be refreshed, encouraged and loved.
- 4:10,11** Every single person in the body of Christ has been gifted by the Lord in many ways. The gift lists are found in **Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 12:7-10, 28, and Eph 4:11**. Each saint has been given at least one gift from these lists. In our display of these gifts, we are to express the wonderful, “**manifold grace of God**”, while bringing glory and honor to God through Jesus Christ. But there is the constant danger when God uses you to take the credit for the work that He has done through you. That was the downfall of Lucifer. Never take the credit for the work that God is doing through your gift! Boast of God’s goodness and grace, not your abilities (**1 Cor 1:26-31**).
- 4:12** How important it is for every Christian to understand this verse because our faith is challenged in so many ways! We are told to

expect “**a fiery trial**”. Satan attacks us with lethal, fiery darts (**Eph 6:16**). Like the 3 young Hebrews (**Dan 3:13-23**), we often find ourselves in a “fiery furnace” because we refuse to compromise our faith in order to fit in with the world.

* A person can trust in Christ and take some ‘heat’ for a few years on earth, or he can choose to do his own thing and take some heat for eternity.

As recorded in the Book of **Job (1:6-2:10)**, there is the Sovereign approval of the trials of faith that must never be thought of as temptations of our faith. God never tempts us with evil (**James 1:13**), but He does test us (**Gen 22:1,2**).

4:13,14 This is what Jesus taught in **Matthew 5:10-12**. Remember how Peter and the other apostles rejoiced after they were beaten because they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (**Acts 5:27-29,40,41**).

Again Peter mentions the coming of Jesus in “**glory**” and the “**joy**” that we will have when that happens.

4:15 There is righteous suffering and there is suffering as the natural consequence of unrighteousness. No Christian is called by God to suffer for any of the unrighteous things listed here. When a person suffers for these things, it is the result of their flesh taken off the cross.

4:17,18 The church will be raptured and stand before Jesus to be judged for the stewardship of what He has given to us (**Rom 14:10, 2 Cor 5:10**). In this judgment, our motives will be taken into consideration (**1 Cor 3:12-15**).

Please note that it is only by the grace and mercy of God that anybody is saved. For those who reject the gift of salvation, Scripture clearly speaks about an eternity of “weeping” and “wailing and gnashing of teeth” in complete torment (**Matt 8:12, 13:41-42, 25:46**).

* Are you absolutely certain that you are born again? Have you repented of your sins and trusted Jesus Christ for forgiveness? Does your life reflect the reality of Jesus Christ as your Lord?

4:19 When we are suffering in the center of God’s will (Read **Heb 11** for some examples, especially Moses in **11:24-26**.), we must commit the keeping of our souls to Him. We must trust Jesus to completely handle the conflict in His providential way. We must purpose to not waver in our behavior in the heat of the trial.

Note here that Peter reminds us that Jesus is our “**faithful Creator.**” He is God.

Jesus is also our “merciful and faithful High Priest” (**Heb 2:17**). How we need to remember in the daily struggles and trials that Jesus is right there with us (**Heb 13:5c**).

James (1:2) says that we are to “count it all joy when (we) fall into various trials” (testings), because we know that God is working in our lives “both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” (**Phil 2:13**)

Chapter 5

5:1,2 Much of what Peter writes about in this chapter comes from his personal experiences or from the teachings of Jesus Himself. Please note that Peter certainly did not interpret what Jesus said in the “rock” dialogue at Ceasarea (**Matt 16:13-18**) as meaning that he was the head of the visible church on earth. The “**fellow elder**” Peter does not command but exhorts. He does not claim power to rule over all pastors and churches.

This commission to the elders, “**Shepherd the flock of God**”, is the same one Jesus gave to Peter:

John 21:15 So when they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”

John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”

John 21:17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”

Paul passed this same exhortation on to the elders from Ephesus: **Act 20:28** Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.

This image of God’s people being His flock is a beautiful one (**Psalm 23, 95:7, 100:3, John 10:14-16,27-29**). Feeding the word to God’s people builds strong, healthy sheep, which then naturally reproduce. The feeding is not only expositional teaching, but also the emphasis on practical applications. The phrase “**exercising oversight**” (or “**servicing as overseers**”) refers to how those in church leadership are to care for the flock

to make sure that they are loved and well fed.

This oversight is a desire that is placed into the heart of men by the Spirit of God (**1 Tim 3:1**). The ministry is not a job; it is a calling from Jesus Christ. Serving Jesus is the most wonderful thing in the universe, and is to be done **“willingly,”** not by force or pressure. A ministry with a strong emphasis on money should raise questions about the motivations of the minister.

Also note here that these scattered, persecuted saints were the beloved of God and, like Peter, **“partaker(s) of the glory that will be revealed”**.

- 5:3** Ministers are to be **“examples”** to the people, not **“lords”** over them. The word minister means a servant. Jesus had taught Peter what true greatness is in His Kingdom and how it means to be the servant of all (**John 13:3-17**).
- In **3 John 9** there is reference to a man named Diotrephes who sought to have preeminence over the flock of God. In contrast, **Colossians 1:18** clearly states that in all things Jesus is to have the preeminence, especially in His church! In **Judges 8:23** Gideon said, “I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you.” He had the right idea!
- 5:4** How important it is for us to remember that pastors, elders, etc. are human instruments that come and go. Jesus Christ is the **“Chief Shepherd”** of the whole flock and heritage of God. Faithful ministers will receive a crown of unfading glory, infinitely better and more honorable than all the authority, wealth, and pleasure of the world. All fleshly glory fades away. Only those things that are done in loving worship of Jesus will last forever. A pastor’s primary desire should be to please the Lord (**Gal 1:10**) and his sole motive for ministry the love of Christ (**2 Cor 5:14**).
- 5:5** The importance of humility within the church can never be overestimated. Peter had already written to the saints about submitting to government (**2:13-14**), to the Lord (**4:19**), and now he writes about being **“submissive to one another”**.
- “God resists (is actively opposed to) the proud”**. God hates the sin of pride (**Prov 6:16-17, 8:13**). Pride disturbs and disrupts peace and unity because it seeks its own way. How we need to guard against pride in any form personally and congregationally! Pride corrupts and defiles; it is a glory-monger, as Lucifer demonstrated (**Isaiah 14:12-15**). Pride destroys (**Prov 16:18**). “Only by pride comes contention” (**Prov 13:10**).
- The way to ‘attack’ any generation gap conflicts within the

church is by adhering to this call to mutual **“humility”** within the body of Christ. The key to humility within the church is found in submission to Jesus Christ because a person who is not in submission to Jesus will never submit to others in a godly way. It takes grace to submit to one another, but God does give the grace to the person who humbles himself before Him.

- 5:6-7** All submission is to be done **“under the mighty hand of God”** that directs our lives. One way that we humble ourselves before the Lord and one another is in prayer. Prayer is the language of total dependence upon the Lord. God wants us to give all our burdens to Him.
The word **“care”** here means anxieties, worries, and concerns. The word **“cast”** in the original suggests a once-and-for-all act. Cast **“all your care”** means personal cares, family cares, cares for the present and cares for the future, for yourselves, for others, for the church, the nation, etc., on the Lord. There is nothing that is too hard or difficult for God to handle (**Jer 32:17**), and nothing that is too small for Him to ignore (**Luke 12:6,7**). David wrote about how the Lord delivered him from all of his fears, all of his troubles, all of his afflictions (**Psalms 34:4,6,17-19**). Anxiety or worry can torture and distract the mind, making us unfit for duties, and hinder our delight in walking with Jesus. **“Due time”** referred to here is not my time but God’s time.
- 5:8,9** Scripture leaves us no room to ignore the reality of the devil. He is constantly out to sift or devour the child of God. He is the tempter (**1 Thess 3:5**) behind every temptation, and he is the accuser (**Rev 12:10**) after every fall. The Bible never tells us to yield to Satan or to give up, but to **“resist him ...in the faith”**. **James 4:7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
Something that every child of God needs to remember is that the most feeble saint is mightier than the devil, not because of their own power, but because of the truth of **1 John 4:4** and **Luke 10:19**. Peter did not heed the warning from Jesus about being sifted (**Luke 22:31**); thus he denied the Lord three times. Peter writes now from a bitter personal experience.
- 5:10** I love this, **“the God of all grace”**. Jesus is the God of every grace, any grace, daily grace. Scripture tells us it is a good thing **“that the heart be established by grace”** (**Heb 13:9b**). Paul told Timothy to **“be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”** (**2 Tim 2:1**) He has grace to help us in every time of need (**Heb 4:16**).

Note that our calling is to **“His eternal glory”**. No matter how difficult things get remember this, that the end of the road leads to glory!

Also note that our present sufferings are only for **“a while”**. Paul calls the difficulties of this life **“our momentary light afflictions”** (**2 Cor 4:17**). It was said of Moses that he chose **“rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”** (**Heb 11:25**). The grace of God is what sustains us in our times of suffering, affliction, and hardships.

These adverse things in life are mysteriously connected with our perfection or maturity in Jesus Christ (**Rom 5:1-5**, **James 1:2-4**). The Greek word translated **“make you perfect”** means to **“mend nets”**, as in **Matt 4:21**. This in turn establishes us. The word for **“establish”** here means **“to fix firmly, to set fast.”** How important it is for us to have **fixed hearts** in the truth of God’s Word. It is God’s strength that **“strengthen(s)”** us to meet the demands and trials of life. Here **“settle”** describes the foundation of our faith, which is Jesus Christ (**1 Cor 3:11**) and obedience to His Word (**Matt 7:24-25**).

- 5:11** To God **“be the glory”** for the things that He has done, for the things that He is doing, and for those things yet future to us.
- 5:12** Peter mentions a **“faithful brother”** Silvanus. How important it is for each of us to have and to recognize those faithful brothers and sisters in our lives.
In **“the true grace of God”** is the only place where a person can stand strong and be confident. This grace however is not some thing; it is some One.
Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for us all (**Heb 2:9**), and He is grace Incarnate (**John 1:17b**). The grace wherein we are saved is the grace that is in His Name.
- 5:13** There are some that interpret **“Babylon”** as a code name for Rome here because of the intense persecution that the church was facing from the Roman Empire at the time.
- 5:14** Keep in mind that in that culture, as in many cultures around the world today, men kissed men and women kissed women. It was as common as us hugging one another or shaking another person’s hand.
“Peace”, a fruit of the Spirit (**Gal 5:22**), is one of the many benefits of the child of God. This of course comes from Jesus Christ, the **“Prince of Peace”** (**Isaiah 9:6**).

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