

The Letters to the Churches- The Epistles Of Peter...I & II Peter

The letters of Peter the Apostle were written to Christians under persecution. (see *I Pet 1:6; 2:12, 15; 4:12, 14-16; 5:8-9.*) This persecution was probably under Nero the Roman ruler. Some see the persecutions as more mob like or directed toward individuals and local groups and not necessarily directed by the government.

The authorship of both of these books is attributed to the Apostle Peter. The first verse gives evidence of this. **1:1 "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ..."** Peter also talks about his soon coming death in *II Pet 1:14.* (see *John 21:18*) The time period of Peter is somewhere between the close of Acts and the Revelation.

1 Peter

1 Peter, as we have stated, deals with suffering. We must realize that suffering is a part of human life as well as a part of the Christian life. Peter gives us some very practical advice for living our life in this book.

Outline:**I- Work of God in our Salvation:****1:1-12****II- Principles for Living: 1:13-3:12;****5:1-14****III- Principles for Suffering: 3:13-4:19****I- Work of God in our Salvation:****1:1-12**

Peter used some very wonderful words to describe what the Father, Son and Holy Spirit has done for us in our salvation. He calls our hope a "**lively hope.**" He says our inheritance is "**undefiled, fadeth not away, reserved**

in heaven..." Remember the Jews he primarily wrote too are under persecution and do not have hope in this life of acquiring many things. He tells them that there is hope to come.

**II- Principles for Living: 1:13-3:12;
5:1-14**

The first principle for living we look at is the exhortation to pure living.

The basis we see for us being holy is that God expects it. We are redeemed and should act like it. The call in **1:13-21** is because we are saved that we should live like it.

2:1-3 tells us to grow by the milk of the word and by intentionally laying aside unchristian behavior.

2:4-8 gives us a wonderful understanding of Christ as Cornerstone.

3:1-7 discusses the behavior of the wives and husbands.

3:8-12 deals with general things pertaining to Godly living.

5:1-4 gives instructions to the elders who ruled in the church.

5:5-9 teaches us to be concerned with each other and to look out for each other because we have an enemy the devil.

III- Principles for Suffering: 3:13-4:19

3:13-17 is where we see that we should suffer for doing right. Suffering for sin and wrongdoing is not godly suffering.

3:18-22 gives us the example of Christ suffering.

4:1-6 teaches us we do not live as a dead man but suffer as a live one.

4:7 The end is at hand.

4:8-19 Suffer as a Christian and judge yourselves. (**4:17**)

2 Peter

The second letter was written shortly after the first letter. This letter focuses on false teachers and false teachings.

Outline:

- I- Grow to Know 1:1-21**
- II- Recognize False Teachers 2:1-22**
- III- The Hope of the Lords Return 3:1-18**

I- Grow to Know 1:1-21

Peter began this letter in which he is going to teach about false teachers by teaching about growing in grace and knowledge. The sad fact about our world today is we do not recognize false teachings because we do not know the truth. If you do not know what the Word of God teaches the words of man will sway you easily.

Peter says, **"I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance....to be established in the truth."** He gives some eyewitness accounts of the fact that Jesus is who is reported that He is. **1:16ff.**

II- Recognize False Teachers 2:1-22

False teachers have always been with the church. They bring in **"damnable heresies."**

These false teachers will fleece the flock. **2:3**, and are compared to dry wells, & clouds. Peter uses the illustration to describe them of a dog and a hog.

III- The Hope of the Lords Return 3:1-18

He next gave them hope by stirring the mind of the certainty of the coming of Christ. He remind them of scoffers who will make fun (**3:3-4**), and

that God will bring it to pass in His time. He reminds us of the suddenness of the coming of Christ. (**3:10**) This promise of His coming should motivate us to live as if it will be within the next minute. (**3:11-14**)

Application to Life's Steps:

- 1- Suffering is a part of life for all humans and should not surprise us, as it always seems to.
- 2- We should however be sure that we do not suffer for wrong doing on our part but for godly things.
- 3- God is concerned in the way we treat others.
- 4- False teachers have always been a problem and always will be. We should learn God's Word so we can recognize falsehood.
- 5- The expectant return of Christ should move us to Godly living.

Retracing our Steps:

- 1- Who wrote the books of **1 & 2 Peter**? _____
- 2- What is the key theme of **1 Peter**?

- 3- What does Peter address in the second letter? _____

- 4- What should be a strong motivation to Godly living? _____

- 5- How will the earth be destroyed?

