

I Peter

Its Meaning and Application

Required Text:

One of the following -

- Clowney, Edmund; *The Message of 1 Peter, The Way of the Cross*; Part of the "The Bible Speaks Today" series; Intersity Press, 1988
- Harrell, William W; *Let's Study 1 Peter*; Part of the "Let's Study ..." series; The Banner of Truth Trust, 2004

Other Readings:

- Bigg, Charles; *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*; Part of "The International Critical Commentary" series; Originally published by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901; Reprinted by BiblioLife
- Davids, Peter H; *The First Epistle of Peter*; Part of "The New International Commentary on the New Testament" series; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990
- Jobes, Karen H.; *1 Peter*; Part of the "Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament" series; Baker Academic, 2005

Introductory Matters:

1) Author

Claims of 1:1

Arguments against the Petrine authorship

The Greek is too polished

The thought structure is too Pauline

We have no record of Peter ever going to the area where the recipients were

2) Recipients

Geography where they lived. See 1:1

What do we know about them from the text? See 1:18 & 4:3

Demographics: 2:13; 2:18 (what's missing?); 3:1 & 7; 5:5

3) Date

Referred to by Clement of Rome in 95 AD

Mentions Silvanus, but not Paul

Does not mention the Neronian persecutions

4) Subjects Covered

Soteriology & Eschatology

Suffering & Hope

Holiness

Community

Trinitarian Thought

5) Outline (adapted from Harrell)

Salutation – 1: 1 - 2

Your great salvation – 1: 3 - 12

Your call to consecrated living – 1:13 – 2: 12

Your call to orderly living – 2:13 – 3:12

Your call to endure suffering – 3:13 – 4:19

Your call to service and vigilance – 5:1 – 11

Closing greetings – 5:12 - 14

1 – The Salutation (1:1 – 2)

Peter

What terms does he use to describe himself in the letter?

What term does he not use?

What is the implication of the term “apostle”?

What do we know about Peter? (see Matthew 16:16f, 23f; 26:69f; Acts 2; 10 & 11; 12; Galatians 2:66, 11f)

What terms in the balance of the letter does Peter use to describe the recipients? Remember their gentile nature. Where does he get these terms?

The recipients are

Elect

Aliens / Sojourners

Part of the "Diaspora"

The Trinitarian involvement in your salvation

The work of the Father

Who else is "foreknown"?

The work of the Spirit

The work of the Son

What does Peter want God to give you?

2 – Your Great Salvation (1:3 – 12)

Peter begins with a blessing for God, not from God

Given the principle of Hebrews 7:7, how is this possible?

See 2 Corinthians 1:3 & Eph 1:3 for similar language

What about Psalm 103:1 & 2, and Psalm 135: 19f

Given the Trinitarian expressions of verse 2 what additional Trinitarian information is given in verse 3?

Why does Peter want God to be blessed?

He caused us to be born again

According to what? Why do we need His mercy?

To what? Why is it living? What do we learn about hope in 1:21 & 3:15?

What is the relationship between your new birth and Christ's resurrection?

You also get an inheritance? What four terms does Peter use to describe your inheritance?

If you have received an inheritance, how do these terms differ from the one you received?

You are also protected. Protected by what?

The means of the protection?

The goal of the protection?

Summarize what God has done for you? Use active verbs.

Why should you bless God?

Peter now turns to rejoicing and suffering (1:6 – 9). What do you rejoice in?

Note the relationship between the indicative of what God had done for you and your emotional reaction of rejoicing.

Peter says you grieve also. How is it that you rejoice and grieve at the same time?

What do your trials result in? Compare this with the first few verses of James.

What attributes of gold does Peter use? What does he compare gold with? Why?

Where else does scripture compare gold with something?

When do the praise, glory and honor come? Why does Peter use this term?

Describe your love for someone. Compare that with what Peter says about your love for Christ.

Relate these sentences to 1: 3 – 5. Peter's point is:

Some Old Testament Background (1:10 – 12)

The OT prophets inquired about what?

How did they do it?

Note the title of the Holy Spirit. What do we learn from this?

Of what did the Holy Spirit testify?

List some OT passages that describe our Lord's sufferings

List some OT passages that describe our Lord's glories

Whom were the prophets not serving?

Whom were they serving?

The implications of this are:

3 – Your Call to Consecrated Living (1:13 – 2:12)

First application – your hope and your life (1:13 – 16)

The first word is the conjunction “therefore”. What do we learn from this?

There are two imperatives in the paragraph, “rest your hope” and “be holy”

“Gird up” and “be sober” are actually participles. Their implication is:

How important is your mind to God?

Your hope is future oriented.

You also function as children (not childish). We saw this concept implied in v. 4

Note the contrast between the recipients’ former life and their current life

We are to be holy in what? Are their biblical principles for this?

Peter quotes Leviticus 11:45, 45; 19:2 & 20:7. Note the context in Leviticus. How does this relate to Peter’s recipients and you?

An Excursus on Effectual Calling

The verb, “to call” is used a number of ways in scripture

To Name

To Describe

To Address

To Invite / To Summon

To Bring

An example with another verb – 2 Corinthians 4:6

How does Matthew 22:14 fit in?

Relate this to John 6:44, especially with its context

Hence, the emphasis of the term “Effectual Calling” is on God’s work in saving us. Summarize scripture’s teaching on this:

End of excursus

The next imperative: Conduct yourself in fear (1:17 – 21)

God is described as father and impartial judge

What are the criteria of his judgment? When does this judgment take place (see 4:17)

Your time here is described as a sojourn. What is Peter’s emphasis? Why does he use this term? See 1:1 & 2:11

Summarize Pete’s user of the term, “fear”: (here, 2:17, 18; 3:2, 6, 14, 15)

Now, relate this to our present pericope. What is Peter’s point?

We come to the indicative. You already know something; that you were redeemed from you way of life

Define “to redeem”

Redemption includes a price and a condition redeemed from. What are these here?

Relate the indicative to the imperative

Where does Peter get the lamb analogy?

A Petrine Excursus

The subject

What we learn about Him

The chronology

The parallels with us

The result

The fourth imperative: Love one another (1:22 – 25)

Peter begins with a historical reflection – Your conversion

This appears to state you cleansed your own soul. Does it? Prove your statement.

The imperative: Love one another

Out of / from the heart – why is this here? Relate to the historical statement.

There is an interesting play on word here in the terms for love:

Peter returns to the historical reflection. He talks about your new birth. Compare the content here to the first historical reflection. Who did the work? What was the means used?

The adjective used to describe the word of God is “imperishable”. Where else has Peter used this term? What contrast is Peter making? Compare the adjectives.

Compare James 1:18. What are the implications for evangelism?

Peter quotes Isaiah 40: 6 – 8. Look at this in its context and relate that to Peter's point

How was God's word used?

The fifth imperative: Desire the word (2:1 – 3)

Note the "Put Off / Put On" motif here. Describe the five behaviors we are to put off.

While these are not desirable, the fact that Peter lists them in this instruction to the church tells us that it is possible to have these in ourselves. This is Jeremiah 17:9 – 10 fulfilled.

Peter uses what neonatal analogy?

In 1:22f God's word has what result? In the current pericope it has what result. Hence, we cannot live without it. Let us become people of the word.

Peter limits the growth statement to which people in 2:3? Compare this statement to Psalm 34:8 and Titus 3:4.

List the five imperatives and their accompanying indicatives

Parallels between Jesus and you (2:4 – 10)

We have come to Christ. This means:

List the four terms Peter uses to describe Jesus. What do they mean?

How do these describe you?

List the Lord's three offices. What are the tasks of each office?

Peter now focuses on your activity as a priest (v. 5). What activity? Through whom? Who is it not through?

Peter proves his points from OT scripture. Where? What is his purpose?

What is the purpose of each quote in their original context?

What commonly rejected doctrine does v. 8 prove?

How does this pericope fit into the structure of 1 Peter?

Peter uses four OT terms in v. 9 to describe you. List them and examine them in their OT context.

What is your purpose that Peter gives here? Which office are you engaged in when you do this?

Peter uses language from Hosea to describe what God has done to you. Describe Hosea's situation and what the terms mean.

Where else in the NT is Hosea's terminology used? How is it used there?

Peter says that you are the fulfillment of the OT prophecy. What are the implications of this, both theologically and behaviorally?

Conclusion to this section and transition to the next

List the terms Peter uses to describe you. What do they mean? Why is he using them?

What is the imperative? What is the indicative that is driving it?

What do fleshly desires do? List some examples and how they accomplish this.

What is the short term outcome of godly conduct? Notice the lack of the conditional expression.

What is the final outcome of godly conduct?

When does this occur?

What other NT passages have similar thoughts

4 - Your call to orderly living – 2:13 – 3:12

Living in Authority Structures

What are the authority structures? How many are listed here?

What other authority structures does Peter not deal with?

What is the paradigm they follow? What are the implications of this for the parties to the authority relationship?

Notice that Peter is applying the principle of conduct given in 2:12

The first authority structure – Civil Government

The imperative: submit

The reason: for the Lord's sake

To whom?

Government's implied purpose

Where else does Peter use the term, “evil doer”?

What is the opposite of “punish”?

Where else in the NT is this issue addressed?

What is the term Peter uses in v. 15 to describe your submission? What is the result? Relate this to the result in v. 12.

You are described as “free” in v. 16. This means what? Relate this to the second authority structure.

Liberty is not to be used for what excuse? When have you heard it used this way? Why are we not to do this?

Peter has four imperatives at the end of this pericope. Your life is to fulfill these.

The second authority structure – Employer / Employee

Notice to whom this instruction is given and to whom it is not. Relate this to the other authority structure pericopes

The command is given as a participle. Yet it has imperatival force.

Employees are to submit to which types of employers

What does it mean for this to be “commendable?”

What are you to do to be commendable before God? Notice the preposition.

Peter brings Christ’s action as your example. Notice the different uses of the atonement in v 21 – 25.

Peter quotes from what passage? List the parallels.

The final quote differs how? What are Jesus’ two titles and how do they summarize his work for you?

Where else in the NT is this issue addressed?

The third authority structure – Husband / Wife

Why does Peter state, “likewise”? Notice he says this in 3:7 also.

What are the differences between this pericope and the previous two?
Note at least these:

Peter has one imperatival force in the first two authority structures. What is it? How many does he have here? What are they?

Peter has a goal of winning the husband. He does not speak that way about political rulers or employers.

How are husbands disobedient to the word?

The wife’s reaction is to be:

The wife’s adornment is to be:

Peter uses who as an example?

What is the purpose of the example? What is not its purpose?

What are the two aspects of fearing husbands that Peter uses? (vs 2 & 6)

Husbands are to have what attitude and behavior?

One of the attitudes and behaviors is "honor". Where else does Peter use this term?

And if they don't?

Where else in the NT are these issues addressed?

Giving and receiving a blessing (3:8 – 12)

Why does Peter say, “Finally”?

List the behavior attributes you are to have:

V. 9 seems to be a summary for the behaviors listed in v. 8

Notice Peter brings up the doctrine of calling again. Why? How does God’s action in calling you related to your action in giving a blessing instead of a curse?

Peter quotes Psalm 34. How does this quote prove Peter’s point? Are the promises of Psalm 34 for you? Or for Israel only?

What hermeneutical point does Peter make here? Notice Psalm 34:8 is in Peter’s mind in 1 Peter 2:3. Further, where is Psalm 34:20 quoted?

List some hermeneutical practices? Do you want your hermeneutic to be the Holy Spirit’s? Which one does he use?

How do you get the blessing of v 10 – 12?

What is the blessing?

4 – Your call to endure suffering – 3:13 – 4:19

Suffer for doing good (3:13 – 17)

Why does Peter make a statement in v. 13 and then appear to contradict it in v. 14?

Peter quotes Isaiah 8:12. What is happening in Isaiah 8 and 9?

How is it relevant to Peter's point?

Where else does Peter quote Isaiah 8?

What is the command of v. 15?

How do you give the reason for your hope?

What is your hope? Relate this to the message of 1 Peter we have seen so far.

What does the "asker" see? Relate this to your message and your behavior.

Will you ever suffer for doing good? (v. 17).

What does this say about some gospel presentations today and the promise of v. 8 – 12?

What the implications of Peter's statement, "if it is the will of God"?

Christ suffered for doing good (3:18 – 22)

This is a difficult pericope. But, let's not get lost in the details and forget Peter's purpose. See how this pericope is the example of v.17.

Christ suffered once for sins. The implications of "once" are:

"...for sins" means what? The parallel is "the just for the unjust".

What was the goal of his suffering?

What possible interpretations can you think of for "put to death...made alive"?

When did Jesus preach to spirits in prison? Who are those spirits?

What was the result of that preaching?

How is God patient? Where else does Peter talk about God's patience?

Describe Noah's baptismal event (v 20 – 21).

How does baptism save you? Are you saved by what you do?

Peter ties your salvation to Christ's resurrection (v 21). Where else does he do this?

Notice the four steps in Christ's work here: Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Session

Excursus: Why is the board of elders called "The Session"?

Whom does Jesus rule?

When will this take place?

You suffer for doing good also (4:1 – 19)

The first paragraph has some difficult ideas. But, don't get so caught up in those ideas that the point is missed. What is the point of the first paragraph? Be sure to relate this to Christ's rule over the angels, etc of 3:22.

Relate this to the previous paragraph (see the "Therefore" in v. 1).

What does it mean to arm yourself?

What is your desire to be according to v. 2?

Relate the life style these people used to have to your redemption. See 1:18

V. 4 – 5 are a parenthetical expression. Relate it to its context.

How is the gospel preached to dead people?

Why is the gospel preached to dead people?

V 7 - The second paragraph begins with an eschatological statement. What does this refer to? Do you believe it?

What are the major imperatives in the paragraph?

Notice how the imperatives are driven by the indicative of v 7.

There is one implied purpose statement and one specifically stated purpose statement. Relate them to the imperatives.

Details:

Attitude in prayer

Passionate love

What is the OT background of covering sins?

Happy hospitality

Gifts for others

What is a steward's most important responsibility?

How do you teach? Relate this to the reaction at the end of the Sermon on the Mount.

Service with God's gifts

Purpose

V. 12 – Begins with advice – “Don’t think it’s strange.” Then Peter turns the advice into an imperative. Notice his contrasting thought.

How do you partake in Christ’s sufferings? See Col 1:24. Was Christ’s sufferings insufficient for your salvation?

Compare your future joy of v 13 to James 1:2. Why the different time perspective?

How does God’s Spirit rest on you? (v. 14)

What has been the reason for the sufferings Peter has talked about? Compare that to the list of v. 15.

What is an evil doer? Compare 2:12ff; 3:16f; John 18:30.

Compare the last item on the list to Romans 14:4.

You are blessed if you suffer as a Christian (v 16). Define that term in this context. Where else is the term used in the NT? Define it.

What are you to do if you suffer as a Christian? (4:16)

V 17 begins with “because”. Tie this verse to the previous context.

What judgment begins with God’s house?

Peter’s point is what in v 17? Note the parallel thought construction with Isaiah 10:12.

Does the clause, “do not obey the gospel of God” teach salvation by works?

V 19 is a summary of this extended pericope on suffering. Note the similar thought to 3:17. You are to commit your soul to God. What does “commit” mean?

God is called the “faithful Creator”. Note Peter focuses us on God as the creator and not as the redeemer.

Given that this is an extended pericope, with sub-pericopes, list the indicatives and imperatives related to persecution:

5 – Your Call to Service and Vigilance

5:1 – 4: Instruction to Elders

Peter exhorts elders. What does “exhort” mean?

Peter lists three self describing attributes. What are they and what are they not?

The imperative in this exhortation is “shepherd”. Using Psalm 23, describe shepherding activities.

What term does Peter use in parallel with “shepherd”? Compare this with 2:25 & 4:16. How does the elder / shepherd engage in this activity and yet not break the imperative of 4:15?

Peter then lists a set of adverbial expressions that describe the shepherding task. What are they? How are they obeyed and disobeyed?

What is Peter’s title for Jesus? Why does he use this one?

What is the promise for faithful elders? Compare this to Hebrews 13:17.

5:5 – 7: Humility and Exaltation

Peter turns from exhorting the elders (officers) to exhorting the young people. Notice the change in meaning for the word “elder”. Paul does this in 1 Timothy 5:1 & 17.

Who are these young people? What are they to do to? And to whom?

Peter next universalizes the command. Paul changes the order in Ephesians 5:17f.

What is it to be “clothed with humility”?

Peter gives an indicative for these imperatives. He quotes Proverbs 3:34. James also quotes this proverb in 4:6. Compare the structure and context of Peter’s and James quotes.

Peter gives you a command and a promise (v 6) all tied together. Compare Peter’s language with that of the context of the proverb.

What is the relationship of participle of v. 7 to the imperative of v. 6? This statement reminds us of a hymn.

5:8 – 9: Keep your head up

Two imperatives

What is Peter's point in "Be Sober"?

And what is Peter's point in "Be vigilant"?

Relate these to the statement about the devil. Who is his target meal?

Notice the parallel concepts (but different order) in Psalm 10.

Peter tells you to resist the devil. James (4:7) has a similar idea.

James has a promise; Peter has a statement about others.

5:10 – 11: Peter's encouraging summary

Use this statement as an aid to summarizing the book.

5: 12 – 14 Closing Statement

Who was Silvanus? See 2 Corinthians 1:10. Compare with Acts 17:15 and 18: 1 – 5

What role did he have in the text of 1 Peter?

Peter summarizes the purpose of his letter by the terms, “exhortation”, “testify” and “stand”. Review the letter with these terms in mind. Where do you see these ideas?

Who were the people in Babylon? What do we know about them?

And who was Mark?

Greet one another how?

The final benediction.