



Author: Simon Peter, apostle (for more, see “Peter’s Life and Ministry” in The Lutheran Study Bible p. 2148)

Date: Before AD 67

Genre: Letter; possibly a sermon or early baptismal liturgy

Purpose: To instruct and encourage the Lord’s people as they endure suffering for the sake of righteousness

Outline:

- I. Apostolic Greeting (1:1–2)
- II. The Thanksgiving (1:3–12)
 - A. God praised for new life in Christ (1:3–5)
 - B. Joy and hope give strength and sustain Christians in suffering (1:6–9)
 - C. Salvation foretold by the prophets (1:10–12)
- III. Christians Lead Holy Lives (1:13–2:10)
 - A. New status: Be holy as God is holy (1:13–16)

Commit to Memory Verses: New birth to a living hope (1:3b–5)



The Letter of Hope

1 Peter 1:1–16

hope through Christ

Overview ▪ 1 Peter is a “letter of hope” written to the people of God who are faced with various trials, such as hostility from the world and persecutions.

1 Peter 1:1–2 ▪ Introduction & the Apostolic Greeting

+ To whom and where is 1 Peter addressed? See 1 Peter 1:1 and the map. What is their relationship with the apostle? See Acts 2:9 and 1 Peter 1:12. Were these people primarily Jews or Gentiles? See 1 Peter 1:14; 2:10; 4:3–4.

+ How is 1 Peter like other New Testament letters/epistles? How is it different? Consider the recipients of the Pauline and Pastoral Epistles (for example, Romans or 1 Timothy) and the author’s relationship to them.

+ In what ways does the rest of the letter reinforce that the author is the apostle Peter? See 1 Peter 5:1.

+ What works of God are attributed to each of the three Persons? How are “obedience” and “sprinkling with His blood” connected? See Exodus 24:4–8.

What Does This Mean?

+ Does it matter to us that this letter was written by the apostle Peter? If so, why?

+ How are the recipients of 1 Peter “elect,” “exiles,” and “of the dispersion”? Can we identify with these descriptions?

1 Peter 1:3–12 ▪ The Thanksgiving

+ Some have suggested that 1 Peter is a baptism sermon or a baptismal (or Easter) liturgy used at Rome in Peter’s day. What baptismal language is used? See 1 Peter 1:23; 3:18–22; Titus 3:4–7.

+ What is the situation of the Christians? See 1 Peter 1:6–7. What is Peter’s encouragement to them? See 1 Peter 1:3–7.

+ How is hope “living”? See Hebrews 11:1. What is the guarantee of this hope? For what do we hope? See Matthew 6:19–20.

+ How and by whom are Christians “guarded through faith”? What is the goal of faith?

+ To what does Peter compare: trials? faith? and a faith that has endured trials?

+ About what do the Old Testament prophets write? See Luke 24:27, 44–47. From where do their writings come? See 2 Peter 1:21. For whom are they written?

What Does This Mean?

+ What trials have we experienced as Christians? Are they similar or different from the trials described in 1 Peter?

+ What does the word “hope” mean to the world? What does it mean to us as Christians? Finish the sentence: “My hope is”

+ Identify these phrases: “just as He [Jesus] is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity” and “This is most certainly true.” What is their significance?

+ What is the point of a test and who administers tests? How do we view trials in our lives? Do we see them as tests of faith or as something else? Has going through a test ever resulted in joy?

+ How does 1 Peter help us to read and more fully grasp the meaning and purpose of the Old Testament?

1 Peter 1:1–16

hope through Christ

1 Peter 1:13–16 ▪ Christians Lead Holy Lives

+ “Therefore” what?

For Further Study and Reflection

+ In 1 Peter 5:13, the apostle Peter refers to Mark, the author of the Second Gospel. Early church tradition describes that Gospel as a record of Peter’s preaching in Rome. Read the Gospel of Mark. How does that Gospel inform your study of 1 Peter?

+ On the situation of the Christians addressed by 1 Peter, see also 1 Peter 2:15; 3:16–17; 4:4, 14, 16. For Peter’s encouragement, see 1 Peter 2:12; 4:5; 5:12.

+ For more on “sprinkling with His blood,” see Isaiah 52:15; Hebrews 9:11–14, 18–22.

+ For additional baptismal language, see 1 Peter 2:2, 9–10. Do you see any others?

+ Luther: “For how could He allow us to suffer lack and to be desperate for temporal things when He promises to give us what is eternal and never perishes?”

Conclusion: Through Jesus Christ, we now have a living hope and know the promise of God that we will live in Him forever. We can face any trial or challenge, knowing that we are safe in His care.

Next week . . . 1 Peter 1:13–2:10—hope with holiness of life

Opening/Closing

Like newborn infants,

long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word.

According to His great mercy,

**He has caused us to be born again to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

**By God's power we are being guarded through faith
for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

The Lord be with you.

And with your spirit.

Before the study

*Almighty God, our heavenly Father, without Your help our labor is useless, and without Your light our search is in vain. Invigorate our study of Your holy Word, that by due diligence and right discernment, we may establish ourselves and others in Your holy faith; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.***

After the study

*Almighty, everlasting God, Your Son has assured forgiveness of sins and deliverance from eternal death. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit that our faith in Christ may increase daily and that we may hold fast to the hope that on the Last Day we shall be raised in glory to eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.***