

Introduction

The men who penned the New Testament were eight unique voices. Luke wrote with the detail of a doctor and historian. Paul's writing showcased his understanding of the Jewish law, the Old Testament and Roman culture. John, though an insider to the ministry of Christ, penned his efforts as an outsider looking in. Peter, the quick-tempered fisherman shows great growth and understanding as the years pass before he undertakes writing. In First Peter, he seems to jump from subject to subject, as if he believes he's about to run out of time and must get more events recorded. He's not keen to give the kind of detail on each subject as Paul or Luke might, but travels rapidly from one important point to the next. Some historians point out that Peter may have dictated this first letter to Silvanus, giving him license to word the message comfortable to the Greeks. The 2nd Epistle of Peter is closely linked to the letter penned by Jude and is discussed and compared following the commentary.

1 Peter 1:1-3

1Pe 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Peter identified himself as the author immediately, establishing his credentials and authority as an apostle. Peter pens only two short letters in the New Testament but he opens with great force, as if he wants to condense all his knowledge of God's grace into this small effort. Peter shows great boldness later in his ministry; a far cry from not wanting to leave Joppa to preach to foreigners in the Italian band at the house of Cornelius.

to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, When Peter says strangers scattered, we know it's directed to children of God – friends he knows and friends he hasn't yet met. The scriptures are written to God's children. Paul uses the same 'stranger' terminology to describe Gentiles. *Eph 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:* The Gentile nations were strangers in Peter's viewpoint. They weren't of Israel, they knew little about grace, and they had no knowledge or hope. Until the gospel went forth, as far as anyone knew, the covenants of promise pertained only to the Jews. Gentiles were and are saved the exact same way as the Jew, but the Jews had the law, the sacrifices, the daily offerings and the feasts of the Lord to practice to bring them to the knowledge of Christ. It all pointed to someone, and the Jews had that expectation while the Gentiles were strangers to these things. Paul summarizes: *Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;*

And Peter tells this good news to the strangers:

1Pe 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Three parties are at work in 1Pe 1:2 God the Father, the Spirit and Jesus Christ. Man is not one of them. He is passive. His election in Christ is according to the efforts of the Godhead and none of his own. The works salvation doctrine the world promotes should see here their help is not wanted or needed. Paul concurs: *2 Th 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 2Th 2:14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Peter and Paul are complimentary in their letters. Each seems to bear out something the other has expressed. Peter opens his epistle with not just good news, but great news, explaining the office work of the thrice holy God in the covenant of redemption. He details their election, through foreknowledge (before the foundation of the world), their eternal setting apart via sanctification and then reveals the obedience and particular redemption that is by sprinkling and the precious blood of our savior, Jesus Christ. It's quite the opening line, followed by his personal greeting or blessing: **Grace unto, and peace, be multiplied.**

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord – Peter begins with a prayer of thanksgiving for the things that follow. **According to his abundant mercy** which Peter has experienced firsthand, with the Lord in his ministry and at many times since. **Begotten us again** – born again – born from above, born of God, born spiritually, the circumcision without hands, circumcision of the heart, made alive, quickened, regenerated, carried through the tree of life, made a new creature. All of these descriptors are the same event: the new birth. The first time we are begotten into this world, it's as sinners, by birth (inheritance) by nature, which makes us sinners by practice. But to be born again everything changes and we are begotten unto lively hope. (*Eph 2:12* above). This lively hope is all thanks to a living Christ and his sacrifice, blood, and righteousness.

There is hope and redemption and salvation for the elect strangers – and each of us – whether we learn about it or not. From a legal standpoint, from a practical standpoint, from a covenant standpoint, Peter is about to assure these strangers they are included in that covenant, that God made with himself before the foundation of the world, and revealed to Abraham. And Peter is the gospel angel that carries these gentiles, through his preaching, to the bosom of Abraham and the comfort of the everlasting covenant.

God's people get doctrinally twisted when they try to parse what happened to saints in the Old Testament against our understanding of how the new birth is explained in the New. But there should be no confusion. Adam, David, Jonah, Moses, Noah were all born of God the same way Peter, Paul, Stephen and you are. Some will say there's a difference and that those folks couldn't have been given eternal life until the resurrection of the Lord. But examined from a legal standpoint, in the mind and purpose of God and his absolute confidence in his Son to fulfill the law and the requirements of justice to a jot and a tittle, we see he legally stood as surety, as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Viewed from either side of the cross, it's a guarantee that complete and sure.

Rom 4:17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Man fails to see the requirements of the new birth, but Peter expounds on them here.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead... The new birth requires God, the Lord Jesus Christ, abundant mercy (which man does not have to give), a method of begetting us, and of course, the legal requirements in the sacrificial death, burial and resurrection.

1 Peter 1:4-10

1Pe 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Peter spends several verses speaking of the incorruptible and undefiled aspects of eternal salvation. *Mat 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

He stresses the eternal protection afforded us in the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus.

1Pe 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. We know who those kept are, it is those who show forth the fruit of the Spirit. (*Gal 5:22-23*) These are the ones who have been chosen to salvation, and begotten again to an inheritance, preserved, or kept in that condition by God's power. As the Lord will perform the good work He has begun in us (*Phil 1:6*) we might say that He is faithful to preserve us, thus this in a sense is God's faith. We have these assurances first in *Jhn 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my*

hand. 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

And while we continue to strive in this flesh, we have the intimate confirmation of our security by his Spirit dwelling within us.

through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. While John tells us we have this salvation now in *1John 5:13*, we don't see the fruition of it now as we will at the redemption of these bodies. Therefore, we daily exercise our measure of faith unto salvation.

1Pe 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: And we do greatly rejoice, as our previous condition and our new situation is brought to mind during our daily walk. When we consider our death in trespasses and in sins, our situation without hope, changed from darkness to light at the new birth, it sets a joy before us, helping us endure the manifold temptations of life.

1Pe 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: We think of gold as being a substance that doesn't perish, but in truth, even the most valuable metal in currency will fade and be destroyed. Peter speaks of our faith during trials, much like gold tried in the fire. Gold, when exposed to high temperatures bubbles the impurities to the surface where they can be skimmed away. It is through this repeated refining by heat that allows gold to achieve such high purity. Our daily trials purify us in the same manner.

might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Not that our efforts or works or faith, are to be found praise worthy at the appearing of Jesus Christ, but rather that we might use our faith, the purifying trials to His honor and glory as we daily appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

1Pe 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: *We love him because he first loved us.* *1John 4:19* Peter saw the Lord, knew the Lord, and experienced much during Jesus' public ministry. He was eye-witness to both his crucifixion and his resurrection. How different his viewpoint is from those of us who have not seen, yet love, and believe. Peter marvels at how such can be the case, but rejoices in that it is common to all the elect upon learning of their savior.

1Pe 1:9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Our faith will end in heaven and Peter alludes to that great and coming day, yet he continues below to speak of the grace that has come to the Gentiles.

1Pe 1:10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Noah and his story speaks of grace and salvation. Abraham's history tells of the covenant of grace. Job spoke of salvation and mercy. *Isa 42:6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;* In *Luke 2:32*, Simeon knew of the prophecies regarding grace coming to the Gentiles.

1 Peter 1:11-17

1Pe 1:11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. The Old Testament speaks of Christ from the opening verse and we see types and shadows in the very first book of the bible. The Psalms detail his suffering on the cross, Isaiah foretells his sacrifice. These Old Testament writers all seemed to know, by the Holy Spirit, someone was coming – but they didn't have the name or dates to reveal. Like Daniel's 70 weeks, they were a mystery looking forward, but a clearer picture for those of us looking back. *Rom 16:25-26 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, :26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:*

1Pe 1:12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. Peter saw the change from the law service to grace. He saw the transition as Jews left the law and turned to Christ. He himself spoke to the strangers at the home of Cornelius to usher in the gospel to the Gentile nations. Peter knows firsthand from the day of Pentecost that the gospel preached with the power and demonstration of the spirit moves men to serve God.

which things the angels desire to look into. The angels have no understanding of salvation, sin, redemption or why it was necessary for their creator God to take on human form and die. To understand grace and the gospel, the angels desire to look into these things, and we suppose a just and holy God would permit such. That observation would take place in worship services, where *“there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”* (*Luke 15:10*) And learn of the hierarchy of marriage as described in *1Co 11:10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.*

1Pe 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; In the study of scripture, we must take established truth and use it to brace contextual wording that causes us questions. This is one such verse. We know that it is not our hope that brings grace or salvation to us, but rather the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. *1Cr 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 1Cr 15:2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.* Using established truth as our brace, we view Peter's instruction as a timely or knowledge salvation to gird up the loins of our mind and be sober as a daily admonishment.

1Pe 1:14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: This instruction pertains to righteous living and Peter will spend a good portion of his letter imploring these new Christians to walk upright.

1Pe 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Peter says of those who are obedient children, desirous of being holy, and further down, those who call upon the Father and have an understanding of their redemption and the incredible price it cost, that God hath called you – not into eternal life, which He certainly has, but here, to worship and service in this lifetime.

Jhn 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

If Jesus makes the distinction here to qualify true worshippers, we conclude that there must be false worshippers as well. Among the true worshippers, it says the Father seeks them to worship him. That's a reducing qualifier. Not everyone is capable or eligible or sought for that opportunity to worship. It is these whom Peter addresses and instructs in this first chapter. *2Th 2:14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1Pe 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. The instruction for our daily walk is set as high as Peter possibly can, giving our example as Jesus and encouraging us to emulate him in our efforts.

1Pe 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Again, we declare it is not our works being judged that determines our eternal destiny. This must then be speaking of our daily quality of life as we appear in the courtroom of the king, before the throne that he has established in these earthly tabernacles, where he rules our heart and mind and judges us on our actions, choices and efforts.

pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Not in fear of eternal condemnation, but with the reverential fear of a just and holy God, seeking to increase the wisdom He gives us. *Pro 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.* Why should we do so?

1 Peter 1:18-25

1Pe 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; Our redemption was not with corruptible things, that is, silver and gold. Though both highly esteemed among men, these have no value until they become currency or are fashioned into an exchangeable manner, but here Peter calls them corruptible, and indeed, anything man assigns value will see corruption. What a great contrast Peter draws. To see the richest and most desirable metals of men, when put beside the blood of Christ, which he does next reveals in comparison how awful they appear!

1Pe 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: In all of creation, can there be anything more precious than the blood of the sinless, spotless, perfect Lamb of God?

1Pe 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Paul's epistles were penned by the time Peter began writing, and we know he had access to those letters, (*2Pe 3:16*) so to hear Peter speak of the doctrines of grace in a similar manner confirms that the two were speaking by the same Holy Spirit, and presenting one doctrine in unity.

1Pe 1:21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Paul tells us that Jesus must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. *1Co 15:28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* It is the Father who covenanted with himself to bring about our salvation and redemption through his only begotten son. We hope and have faith in God, who has reconciled us to himself and even Christ will one day deliver the kingdom up to him. *1Co 15:24*

1Pe 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Peter uses poetic language here. Our souls were purified by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and as we cannot perform that action in any measure, we are again drawn to the

daily performance of service in obedience that helps to keep sin from us, and us from sin, thereby *'purifying our souls.'*

1Pe 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. *1Jo 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* The word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever is discussed below.

1Pe 1:24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

1Pe 1:25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. John calls Jesus the word which was with God, and the Word was God. (*Jhn1:1*) Paul speaks of the word in *Hebrews 4:12* and here Peter says the word of the Lord endureth for ever. All three men are speaking of the Living Word, the Lord and Saviour, and not the gospel or written word. The spoken gospel will come to an end, and the scriptures we now enjoy will not follow us to heaven. As Peter points out in the verse prior, all the glory of man will wither and fall away. Grass, trees, (paper) papyrus and scrolls will see an end.

And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. *Jhn 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* Every child of God will hear the *'word'* at the new birth when Jesus speaks life, (*John 5:25; 6:63*) when the dead hear the voice of the son of God and they that hear, live. That life-giving word endures forever. At some point in your natural life, after having heard that heavenly voice, you may hear the good news of the preached gospel, or encounter the written gospel, but it will have no impact if the life-giving gospel has not preceded it.

1 Peter 2:1-10

Peter continues in chapter two laying out the importance of walking the straight and narrow path, and conducting oneself as a subject of the King should.

1Pe 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, Those things which we carry in our old nature that continue to plague us, we must learn in time to set aside, not for the purpose of attaining eternal life, but for greater and purer service to God in this life, that men might outwardly view our inward change.

1Pe 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: Pure, healthy, nourishing and easy to digest. These are qualities of mother's milk for the newborn, and as new Christians, these strangers to whom Peter writes should seek the

healthy, nourishing doctrines of grace before taking on the grander teachings and meat of the bible. Crawl, walk, then run would be good advice for these strangers and all new Christians. This *milk first* advice is in line with Paul's suggestion in *Hebrews 5:12-14*.

1Pe 2:3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. While all men who have been born again of the Spirit of God, regenerated and made alive in Christ have tasted that the Lord is gracious, not all will quickly acknowledge such.

1Pe 2:4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Comparing Christ to a stone, albeit a living stone, was probably an odd metaphor to the Gentiles. But the Jews were consumed with the beauty and majesty of Herod's temple and stones are often peppered through their idioms and speech. (*Mar 13:1 And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!*) Peter draws on the analogy to make a point. Paul also used stones to draw lessons. *1 Co 3:12*

1Pe 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But now, in the New Testament church, we are the stones, lively, each perfectly suited to the master's work. In Behold the Mount of Zion, the songwriter expressed the members of the assembly as stones:

Each stone is wisely polish'd;
And fitted to its place'
And all are well cemented
With God's redeeming grace.

Psa 144:12 That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:

an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Church members who have undergone the watery grave of baptism enter the holy priesthood. We have been made kings and priests to God. *Rev 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.* Our spiritual sacrifices consist of singing, preaching, praying, showing sincere love one for another, study of God's work, helping our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in any way we can and esteeming others greater than ourselves.

1Pe 2:6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. If we are stones, built up unto a holy house, there must be a cornerstone. Christ is the only one who could

fill that position. He that believes on the cornerstone of Christ will not be confounded or overtaken by every wind of doctrine. The world's works religion has no cornerstone. If all could strip away the world's confusion and see Christ as the author and finisher of our faith, so much error would fall by the wayside.

1Pe 2:7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, Jesus is precious to us, but to the Jews of Peter's day, he is the very Messiah they shunned, the stone the builders rejected (*Psa 118:22*) and is now made the head of the corner. Not only is he the cornerstone and strong foundation that holds and supports the building, he is the head of the corner, made higher than man, angels, principalities and powers.

1Pe 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. Peter speaks of some being disobedient, and some, perhaps the Jews, appointed to that disbelief, as they stumble over the deity of Christ to this day. (*1 Co 1:23*)

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: We teach that God will have a witness in the world for every age until the end. This is borne out by Paul in *Eph 3:21. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* The witnesses are to reflect their roles as a chosen generation, as priests, as citizens of a holy nation, as peculiar people who shew forth praises unto God, reflecting the marvelous light as a city set upon a hill.

All the elect are called out of darkness into eternal life, but not all become priests, and not all are willing to serve or walk in that light.

1Pe 2:10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Gentiles were not a people in the eyes of the Jews, and certainly the Jews didn't believe the Gentiles at large to be God's people. The Jews under the law experienced a portion of mercy, while the law was yearly pushing forth sins in remembrance, but not actually taking them away; the Gentiles did not enjoy the few mercies granted the Jews. *Mat 15:26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*

1 Peter 2:11-17

1Pe 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; *Gal 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

1Pe 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Not every Gentile was given the knowledge of God, so now Peter speaks of these strangers as brothers and sisters in Christ who need to be aware of their own behavior among the Gentiles with whom they live and deal. A great change of personal behavior, the fruit of the spirit and the light of Christ should shine forth from these people: *Mat 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Peter was present when this great discourse was taught. He passes along this wisdom, that if the Gentiles, strangers, show forth the spiritual light, that others in their midst, with whom God has dealt might be moved to serve and glorify God.

1Pe 2:13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Peter is not suggesting we obey any law or regulation that conflicts with what we've been instructed by the scriptures. We read of his personal rebellions in the book of Acts. What he means by submission, is that if the law doesn't overly burden you, or put you in great conflict, you should submit, that your quiet disposition be well spoken of by those who observe you as followers of Christ. Paul is similar in his exhortation to live peaceably with all men (*Rom 12:18*) and *Tit 3:1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,* Both men offer good advice which keeps trouble out of our lives, but Peter is not suggesting submission without limits.

1Pe 2:14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 1Pe 2:15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: That is, by your clean living, obedience to God, you will advance your life as a light for others to observe. The ignorance of foolish men, being those who have been born again but remain entangled in the world, who would use your liberty as a cloke of maliciousness. You've heard these people who attack the doctrines of grace in a mocking manner saying "If I believed like you do, I'd go out and sin until I got my fill." Such people are ignorant of God's covenant and authority and of temporal salvation, to say nothing of the effects of continuing sin on one's life.

1Pe 2:16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Paul spoke a great deal throughout his writings of boasting. Peter acknowledges such

can be misconstrued easily by those who observe our lives. We should not use our liberty in Christ to elevate ourselves above those with whom Christ has not dealt, but rather, we should

1Pe 2:17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

1 Peter 2:18-25

1Pe 2:18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. Men have debated slavery since Canaan was cursed to become the servant of servants. *Gen 9:25 And he said, Cursed [be] Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.* Peter is not endorsing slavery, but advising them, as he knows God has children in every class of men, to show the respect and love toward them that they would show toward a fellow brother or sister in Christ

1Pe 2:19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 1Pe 2:20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. By faults, we take it to mean our personal or repeating sin. When we sin, we find we are going to be chastened for it, as it is disobedience by description. And when that buffeting or chastisement comes, if we fail to recall that we are the problem, we will direct anger towards God. Patience helps prevent compounding our problems by assigning blame on anyone but ourselves.

1Pe 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: When we murmur and complain about how unfair or hard life is, we need to look to our example and who suffered for us, following his steps: The world took this idiom to extremes with “What Would Jesus Do?” and while they mostly misapplied the concept, it’s a good place for our thinking to begin.

1Pe 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Your example was a spotless, sinless, lamb, who was harmless as a dove.

1Pe 2:23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

A man who threatened to pummel his neighbor for an injustice was reminded by his wife of the Lord saying “Vengeance is mine,” The man replied: “Honey, I’m just doing the Lord’s work.” We are quick to take justice into our own hands, but Jesus is our example once again: not reviling, nor threatening, nor railing, but leaving the matter in the hands of a righteous judge. If we meted out justice to our enemies, there would be no measure to stop us, no mercy, no love. It’s best we leave such in the hands of God.

1Pe 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. Because Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, we should have a call to action in gratitude of what he has done for us.

by whose stripes ye were healed. The healing stripes he speaks of here are multiple. He healed us from our death in trespasses and in sins. He healed us from sin’s bondage, sin’s depravity, from our condition of separation from God and so much more. While the Christian world wants to take the singular verse above and apply it to modern miraculous healing of physical and mental difficulties, we note the next word is **For**, explaining why we were healed:

1Pe 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

1 Peter 3:1-8

If you were to stumble upon a community of people who had just heard the gospel for the first time and were anxious to know how best to conduct themselves as Christians, walking, living, serving in such a way as to benefit not only their own lives, but the lives of their brothers and sisters in Christ, you might well study with them the epistle of First Peter. Peter didn’t travel as extensively as Paul as we’ll see later, but he sought to impart his wisdom about Godly living in this letter to these strangers.

1Pe 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; There is a hierarchy in marriage. *1Co 11:3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.* When Peter tells wives to be in subjection, it is not in order to bring an unequally yoked person from death to life, but rather to bring a lackadaisical or backsliding husband (that doesn’t obey the word) back into a better situation because he sees his wife’s obedience to God. As the next verse confirms:

1Pe 3:2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. ‘Conversation’ is an old English word meaning behavior. Peter uses the word ‘fear’ five times in this first undertaking. While it does mean “being afraid,” as we use the word today, it also is used earlier to mean ‘reverence towards God,’ which is certainly the kind of fear we ought to show toward the Creator in respect unto His working in our daily lives. But the third listed use in Strong’s Concordance tells us the word ‘fear’ is a reverence for one’s husband, which is in keeping with Peter’s theme. So we could read the sentence thusly and do it no harm: While they behold your decent behavior coupled with reverence for your husband. Strong’s uses the same word fear to mean ‘terror’ below in 3:14. Context is always important to rightly dividing the word.

1Pe 3:3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; Slowly transitioning to another issue, the excessive concern to the outward appearance, Peter uses the subject of marriage and subjection and ties the two together.

1Pe 3:4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. What is inside a person shows more beauty than the outward appearance, and a meek and quiet spirit is a beautiful attribute, not only to God, but to the husband as well.

1Pe 3:5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: The inward adorning is borne out by obedience and subjection.

1Pe 3:6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Lord was a title of respect and honor. Sara was the free woman, and all those who are under grace and have the knowledge of the salvation brought by the Lord Jesus Christ might well claim to be like unto Sara, their type and foreshadow in the Old Testament.

1Pe 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. Peter gives here veiled instructions for marriage as his theme continues. Husbands and wives are to dwell together, and by knowledge, Peter says they are to ‘know’ one another in a marital sense. Respecting that the male and female are different, and a woman is called the weaker vessel, a man must be aware of such and wise about such matters. Paul speaks of the importance of the marriage bed here:

1Co 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. Few things in this life equal the joy of a husband and wife sharing their lives in a godly marriage, both aware of their eternal condition and grateful to the Lord who made them thus. They are truly become one flesh. They pray together but as one mind. If one member of the marriage is praying and the other is not, would they not be at cross purposes? The importance of the husband and wife praying for the same end cannot be understated.

1Pe 3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; A church that is not of one mind is also at cross purposes. If one strong minded personality in the church is overly forceful in a matter the rest of the congregation does not desire, much trouble can result. And like in marriage, the church must be mindful of the issues impacting one another. If one member prays for the health and healing of a fellow member, while another prays for speed in death and release for that same member, the prayers are contrary. While both may have the best intentions at heart, it's important that they be of one mind.

having compassion one of another, While we are commanded to love our neighbors even as ourselves, we need to be especially mindful of our brothers and sisters in Christ, putting their concerns and issues even above our own if possible.

love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Love the brethren as family, though no one knows how to push the emotional buttons like those closest to you. And when those close members hurt you, it's more painful than the same pain inflicted by a stranger. But as family in the church, we are to love, forgive; overlook one another's faults, being compassionate and friendly one towards another. The church gathered together should be a joyful place, not only for the members present, and as examples for the children, but more so for the visitors who observe our interaction. This is where they will first see and experience the love we have for each other and perhaps desire to be a part.

1 Peter 3:9-15

1Pe 3:9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. Peter teaches us here the same things he learned from the Lord. This is the reminder to turn the other cheek and overcome evil with love. It's especially important among church members to go the extra mile in overlooking the minor issues which can quickly be flamed into devouring fires.

but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. Do you inherit a blessing when you are obedient to those things that feed the spirit instead of the flesh? This is truly casting our bread upon the waters so they will return after many days.

1Pe 3:10 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: *Eph 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)*

One of the hardest lessons for most people is how to tame the tongue. (*James 3:5*) Learning to refrain the tongue from evil will extend one's life.

1Pe 3:11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

Good wins over evil not only in eternity, but also here in time, and those who seek peace shall find it and enjoy better days than those who do not.

1Pe 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Jhn 9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

What a great reminder that the ever present Lord watches over His people. His eyes are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers. How we should learn to properly pray, and pray for His will given that information. And on the opposing side, the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

1Pe 3:13 And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? For every situation, there is a variable that can change it. We know we aren't blessed to lie on clouds of ease throughout our life, and we know that time and chance happens to us all, (*Ecc 9:11*) but keeping our walk as possible close to the Lord will go far to keep trouble out of our lives.

1Pe 3:14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But and if. Should circumstances come upon us that we must suffer, it's better to have such as a result of a righteous cause, rather than to suffer because of our participation in an evil endeavor.

1Pe 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: When a child of God walks in the spirit, it's visibly evident to others. Those children of God who are seeking answers or are newly born again will have a commonality with you that

they cannot explain or immediately understand. Perhaps they are seeking to serve God; maybe they are being pulled to service or are searching for the righteousness that is revealed from faith to faith that will testify with their spirit. It is to these individuals we are to be ready to give an answer should they inquire about our hope.

with meekness and fear: That's not directed as much at your answer, but at their attitude in asking. If someone were to brazenly confront you demanding why you seem to have hope in your life, you can be sure that person does not desire your answer to find a way to honor God. However, from our perspective, guiding one searching for answers is an endeavor we might approach cautiously. Considering the importance of such a task, meekness and fear applies in both directions.

1 Peter 3:16-22

1Pe 3:16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. We see here the reason that we should discern who's asking about our hope and for what purpose. A meek request is probably genuine, whereas evildoers asking are only looking to speak evil of you, to use your faith against you in a condescending or mocking manner.

1Pe 3:17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. Again, Peter reiterates, if we are to suffer, better for the cause of God than the will of the flesh.

1Pe 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: *Heb 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

Peter in one verse tells us of the sacrifice, the perfection of that sacrifice (just for the unjust), how guilty and vile we were, the reconciliation to God, and price required to do so: the death of Jesus in the flesh to pay for our sins, and that he was quickened – made alive by the Spirit. Then Peter continues and gives us the verse greatly abused and misunderstood by the modern Christian world:

1Pe 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

Entire books have been written on this verse. The modern Christian world would have you believe that Christ descended into hell (or an underground chamber next to Paradise) and offered all those who died under the Old Testament law an opportunity to accept or reject Him. There are greater blasphemies and heresies taught about God's word, but this one ranks near the top. First, and most importantly, the only offer ever regarding Christ is from the son to the Father to reconcile us to God. He doesn't offer salvation to mankind. Secondly, Peter next gives us the necessary context to identify the spirits in prison:

1Pe3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. How is this verse ignored in the teaching of the 'Jesus preaching in hell' doctrine? He clearly gives the situational context and timing – *while the ark was preparing*, and says that among God's elect, eight would be saved and all the rest were spiritual prisoners. We know there were more than eight elect people in the world during the time of Noah and the flood. Most were disobedient, as Peter relates. Disobedient children are different than the non-elect. Disobedience suggests a relationship. When neighborhood children are acting up, they are not disobedient to me, but to their parents. When my children are acting up, they are being disobedient to me. The disobedience of this time in history Genesis records as evil only continually.

1Pe 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) The saving by water puts Peter in mind of baptism, the subject he next brings.

It is these last few verses in the third chapter which cause us to think Peter may have been dictating his thoughts rapidly to Silvanus, whom he mentions at the end of this letter. It does much to explain why the subjects seemed pushed together, and why two voices may be heard in the reading.

The ark was indeed a like figure to baptism. God's people are timely saved in the same manner as the ark saved the eight of Noah's family. Saved by water. Peter is quick to clarify that baptism doesn't put away the filth of the flesh, but answers the good conscience given us by God. As only a child of God can have a good conscience, given in the new birth, we know baptism doesn't play a part in our salvation from sin or the birth from above. It is a gospel saving, answering in thanksgiving for the work Christ has done for us. Our conscience has been made to understand it was not by any works of righteousness on our behalf, but only by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

1Pe 3:22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. At the mere mention of the resurrection of Jesus,

Peter seems excited to summarize where his resurrection took him, how it positioned him, and what eternal authority and power awaited him upon that triumphant recovery from the grave.

1 Peter 4:1-6

1Pe 4:1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; Seemingly jumping from 1 Peter 3:18 or continuing a long and complicated thought, Peter ties his subject together suggesting that if we have suffered in the flesh, we have ceased from sin.

Some will suggest he is referring to Christ taking on our sins in his body on the tree of the cross and suffering the punishment we deserved on our behalf, all to which we agree was done, and that, perfectly.

But the wording of the sentence implies *Christ* hath ceased from sin, which can only mean that Christ has ceased from suffering for all sins, and having born them will suffer no more, but given the follow on in verse 2, more likely speaks to us in our daily lives, *that we should cease* from sin. Yet we know we can never really cease from all sin in the lifetime, these bodies still clinging to the Adam nature which was not repaired or replaced in the new birth, therefore, we suggest that in our lives, when chastisement comes from a particular sin or sin(s) and the suffering is over, that sin ought not to tempt us again in this lifetime, bringing a cessation.

Because the next verse, in context, cannot apply to Christ:

1Pe 4:2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. Coming out of our state of depravity into a newness of life, and learning to walk therein involves giving up lusts of the flesh and submitting to the will of God.

1Pe 4:3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: For this indeed was our case. And Peter suggests that for the Gentiles it was customary for them to partake in such a lifestyle.

1Pe 4:4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: And those whom you leave behind in that world of depravity cannot understand why you no longer engage in the evils you once enjoyed, and because they can't see the change you have undergone internally, they speak evil of you to those who are willing to listen to such things.

We again comment on Peter's style, whether by dictation and translation or by his own hand, we cannot say. But we suggest if he had one thousand ideas for this letter, he purposed to get as many points in as possible.

1Pe 4:5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. The quick and the dead. The elect and the non-elect. The elect are daily judged in the courtroom of the heart and mind where God is enthroned (in earth) and tabernacles with his people. The dead will be judged out of the books at the end of time. (*Rev 20:12*)

1Pe 4:6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. Without careful or rightly dividing, this verse could easily lead one astray into areas of doctrine that sound reasoning will not support. Some men will apply this verse to the doctrine of gospel regeneration, saying that it is the preached gospel that brings one from death to life. The doctrines of grace explain to us clearly and abundantly how one is brought to life from death in trespasses and sins, we can and must declare that gospel regeneration is a falsehood. Therefore, we proclaim that Peter is telling preachers that it is impossible to tell, from viewing only the flesh who is a child of God and who is not.

Preaching the gospel to the spiritually dead would be an exercise in futility, as they could not hear, or perceive the gospel message and it would in fact be foolishness to them. That then is not the message Peter is communicating here, but rather that the gospel is the standard by which those non-elect, who will never be brought to spiritual life, are to be judged, at the end of time: *Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. We spoke of Peter also writing some things that are 'hard to be understood,' as he says of Paul. This is one of those things.

During our lifetime, we are first considered an enemy to God; we dwell, as it were, as dead, among the dead, with no spiritual life or knowledge. God changes our status in the new birth, and while we appear before the judgment seat of eternity for only the briefest second, the gospel becomes our standard by which we will be judged in this lifetime, even by those who remain in that dead state. They will watch to see if we conduct ourselves by the gospel or continue to walk according to men in the flesh. This is our free will. It is not our eternal salvation, but our choice of whether to serve God and thank him in this lifetime or not.

1 Peter 4:7-12

1Pe 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. From the day I first understood something about the gospel, I heard about the last days, and like every generation, believe we are in them or near them. (*1Pe 1:20*) John says in (1Jo 2:18) *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. it is the last days.* As the kingdom was ‘at hand’ when Peter walked with Jesus, now he turns away from that beginning to glance longingly unto the end. It’s closer than we think.

be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. This advice will sustain us day after day.

1Pe 4:8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Charity among believers includes overlooking the petty grievances, disagreements, shortcomings and the multitude of sins represented. While we have a responsibility to repent and confess our sins to the Lord, asking forgiveness, the meaning here is probably that believers put the past behind them, not calling to remembrance those sins of others before they began their efforts to walk in Christ. We might have known someone who lived a rebellious and sinful life growing up, and encounter them later in the church, among the saints of God. While details of their past might come to mind, it is our charity that covers those sins, knowing we too have transgressions we would desire be covered and left in the past.

1Pe 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. Be kind one to another. Love each other as Christ has loved us.

1Pe 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. A gift or talent ought to be employed for the benefit of one another in the church and the Kingdom of the living God. Well use of that gift(s) manifests the grace of God in the church.

1Pe 4:11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. If a man enters the stand to proclaim the word of God and considers that he is on (theoretically) holy ground, and for a few moments, speaks on behalf of the creator, relaying a message given him by the Spirit, how awfully reverential such a man should be in that position.

if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: All ministers run a race, but each in a different lane, at a different pace, using different talents, but all run toward the same goal, which is

that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1Pe 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: Here is the admonition to new Christians. When first aware of the goodness and mercies of God and presenting yourself to service, the enemy comes and attacks and tries to discourage you and knock you away from such endeavors before you have been firmly established.

as though some strange thing happened unto you: It's common to all. Jude speaks of the common salvation and the importance of earnestly contending for the faith. Jesus said the enemy would come and try to take the word away before it was rooted and could produce fruit. *Luk 8:12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

1 Peter 4:13-19

1Pe 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. The joy that awaits us cannot be put into words. We are partakers of Christ's sufferings, but only in the smallest degree. We may suffer at the hands of men because we have rejected the world and strive to serve the living God but that can never be compared to the sufferings of the Lord on our behalf.

1Pe 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. *Mat 5:11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.* Peter's memory takes us to the Sermon on the Mount, and tells us that reproach for the name of Christ is a mark of identity, testimony that the spirit of glory and of God rests on you, a confirmation that you are indeed one of His.

1Pe 4:15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. We've declared and teach that nothing that one does in this lifetime changes their eternal status. Peter confirms such here. While we would argue one who habitually performs these actions without remorse or repentance is not born of God, there are those among us who have found themselves in situations Peter describes. He would not desire that your suffering on behalf of the cause of Christ be due to one of these crimes. We also note that the position of busybody in other's men's matters appears to be equal in Peter's mind as that of a murderer.

1Co 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, :10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. :11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

1Pe 4:16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. There is an honor to be counted worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? Judgment within the house of God, undertaken by the saints can only be a temporal, worldly judgment. We know the end of them that are called the non-elect because they will never have a new birth, or spiritual mind. We are told that end. But Peter is speaking of those who can obey, and do not. The church is to judge righteous judgment, and we are taught in scriptures how to do so. Judgment begins at the house of God. If we judge ourselves, and one another, we'll do much, as James instructs, to save a soul from death.

what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? Their lives will suffer. They have not the opportunity to appear before the throne of mercy; His eyes are not over them, nor are his ears open to their prayers. They will submit to sin and temptation as they don't have the spiritual strength to win the daily warfare Paul describes for us in Romans. They won't have the fellowship, the joy, the comfort or the rest they would find worshipping with the saints. They will have fewer brothers and sisters to look after them, care for them, pray and cry with them, encourage them or uplift them. They will have no lamp unto their feet to keep them on the straight and narrow road and often find themselves in the world's ditches where the adversary roams, seeking whom he may devour. They will be blown about by every wind of doctrine, and ever learning, never finding the truth.

1Pe 4:18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Our context is timely obedience. So that we, and Peter, are not misunderstood, let us declare here, that the elect, the righteous, were saved at the cross by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God and that saving is eternally to heaven, completely, and it is a finished work in which the Father himself is well pleased.

When Peter says the righteous are scarcely saved, we often read it as 'being barely saved' as if Christ almost failed. What a tremendous interpretation error that would be. We might be better suited to look at the word scarcely as "few." *Luk 13:23-24 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Those who do not find it (the strait gate) are also children of God. Only God's children would desire or even make a half-hearted effort. He says in Luke MANY will seek to enter in – the non-elect or the wicked would not seek such. Many that make the attempt are blinded by the world's false religions, their own misunderstanding of scripture or ego that says they must do something to finish what they believe Christ could not.

Therefore, FEW, dare we say a scarce few will be saved by the strait gate and narrow path. Our ungodly position in our natural state, prior to our eternal salvation concludes that this scripture is in the same vein as *Heb 2:3 "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;"*

where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? If Peter is still speaking of God's children, the born again child who remains in the world, then they shall appear in the world, suffering according to the choices and decisions they make, bearing the burden of their continuing sin. These are those whom Paul admonished in *Rom 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

1Pe 4:19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Wherefore – if your suffering comes while attempting to be obedient, bear it well, committing the keeping of the soul to God. *2Ti 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

Wrapping up Chapters 3 and 4 on how to live a Christian life in the world and in the sight of other Gentiles, Peter now turns to instructions for the church.

1 Peter 5:1-14

1Pe 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: We never hear him addressed as Elder Peter, but he says so here, in order that those whom he addresses might identify with him.

1Pe 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; The flock of God is fed by sound gospel preaching. It must make a recognizable sound. It cannot be contrary to

established doctrine and it must be led of the Spirit. When the word is proclaimed in power and demonstration of the spirit, it provides the sheep and the lambs the spiritual nourishment they require and gives them comfort and peace and hope and joy in the Holy Ghost.

taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; *Eph 4:11* details the gifts to the church. Not every elder is made to be a pastor, but those to whom God has given that ability should be ready to take the oversight of the flock that calls him to the position, provided the Lord be in the matter, and to do so willingly, not begrudgingly, and not out of consideration for what monetary gifts the church may prescribe.

1Pe 5:3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. A pastor or an elder is a servant to God's children. Being in a position of authority in the church should humble a man, rather than exalt him, that his service to them and to the Lord should be an example to them and those who see his good works.

1Pe 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. The chief Shepherd of course is Jesus Christ, the elder or pastor of the church is an under-shepherd. Whether the appearing of the Lord is during worship, which is fitting, or at death of the elder, there is a crown of glory.

We don't proclaim crowns as the modern Christian world does, who seek not only crowns but also stars to adorn them are beset with works, trying to proclaim their own glory. *1 Co 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

In proclaiming the gospel, at those times when the Lord is present and directs the mind, words and message of a preacher, there is a crown of glory. The word crown is rarely used in scripture by New Testament writers to be an actual adornment on the head, but rather a blessing or honor. If the appearance of the chief shepherd is at the end of an elder's life, the other possibility we presented above, then there is a crown of glory assigned him that fadeth not away. *Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*

The pastors and elders who have gone home before us are still spoken of in honorable terms. We reflect upon their preaching, teaching, writing, instruction and humble manner long after they have departed us. We have 'crowned' their memory with a glory that will not fade away, as man's honors do. *1Ti 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*

In Revelation 4:20 we read where the elders cast their crowns before the throne. We aren't looking for eternal physical crowns.

1Pe 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. As we should honor our mother and father, respect those aged among us, we ought to give respect to the experience of those who have travelled the path before us. Mothers and fathers in Israel have much to offer the younger members by way of experience, advice, godly examples and wisdom.

Yea, all of you be subject one to another, (Eph 5:21) and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Be not highminded, but fear. Humility is a beautiful trait in God's children. We know the Lord looks unfavorably at pride, so we need to work to control it. Grace to the humble. It's as if Peter is giving us a key to unlocking the door of answered prayers.

1Pe 5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: *Mat 23:12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*

1Pe 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. We're sometimes falsely humble, pretending we don't want to burden God with our "little" problems, thinking that we should save our prayers for the big troubles in our lives. But by casting all our care upon him, we learn to trust that he is there for us in six troubles, and will not forsake us in the seventh. Prayer is perfected by practice.

1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Be sober and watchful. The drunken, careless man is the one who finds himself ensnared in a trap.

because your adversary the devil, Peter uses the legal term adversary, or enemy suggesting the devil will accuse you before the court, accuse God before you and bring railing charges against both. He calls him *your* adversary. That's personal.

as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Before he roars, though, he will likely stalk you to try and determine your weakness.

1Pe 5:9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. You are not alone in your trials and temptations. By faith in God, prayer, and efforts at righteous living, we can resist the devil. *Jas 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

in your brethren that are in the world. Just a quick aside here to point out that Peter is teaching not all of God's children find the church. Many are left out in the world, either by their own desire or physical circumstance. But he calls them brethren nonetheless. A good lesson here for the missionaries of the world seeking to make children of God.

1Pe 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. Here is the purifying Peter spoke of before. Remembering our eternal glory to come and our heavenly calling, the light afflictions of our suffering will bring us forth as gold. (*Job 23:10*)

1Pe 5:11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1Pe 5:12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. We mentioned Silvanus briefly at the outset. Historians are awash with theories concerning him. They believe he was one of the 70 sent out by Christ in the gospels. Some claim he is Silas, Peter's travelling companion. Some think he was an elder at the church at Thessalonica. All we can say for certain is that he aided Peter in either transcribing or translating this letter. In Peter's second epistle, the voice of the writer takes a noticeable change.

exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

If you were in doubt about the gospel you had thus far received, doubt no more strangers. Peter confirms it for you by his testimony. Similar to Paul's warning to the church at Galatia, but short and to the point.

1Pe 5:13 The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. Among the theologians of the world who must appear to be smarter than New Testament writers, you have just read a lie. Some say Peter is writing from Jerusalem, and some say Peter was writing from Rome, and that it was necessary in either case to encode his location for his own safety. I have a problem when people have to change what the bible says to something else, especially when there is no corresponding scripture to authorize the change.

I find no evidence, despite the claims to the contrary by the Catholic church, that Peter was ever in Rome. Tradition says Peter was martyred in Italy, crucified upside down, but there is no scripture to indicate Peter's death or where it occurred. Secondly, if Peter is encoding his location, there is never a reason given, nor is there clarification later on. Knowing he is penning scriptural cannon, such a statement would only gender confusion for anyone reading beyond Peter's lifetime.

Psa 87:4 I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there.

Babylon would have many with Jewish ties, and of all the regions into which the gospel went in the beginning, this certainly was not the most wicked among them. Perhaps Peter is commending them to these other churches as a gospel church like they are, qualifying them as:

elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.

That sounds like an endorsement of the church at Babylon to the other churches, with the further instruction to

1Pe 5:14 Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.