

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. **AUTHORSHIP** – The Apostle Peter has long been regarded as the author of these epistles bearing his name, and there is no credible challenge. The theology is definitely “Petrine.”
  - a. Though it is known that many works were written in the name of known Jewish or Christian leaders attempted to gain credibility for their thoughts or theological opinions by impersonating famous writers, the letters [epistles] bearing Peter’s name have long been accepted as valid and attributed to the Apostle Peter.
  - b. The “Old Testament and New Testament Canon” affirms our present Scripture as correct, trustworthy and authoritative in its present form. See introduction to the epistles for more on this topic - <http://www.authenticdiscipleship.org/pdfs/1-biblical-literacy/Bible%20Survey%20-%20NT%203.1%20-%20Introduction%20to%20the%20Epistles.pdf>
  - c. John Mark was a known associate of Peter and the author of the Gospel of Mark is generally accepted to have been strongly influenced by Peter. Similarly, Luke was a known associate of Paul, and the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts both written by Luke demonstrates Pauline sources and theology. That they may have been involved as Scribes in these apostle’s work does not compromise the canonical integrity of these works, as many valid authors employed the use of scribes or otherwise known as “Amanuenses” [secretaries].
  - d. The typical “Greco-Roman” letter form is the basis of the “epistolary” form. These letters were composed with an introductory greeting to the intended recipient, a main body of the text, and a conclusion that often included a salutatory farewell [doxology or benediction].
  - e. Although New Testament Epistles were written to a particular referenced recipient, they were also intended to be copied and distributed to a wider audience. This copying and redistribution process has insured that such manuscripts have been preserved through history.
  
2. **DATE OF COMPOSITION:**
  - a. Historical Context – The date of the epistle can be surmised from certain known historical events. We know that Peter’s letter was written in response to the threat and reality of persecutions that began against Christians in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the dates of these persecutions provided a need and purpose for both John’s and Peter’s letters to reassure and strengthen the faith of congregations.
    - i. Nero’s persecution began in earnest in 64 AD and continued until his death in 68 AD. It has long been held that Peter wrote these letters shortly before Nero’s sanction against Christians to prepare congregations for their coming ordeals. Thus 64 AD would be the earliest date of authorship.
    - ii. Both Paul and Peter’s epistolary assertion that Christ followers should obey the law and respect governmental leaders is seen as a way to not inflame governmental opposition – Romans 13:1-5; 1 Peter 2:13-17. Jewish “Zealots” by contrast were looking to provoke a

confrontation with Rome to hasten their hoped for political overthrow of their oppressors.

- iii. The latest date of the writing of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter would obviously be before Peter was martyred in Rome. We know from the historical record that Paul was executed in Rome in late 66 or early 67 AD; and Peter was executed at or about the same time. Thus, this would be the latest date of authorship.
- b. Therefore, the most likely date of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter are at the earliest 64 AD, and at the latest 65-66 AD. Most scholars prefer the earlier date as these epistles were sent to prepare these Christian communities for the persecutions that would come radiating out of Rome where Peter was imprisoned.

### 3. PURPOSE AND DESTINATION FOR WRITING:

- a. Peter states his purpose for writing his epistle in 1 Peter 5:12 – as “exhorting and testifying that this [Christian revelation] is the true grace of God; [therefore] stand firm in it!”
  - i. One can only surmise that Peter’s denial of his Lord before Jesus’ crucifixion had to have been on his mind as he wrote, as well as the likely immediacy of his own death advancing.
  - ii. “Standing” amidst opposition is a common theme of Peter, Paul, John and James. The context here is standing “for” the Truth, instead of standing “in opposition” against the ruling agents as was more common of the Jewish Zealots.
- b. Zondervan’s Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible provides the following statement for Peter’s writing:

The First Epistle of Peter is addressed to believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia—provinces in Asia Minor between the Taurus Mountains and the Black Sea. It is likely that Peter ministered in this area. It is noteworthy that Paul at the beginning of his second missionary journey was “not allowed by the Spirit” to go into this territory (Acts 16:7, 8). This is likely in keeping with Paul’s policy of not working in an area where others had been or were presently working. Possibly, Peter was in this part of Asia Minor at the time of Paul’s first or second missionary journey.

- c. The introduction of 1 Peter 1:1-12 – is a clear statement that 1) confirms the author, 2) identifies the destination, and 3) sets the reason and priorities that were obviously on Peter’s mind. It also declares positively Peter’s focus on the Christian communities he would be leaving behind as he was facing his own demise in Rome. This opening of the epistle is a great statement of what a Christian leader’s priorities should be for their congregation:

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an

inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things. 1 Peter 1:1-12 (Cross reference with John 17:1-26, especially verses 14-19)

#### **4. STRUCTURE:**

##### **A. Outline #1 – Dr Gary Tuck:**

- a. Introduction – 1:1-12**
  - i. Salutation – 1:1-2**
  - ii. The Blessing and Hope of Christian Salvation – 1:3-12**
    - 1. New Testament Grace – 1:3-9**
    - 2. Old Testament Shortcoming – 1:10-12**
- b. New Covenant Exhortation – 1:13-2:10**
  - i. Call to Holiness – 1:13-21**
  - ii. Call to Brotherly Love – 1:22-25**
  - iii. Call to Spiritual Growth – 2:1-3**
  - iv. Jesus’ Invitation to Follow – 2:4-10**
- c. World View Exhortation – 2:11-3:12**
  - i. Heavenly Behavior – 2:11-12**
  - ii. Civil Relations – 2:13-17**
  - iii. Relational Submission – 2:18-3:7**
  - iv. Service to Others – 3:8-12**
- d. Exhortation amid Christian Suffering – 3:13-5:11**
  - i. Exhortation of Godliness – 3:13-4:6**
  - ii. Exhortation of Righteousness – 3:18-22**
  - iii. Exhortation in the Expectation of Suffering – 4:1-6**
- e. Exhortation to Ministry – 4:7-11**
  - i. Prayer – 4:7**

- ii. Service – 4:8-11
  - f. Exhortation to Endurance – 4:12-19
    - i. Suffering as a Blessing – 4:12-16
    - ii. Suffering as a Statement Against the World – 4:17-19
  - g. Exhortation to Order and Harmony in Community – 5:1-5
    - i. Elders – 5:1-4
    - ii. Lay Leaders – 5:5
  - h. Final Exhortation – 5:6-11
    - i. Trust God – 5:6-7
    - ii. Resist Evil – 5:8-9
    - iii. God’s Supporting Presence – 5:10-11
  - i. Conclusion – 5:12-14
- B. Outline #2 – Zondervan’s Archeological Study Bible:**
- a. Greeting – 1:1-12
  - b. Exhortations to Holy Living – 1:13-5:11
    - i. Self-Control & Holiness – 1:13-2:3
    - ii. Conduct of God’s People – 2:4-12
    - iii. Submission to Authority – 2:13-3:7
    - iv. Suffering for doing good – 3:8-17
    - v. Armed with the attitude of Christ – 3:18-4:6
    - vi. Conduct in view of the end of all things – 4:7-11
    - vii. Suffering for being a Christian – 4:12-19
    - viii. Exhortations to Elders [mature Christians] – 5:1-4
    - ix. Exhortations young men [growing Christians] – 5:5-11
  - c. Purpose of the letter – 5:12
  - d. Closing Salutation – 5:13-14

**5. THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT – Dictionary of the Later New Testament identifies the following major themes:**

- a. Jesus is the Living Hope of all Christians – 1 Peter 1:3... therefore, the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming [Parousia] of Jesus needs to be understood in terms of the 1) Revelation [Apocalypse] of God’s Truth through Jesus (1:7, 13); 2) Jesus is revealed as God’s salvation for humanity (1:5, 9); and 3) as the Glory of God (4:13). Peter develops his argument through these points and goes on in encouraging believers to live out their faith; meaning they are becoming a living testimony of God’s Truth revealed in Christ.
- b. Discipleship is seen as a “Journey” – all Spirit filled believers are moving toward “an indestructible, incorruptible, and unfading inheritance” reserved for all Disciples of Jesus which is waiting for them in heaven (1:4). For Peter, salvation is not something that just comes to us, but rather it is what waits for us at the end of a faithful active life (1:9) as we grow in maturity in

becoming more like Jesus (2:2). This was another way of stating Paul's encouragement of becoming a "living sacrifice" in Romans 12:1. The Peterine view is that we should be seen as "us coming to Jesus" rather than "Jesus coming for us" (2:4). The result of a such a life of discipleship is our being built into a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood (2:5) as we follow in Jesus' footsteps (2:21). The Gospel of Mark follows a similar line of thought (Mark 1:16-20; 8:34; 14:27-29). A believer's whole life is seen as a journey toward Heaven walking in the footsteps of Jesus (1:15, 17; 2:12; 3:1-2, 16).

- c. Jesus [and by extension His Church] is victorious over evil and evil spirits who have rebelled against God and set themselves against God's Will and Purpose – both Peter and Mark pay special attention to Jesus' ministry on earth in victory over the spiritual realm including exorcisms, healings, etc. (Mark 1:23-28, 32-34; 3:11-12; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:14-29). This is not surprising as John-Mark was a close associate of Peter. Similarly, Luke was a close associate of Paul, and does not focus as much on exorcisms but does include elements of spiritual awe and wonder.
- i. In a cursory reading you might conclude that spiritual exorcisms played only a minor role in the development of the early Pauline Christian mission (Acts 16:16-18; 19:11-16). However, this is more about differences in these Christian communities in living out a Spiritual Life in a physical world in differing cultural environments. As such, these differences may not necessarily be disagreement between Peter and Paul, but perhaps more indicative of Peter's focus on Jewish roots, and Paul's focus on Greek roots.
  - ii. Jews accepted the spiritual realm of angels and demons being very active on earth and heavily involved in influencing and affecting human life. While Greeks viewed the spiritual realm as more separate and innocent (1 Corinthians 1:21-24).
  - iii. Both Paul's and Peter's writings agreed that Christians need not be afraid of human oppressors who had no authority over the spiritual realm because Jesus had already proved His power and authority over evil by promoting spiritual life, and guaranteeing eternity for His disciples.
- d. The virtue of suffering for doing what is right and good – 1:6 expressed that believers would suffer trials and 1:7 that standing firm in their faith (5:9) would prove their faith -1:7. When suffering unjustly, we demonstrate Christ's example to an unbelieving world. (CR James 1:2-4)
- e. Christian living – 1:9, 2:2... salvation is a process where believers grow Spiritually from their daily expressions of faithfulness under worldly pressures. In this context, sanctification has an initial genesis in the indwelling of the Spirit, and an ongoing process as we become progressively more "Christ-like" in our attitudes, values, and priorities. Paul says much the same thing when he reminds the Corinthians that "you were bought at a price... therefore honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:20) and "do not become slaves of men" (1 Corinthians 7:23).

6. **EXEGETICAL MESSAGE OF 1<sup>ST</sup> PETER – Dr Gary Tuck** – follow along as each passage is explained:

- a. 1:1-2 – in this very short but theologically dense introduction, Peter introduces a number of thoughts:
  - i. 1:1a – Peter is identified as the author – in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD John, Paul, and Peter were the main influences of Christian thought. Peter goes on to list three themes – “God’s Elect,” “strangers in the world,” and “scattered saints:”
  - ii. 1:1b – God’s “Elect:”
    1. “Elect” refers to believers having been selected for a purpose. Zondervan’s Bible Study Library Scholar’s Edition provides the following note on how the term “Elect” should be viewed in this text.

“In biblical teaching, election is a central theme and the foundation of spiritual blessing (cf. Dt 4:37; 7:6; 14:2; Ps 105:6, 43; Isa 15:4; Eph 1:4-5). No believer should ever feel threatened by the doctrine of election, because it is always presented in Scripture as the ground of comfort. So here the designation “elect” reminds the scattered Christians in danger of persecution that God’s purposes for them are certain and gracious.

      - a. Being ‘elect’ should be seen in terms of being selected as in an appointment by the King for a particular purpose. This is a great honor God bestows upon His people.
      - b. ‘Elect’ and ‘chosen’ are often seen in a more determinative sense rather than a volitional sense. Hence, I generally prefer to substitute ‘invited’ to being ‘elected’ or ‘chosen.’ Invited makes clear that we have a volitional responsibility that is often obscured by the more determinative terms. We need to cooperate with what God is already at work in advancing His Kingdom. Being engaged with God is a wonderful experience that brings meaning and fulfillment to life.
    2. Being God’s people on earth means we are “strangers in the world.” In other words, earth is not our home but rather the place of our sojourn. Our true home is our inheritance in eternity (1:4). Zondervan’s goes on to say, “ ‘Strangers in the world’ points to the fact that Christians are pilgrims who do not reside permanently on earth. They belong to the heavenly realm (cf. Ephesians 2:19; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 11:13-16).”
    3. God’s people have also been “scattered” geographically... the term used is referring to how seeds are scattered across a field, meaning God’s people are seeding the world for a reaping of righteousness.
- b. 1:2 - God as Trinity [Father, Son & Spirit] is in control – our Triune God is active in our faith securing our future:

- i. **“The foreknowledge of God the Father” – God knows who will answer His invitation in faith, but each person is responsible to choose or reject the invitation. This follows along with the volitional concept of elect, chosen, and invited discussed above.**
  - ii. **“The sanctifying work of the Spirit” – God’s redemption is at work from the inside out of His people, as we become increasingly more Christ-like.**
  - iii. **“Jesus Christ [the Son] sprinkling by his blood” – this is the priestly justification and should be seen in the context of the priestly ministry in the Temple whereby the sprinkling of blood upon the people and upon objects makes them clean and holy... and as such presentable to God.**
  - iv. **As a result of the foregoing, Grace and peace are now ours in abundance, because every believer’s salvation is God’s doing on behalf of those who respond in faith. Note the following texts:**
    1. **Psalms 56:11 – In God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? Note that this is a reference to God as Father and ultimate ruler over all.**
    2. **Psalms 118:6 – The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? Note that this is a reference to God as Son... Immanuel, meaning God with us (CR Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14).**
    3. **Hebrews 13:6 – So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper [advocate]; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” This is a reference to the Spirit as “Paraclete” meaning “advocate, counselor, comforter, helper” (CR 1 John 2:1; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).**
  - v. **The result of this gift of Grace is twofold:**
    1. **There are implications for Christian behavior... we are expected to be obedient to Jesus. Because of our sprinkling with His Blood, we are now clean and presented to God by the Son.**
    2. **As a result, Grace and Peace are the gifts the Spirit brings to God’s people now. Our confidence is not in our strength, but in God’s indwelling Presence... now and forever.**
- c. **1:3-9 – “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”**

- i. Because of this, we have a 1) 'new Birth', 2) a 'living Hope', and 3) an 'inheritance awaiting us in heaven'. Even though persecution results, because the world hated Jesus we should expect the same treatment; and because Jesus is resurrected and promised, we would be with Him our hope is secure – John 12:26; 13:3. John 7:7; 15:18-19.
- ii. Rather than despair, we should rejoice in the great salvation we've been given by Grace – 1:3-4.
- iii. Realize that our inheritance is not merely here and now; it is in eternity with God – 1:5.
- iv. Present afflictions are positive reminders of our progress in faith and our ultimate glory with God is our reward for faithfulness – 1:6-9.
- d. 1:10-12 – both the prophets of old and the angels themselves stand in amazement of what God is doing in His people.
  - i. Romans 8:18-39 – “The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.” This I find to be mind boggling... that all of creation waits in eager expectation for the sons and daughters of God to be revealed as He intended us to be.
  - ii. Romans 8:38-39 – “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” If we truly believed this, nothing would stop us from investing our lives as Living Sacrifices to advance the Kingdom of God.
- e. 1:13-5:9 – the body of this letter is comprised of a series of exhortations:
  - i. The 1<sup>st</sup> appeal is to live lives of Holiness as the proper response of the great gift of salvation we've been given – 1:13-21.
  - ii. The 2<sup>nd</sup> appeal is to love the faith community in light of the great gift we've received individually and collectively – 1:22-25.
  - iii. The 3<sup>rd</sup> appeal is to intentionally grow as disciples as we take on the spiritual nourishment of the Word of God – 2:1-3.
  - iv. The 4<sup>th</sup> appeal is to take our rightful place as saints and priests to God, and ambassadors of God to the world – 2:4-10.
  - v. The 5<sup>th</sup> appeal is to maintain the integrity of our testimony to the world by intentionally separating ourselves from sin – 2:11-12.
  - vi. The 6<sup>th</sup> appeal is to respect our civil authorities out of our respect for God's authority – 2:13-17. The Greek word used for submit translates as “to put [oneself] in subjection, to become subject to, to subordinate oneself; to submit, to be subject to.” Both terms “election” and “subjection” tend to offend our modern Western cultural sensibilities, but the terms should be seen in the context of a relationship with a benevolent and loving King [ruler]. In this context “election” is to be chosen for a purpose where to be elected is an honor in being assigned a position by the King. Similarly, “subjection” is not a passive action but an active effort as the responsible act of a grateful individual who submits

- willingly to his Lord's will and purpose. This is one of many ways where evolving language and literary usages over time can cloud or even obscure the meaning of a passage.
- vii. The 7<sup>th</sup> appeal is to submit to authority as a living example of Jesus' suffering – 2:18-25.
  - viii. The 8<sup>th</sup> appeal is for submission within the marriage and family as a living affirmation of respectful holy living – 3:1-7.
  - ix. The 9<sup>th</sup> appeal is that good deeds are always an appropriate example of Christian behavior – 3:8-12.
  - x. The 10<sup>th</sup> appeal is for each disciple to be prepared for adversity by having a clear Gospel response prepared in their mind to sustain them, and by avoiding behavior that might provide a legitimate accusation – 3:13-17.
  - xi. The 11<sup>th</sup> appeal is based on Jesus' example of endurance... He was innocent and experienced the most extreme persecution only to be vindicated by His Resurrection. Our baptism is our pledge of being identified with Christ and our expectation of sharing in His triumph – 3:18-22.
  - xii. The 12<sup>th</sup> appeal is to decide in advance our willingness to suffer for innocence rather than compromise with sin and suffer judgment – 4:1-6.
  - xiii. The 13<sup>th</sup> appeal is for standing together against suffering with prayer and practical spiritual service – 4:7-11.
  - xiv. The 14<sup>th</sup> appeal is accepting suffering as part of the norm of being the faithful in a faithless world, and as a means of blessings and glory amid judgment against an unbelieving world – 4:12-19.
  - xv. The 15<sup>th</sup> appeal is for elders to lead by example, and laymen to humbly submit to authority – 5:1-5.
  - xvi. The 16<sup>th</sup> appeal is to focus attention on the spiritual forces, to trust in God and resist the devil – 5:6-9.
- f. 5:10-11 – Through all the struggles and temptations of life we have the promise that God will see us through – 5:10-11.
  - g. 5:12 – In closing we're reminded of our obligation to submit and comply with God's Desires.