

Lesson 1: The Living Hope

A Series Thru First Peter

Apostle Peter

Peter (Greek *Petros*) was the Greek name of the apostle. He was also called Simon (Hebrew) and Cephus (Aramaic). By the time of Jesus' ministry, Peter lived in Capernaum (Mark 1:29). He and his brother Andrew were disciples of John the Baptist (John 1:42) but upon John's identification of Jesus as the Christ, they followed Jesus. (John 1:41-42) Peter was married (Matt. 8:14) but we know little about his wife. Peter was a fisherman by trade. (Luke 5:4-11). His calling as an apostle is recorded in Matthew 4:18-20, and he is named first among the 12 apostles (Matt. 10:2; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13). He was the disciple we can relate to. He walked on water (Matt. 14:29) but denied Jesus three times during his trial (Matt. 26:69-75). Along with James and John, Peter was at the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8). He drew his sword to defend Jesus (John 18:10-11). He witnessed the empty tomb (Luke 24:12; John 20:2-10). He was restored by Jesus (John 21), preached at Pentecost (Acts 2), but we know little about him after Acts 15.

1. **The Audience (1:1)**: Peter addressed his epistle to the exiles in the "diaspora," a term of art referring to the Jewish people living outside of Israel.
2. **Purpose**: Peter wrote to Jewish Christians he anticipated were suffering persecution. The book is not about how to become a Christian, but about how Christians should live during trying times, with a focus on their inheritance.
3. **Chosen Through Sanctification By the Spirit (1:1-2)**: Depending on your translation, you probably have the word "chosen" in either verse 1 or 2. Despite how it is often translated in English, the word "chosen" is not a verb but an adjective (*eklektos*) and has the predominant meaning of something or someone being "choice" in the sense of being especially distinguished.
 - his audience was especially distinguished "according to" or in harmony with the foreknowledge of God
 - they were especially distinguished because the Holy Spirit set them apart, which is true of all Christians at the moment of faith (Romans 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2, 6:11)
 - they were set apart by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of obedience and "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" which probably indicates covenant faithfulness to the New Covenant (compare Exodus 24:7-8; Hebrews 9:18-23)
4. **The New Birth and Living Hope (1:3)**: The phrase "new birth" (or born again) only appears in the NT here and in 1:23. The new birth is for the purpose of a living hope — a hope that should change us (see Hebrews 11) and was made possible through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The content of this hope is our inheritance (v. 4) and final salvation (v. 5).
5. **Our Inheritance (1:4)**: In the OT, Israel's inheritance was the Promise Land. The concept of an inheritance is carried into the NT (Hebrews 1:5; Eph. 1:11; Gal. 4:7; Rom. 8:17; Matt. 6:19-21). But what is the inheritance? (See 1 Pet. 1:7)

