

### **Background and Introduction to 1 Peter (1 Peter 1:1)**

- Begin with the infamous date of July 19, 64 AD, Nero fiddled while Rome burned.
- 3 days Rome burned continually with Nero insuring that it burned to the ground.
- Nero, obsessed with building, so he burned Rome with a desire to build it anew.
- Romans knew it was Nero, they lost everything, household gods, houses, lives.
- They were infuriated and Nero knew this, so he blamed Christians for the fire.
- Romans: strongly anti-Semitic, so Christians were hated, for their Lord was Jewish.
- They were hated because they refused to worship Roman pagan deities.
- Hated because they refused to allow pagans to participate in Lord's Table service.
- Hated because some Roman women were converted; insubordination to husbands.
- Hated because of their expectation of the Lord's return & coming judgment of fire.
- Hated because of their love for one another, accused of sexual promiscuity.
- Roman children were converted & broke their relations with their family.
- Seen as a group that inspired insubordination & broke family relationships.
- They were the ideal group for Nero to blame, so persecution broke out & spread.

#### **I. Persecution Comes to the Diaspora**

- Persecution spread from Rome to Pontius, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bythinia.
- As it spread it effected those who Peter calls Aliens, strangers in these regions.
- Peter's epistle is forged in furnace of fierce persecution/ loss of life for Christians.
- Peter's purpose in writing: pastoral. Contrast to Paul: wrote more theologically.
- His pastoral council & ethical advice: experiential knowledge of God's character.
- Peter encourages believers in two ways: encourage & testify to the grace of God.
- It is this grace in which Peter encourages the believers to take their stand.
- Emphasis, then, is to teach believers to live victoriously in midst of persecution.

#### **II. Peter and Apostle among Apostles (1 Peter 1:1)**

- Peter is at the head of every list of the apostles (Matt 10; Mk 3; Luke 6; Acts 1).
- Apostles knew Christ, personally, saw Him after His resurrection, called by Him.
- Sent by Christ, their ministry was attested by signs & miracles 2 Cor 12:11, 12.
- Apostles: foundation on which Church is built (Eph 2:20) Direct revelation (3:5).
- "Holy Apostles" they were models of spiritual virtue (Eph 3:5 & Rev 18: 20).
- They were honored with a special place & their ministry is still with us (Rev 21:14).