

A Sermon Series on the First Epistle of Peter

“Making the Best of Your Worst Times”



“The Penitent St. Peter” by El Greco, 1541–1614

To understand this Bible book (written in Rome, likely around A.D. 64), think *suffering*. Think *pain*. Think of being *unfairly blamed*. You see, Nero was the wicked emperor in Rome. He wanted to burn down part of the city so he could build his own new palace buildings. So, once the fire had destroyed thousands of people’s homes, he had to find somebody to blame for the mess. Guess who he chose? “Those crazy Christians did it!” he said.

That meant years of torture for the Christians living in Rome. Everybody seemed to hate them. They were killed in terrible ways. How could they survive? Peter wrote to these suffering believers. He was teaching them how their faith in Christ could support them in the most “fiery trials” (1:7).

Question: Ever have times when you need that kind of encouragement?

Believer Building

- God the Father chose us for salvation (1 Peter 1:2).
- God calls us to holiness in every area of life (1 Peter 1:15).
- Christ our Savior is also our example to follow (1 Peter 2:21).
- Let us be ready to witness to our faith (1 Peter 3:15).
- We can give all our worries to the Lord (1 Peter 5:7).

Aha Moments

- The Word of God endures forever (1 Peter 1:25).
- Civil rulers deserve our respect (1 Peter 2:13-17).
- Christian spouses treat each other right (1 Peter 3:1-7).
- Temptation lurks—beware! (1 Peter 5:8).

— Gary Wilde, *The Young Believer's Bible*

Word from a scholar: “Numerous personal commands give this letter a directness and an informality which resemble a preaching style. Peter was speaking from his heart, not writing a formal essay. ... The chief value of his letter is that it shows Christians how to live out their redemption in a hostile world. Salvation may involve suffering, but it brings a hope also, as the grace of God is amplified in the individual life.”

—Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey*

Key Verse: “That the genuineness of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes—even though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:7).

The Sunday Lectionary Readings for a Sermon Series on 1 Peter

Easter 2—April 23 / 1 Peter 1:3-9

Easter 3—April 30 / 1 Peter 1:17-23

Easter 4—May 7 / 1 Peter 2:19-25*

Easter 5—May 14 / 1 Peter 2:2-10*

Easter 6—May 21 / 1 Peter 3:13-22

Easter 7—May 28 / 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

*Lectionary reverses order here

An awesome web link for studying 1 Peter:

http://www.preceptaustin.org/1_peter_commentaries