

2 - THE HOPE OF THE NEW BIRTH (1 PETER 1:1-12)

I. The Greeting (1 Peter 1:1-2)

A. The Writer (1 Peter 1:1a)

- The writer identifies himself as the apostle Peter.

Historical Note: Peter, the Apostle

Peter was the most prominent of the twelve apostles. He was an outstanding leader in the early church. His original name was Simon, a common Greek name and a popular Hebrew name. He was called Peter by Jesus (see Matthew 22:41-46). He was a native of Bethsaida (John 1:44), which was located in Galilee of the Gentiles. He was the son of John, also known as Jonah (see John 1:42; 21:15-17). A follower of Jesus during his earthly ministry, he denied Jesus three times on the night that Jesus was betrayed. Peter was restored by Jesus after his resurrection (John 21:1-23). He was prominent in the church at Jerusalem. Peter wrote two epistles which appear to have been written from Rome. He apparently came to Rome shortly after apostle Paul's release from his first imprisonment. Church history records that he suffered martyrdom under Emperor Nero.

B. The Recipients (1 Peter 1:1b)

1. Pilgrims

- Peter identifies these believers as those who are temporarily living in this world.

2. Dispersion

- Peter refers to these believers as scattered among the nations.

Historical Note: The Dispersion

The Dispersion refers to the scattering of Jewish Christians among the Gentile nations. This occurred during the persecution of Jerusalem church after the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 8:1). As the believers scattered from Jerusalem, they preached the gospel (Acts 11:19-21).

Also see: James 1:1

C. Their Description (1 Peter 1:2a)

1. Chosen by God

- They were chosen through God's grace and love as a part of His predetermined plan.

2. Sanctified by the Spirit

- They are being set apart by the Holy Spirit to become like Christ.

3. Obedient to Jesus

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- This results in obedience to Jesus Christ.

D. The Greeting (1 Peter 1:2b)

- Peter greets his readers with a greeting of grace and peace.

II. The New Birth's Hope (1 Peter 1:3-12)

A. The Offering of Thanksgiving (1 Peter 1:3-9)

1. New Birth (1 Peter 1:3)

- Paul thanks God for the blessing of the new birth which results in hope.

2. An Inheritance (1 Peter 1:4)

- The new birth also results in an inheritance that is reserved in heaven.

3. An Assurance (1 Peter 1:5)

- God keeps believers through faith until our salvation is fully revealed.

4. Joy Experienced (1 Peter 1:6)

- The hope of salvation revealed results in joy in spite of current hardships.

5. The Testing of Faith (1 Peter 1:7)

- Trials purify and prove the genuineness of our faith.

6. The Source of Joy (1 Peter 1:8)

- Our joy is found through faith in Jesus Christ, who we have not yet seen.

7. The Result of Faith (1 Peter 1:9)

- The culmination of our faith is salvation, present and future.

B. The Revelation of Salvation (1 Peter 1:10-12)

1. The Longing of the Prophets (1 Peter 1:10)

- Salvation was the subject and longing of the Old Testament prophets

2. Their Search for Understanding (1 Peter 1:11)

- The prophets sought to understand the prophecies of a suffering Messiah.

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3. The Nature of Their Writings (1 Peter 1:12)

- They were writing not just to themselves.
- They were writing to those who would respond to the gospel.