

# 1 Peter 1

These are the leaders notes from the Kielder Bible Study Group for the meeting that was held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Some background to 1 Peter

- The author is Peter – the Apostle
  - but letter actually penned by Silas (1 Peter Ch 5 v12) his secretary
- It was written in Greek
  - There are comments that Peter was a pseudonym as the Greek it has been written in was too good for a fisherman, but if Silvanus was the secretary and knew Greek then this is not a problem.
  - Also Alexander the great Conquered Palestine in 332 BC and imposed the Greek language on the inhabitants so there is no reason why Peter should not have known basic Greek
- Where was it written -
  - 1 Peter Ch 5 v 13 mentions Babylon
  - He probably does not mean Babylon in Mesopotamia, as it was a small obscure place and not mentioned in other literature but
  - Else where in the New Testament Babylon is taken to mean Rome
  - Tertullian writes in Ad 203 about Peter being in Rome
    - **Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus**, anglicised as **Tertullian** (c. 160 – c. 220 AD), was a prolific early Christian author from Carthage in the Roman province of Africa. He is the first Christian author to produce an extensive corpus of Latin Christian literature. Tertullian has been called "the father of Latin Christianity" and "the founder of Western theology."
- Date when written
  - It is assumed that Peter died under Nero's rule and therefore must have been written before AD 68 when he ceased being Roman Emperor
  - Paul was in Rome AD 60 – AD 62 and does not mention Peter in his letters so it must have been after that.
  - Late AD 62 seems to be the favourite date for 1 Peter and AD 63 for 2 Peter
- Earliest citations
  - Polycarp (died AD 155) cited it in his epistle to the Philipians
  - Eusebius a Roman Historian (c. AD 263 – 339) quotes Papias (died AD 130) quoting Peter
- Readers and Destination
  - The readers were the Jewish and Gentile Greek speaking believers
  - The opening verse states clearly where they were. Probably all on a travel route around the Black Sea.

- Purpose
  - To encourage the readers to grow in faith trust and obedience of God. Peter also recognises that life is not easy as a Christian

In these letters hopefully we can see that Peter has become a boldly confident and humbly self-effacing servant of Jesus. Also that he is a witness to what he himself describes as “a brand-new life, with everything to live for”.

In our studies on the Old Testament we often read several paragraphs at a time, to get the context and meaning of the passage. In this letter we will find that every other word is a nugget of value

So now looking at Chapter 1

### 1 Peter 1 1-2 – Salutation

Q How does Peter describe his readers?

A Exiles in the world scattered? (What does this mean - Living in an alien isolated environment)

Q What words of encouragement does Peter use? -

A Elect & Chosen (Read Ephesians 1 v3 – 8)

Q What is the Sanctifying work of the spirit 2 Cor 3:18 –

A God is working in us to change us

Q Can we put into our own words “Grace and Peace be yours in abundance”

A Gods love in action through Jesus (Grace is a gift from God)

### 1 Peter 1 v3 -9 & Read John 1 v12-13

This section divides into 3 smaller parts

- Heavenly reward 3-5 - In v3 Peter talks about Living Hope – This is one of the key themes of the letter.

Q Why is Peter so sure of the Living Hope?

A Seeing Jesus alive after the resurrection

Q In v4 Peter talks about Inheritance what does he mean?

A God gave the land to Israel in the old testament He gives us an inheritance in Heaven, which does not fade or spoil.

- Joy in-spite of suffering 6-7

Q What do we think Peter is talking about here?

A Peter was probably thinking about Christians suffering that he has known about. Also thinking about Jesus suffering on the cross – Peter is returning to the theme of hope which he has just introduced.

- Joy of Knowing Jesus 8-9

Q What is the joy that Peter is talking about? - Q Is this joy of knowing Jesus real for us?

1 Peter 1 10 -12 - Prophets and Angels amazed

Q Can we remember roughly how many Prophecies Jesus fulfilled  
A over 300

Jesus' coming was a planned event in the world time frame Ephesians 1 V4 which we have already read. 2 Timothy 1 v9 even more amazing

The Holy Spirit was inspiring the words of the Prophets and teachers even though they did not know the implications of their words as they could not see how history would unfold.

1 Peter 1 13 -16 – Desire the beauty of God to be Holy

Peter calls us to do three things

1. look to the future - consider what we will receive as Jesus is revealed in us and in the age to come. (Hope of meeting Jesus v13)
2. forsake the past : don't let your old wrong desires prevail.
3. how to live in the present: be self-controlled, be holy (different, separated to God), consider yourselves strangers in this world. (Obedience to the written law v15)

1 Peter 1 17- 21 - Fear the displeasure of God who is Holy

This little part is quite a challenge to understand looking at each verse in turn

- v17 *reverent fear means respect not terror* Q Where is Peter saying we should consider as home? A Heaven
- v18 Q what is this saying? Remember in the past we had an empty way of life
- v19 Jesus was the ultimate perfect sacrifice for our sins
- v20 God has long term plans for us
- v21 Q what must we remember? A God raised Jesus from the dead and glorified him in heaven.

1 Peter 1 21-25 Love one another vs 24 – 25 comes from Isaiah 40:6-8

Peter says five things have happened to us -

1. "*you have purified yourselves*". How? When we came to Christ. We have been "purified" when we were forgiven and cleansed by the blood of Jesus (see 1 Jn 1:9).
2. "*by obeying the truth*". The truth here was God's word, the Gospel, and the prompting of the Spirit of Jesus as he led us into salvation. As we obeyed what he put before us, so we received what God gave, His salvation.
3. "*You have a sincere love*". We *do* love one another because the Spirit of Christ now dwells within us (e.g. 1 Cor 6:19 ). God is love (1 Jn 4:8), so His love is in us for one another.
4. "*love one another deeply*". God's love *is* in us but we have to express it and let it flourish from deep within us, not a mere surface, token love.
5. "*you have been born again*". Peter echoes what John told us in his Gospel (Jn 1:13 , 3:3). Being a Christian means God has enabled you to start all over again with a new life-power source within.

Q He also says we are "*not of perishable seed*". What does he mean by this?

A What God has put in us will not shrivel and wither away, it is His very own word which will go on and on, the truth, and that endures.

Peters letter is aiming to offer hope to Christians, by reminding them of their salvation. He also reminds them that who we are includes what we do and how we react with one another. He gives clear instructions as to the sort of people we should be.