

Introduction to 1-2 Peter

1. Narrative Background to the life of Peter

- a. Calling: (Matt 4:18-22, Luke 5:1-11)
- b. Confession: (Matt 16:13-20)
- c. Denial: (John 13:31-38, 18:15-27)
- d. Restoration: (John 21:12-19)
- e. In Palestine (Acts 2-15)
- f. Jerusalem council (Acts 15, A.D. 49)
- g. Antioch with Paul (Gal 2:9-11)
- h. In Asia Minor (1 Pet 1:1-2)
- i. In Corinth (1 Cor 1:12)
- j. Imprisoned in Rome (1 Pet 5:12-13, A.D. 66)
- k. Writes Epistles 1-2 Peter
- l. Executed by Nero (2 Pet 1:12-15, A.D. 67)

2. 1 Peter: key themes and texts

- a. Outline: *Salvation*: 1 Pet 1-2:11 and *Suffering*: 1 Pet 2:11-4:12, trans. *beloved*
- b. Suffering with the right perspective (1 Pet 1:1-7, 2:1-25, 5:12)
- c. Emphasis on Lordship and suffering of Christ (1 Pet 1:4-11, 3:18-22)
- d. Discipleship and sanctification (1 Pet 1, 1 Pet 2:1-11, 5:1-9)

3. 2 Peter: key themes and texts

- a. Peter's final letter (1:3-11, 2:1-3, 3:1-4) and nearing departure (1:13-5)
- b. Christian doctrine and virtue (2 Pet 1:3-11) and fear of apostasy (2 Pet 2)
- c. Preparation for Second Coming and judgment (2 Pet 3), trans. *beloved*

Tacitus (55 -117 A.D.): Nero's persecution of the Christians: [It was rumored in Rome that Nero ordered a destructive fire...] Therefore, in order to abolish that rumor, Nero falsely accused and executed with the most exquisite punishments those people called Christians, who were infamous for their abominations. The originator of the name, Christ, was executed as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate during the reign of Tiberius; and though repressed, this destructive superstition erupted again, not only through Judea, which was the origin of this evil, but also through the city of Rome, to which all that is horrible and shameful floods together and is celebrated. Therefore, first those were seized who admitted their faith, and then, using the information they provided, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much for the crime of burning the city, but for hatred of the human race. And perishing they were additionally made into sports: they were killed by dogs by having the hides of beasts attached to them, or they were nailed to crosses or set aflame, and, when the daylight passed away, they were used as nighttime lamps. Nero gave his own gardens for this spectacle and performed a Circus game, in the habit of a charioteer mixing with the plebs or driving about the race-course. Even though they were clearly guilty and merited being made the most recent example of the consequences of crime, people began to pity these sufferers, because they were consumed not for the public good but on account of the fierceness of one man.”

Difficult passages in 1-2 Peter

1. The nature of salvation: 1 Peter 1:8-12

- a. Peter stresses the future sense of salvation (1 Pet 1:5, 2:2)
- b. Salvation includes all of God's work in the life of the believer
- c. Salvation as past (Rom 8:24, Eph 2:5-8) and present (1 Cor 1:18, 2 Cor 2:15)

BF&M 2000: Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal

redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.

2. Household codes: 1 Pet 3:1-7

- a. Roles of husband and wife (Eph 5:21-6:9, Col 3:18-4:1, 1Tim 6:1-2)
- b. Wife as the weaker vessel stresses physicality

BF&M 2000: God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society... Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime... The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

3. Christ preached to the spirits in prison: 1 Peter 3:18-21

- a. Some claim Jesus went to Sheol to proclaim gospel to the dead
- b. Two possible options:
 - i. spirits = sons of God or fallen angels (Gen 6:1-4) and Christ proclaimed victory over all things (Eph 6:11-12, Col 2:15)
 - ii. spirits = those who rejected Noah's preaching (through Christ) and died and now await resurrection and judgment (Gen 6:3-11)

4. Baptism saves us: 1 Peter 3:21

- a. Some claim this passage teaches baptismal regeneration
- b. Water baptism = symbol of public profession of faith

BF&M 2000: Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus....

5. Judgment of False Teachers: 2 Pet. 2:4

- a. Three examples of false teachers: angels, Noah's day, and Sodom
- b. Two possible options
 - i. angels who sinned = the sons of God in Gen 6:1-4
 - ii. angels who sinned = fell with the Devil and await judgment

6. The Destruction of the earth: 2 Pet. 3:10

- a. The Lord will return again in glory to judge the living and dead
- b. The earth is not destroyed but purified and renewed (Rev 21:1-3)

BF&M 2000: God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness....