

I. I Peter in Biblical Perspective
The Elect in the Exile
“A Man Called Peter”
I Peter 1:1–2
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This is our first study in our series of I Peter and I believe the theme verse of this epistle is I Peter 3:14–16 which says [14] *But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, [15] but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, [16] having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.* You will see why I think this is the theme verse as we make our way through this epistle.

Now let's look at the text we will be looking at for the first two studies of this epistle which is I Peter 1:1–2 which says [1] *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, [2] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His word be preached for you.

Our theme for the year is revival and revival is an extraordinary work of God's grace through ordinary people in ordinary places by ordinary means with extraordinary consequences for God's glory. The extraordinary purposes are God-centered worship and the ingathering of an effective evangelistic movement throughout a region through that revived church as God's people individually and as a church are overflowing with the presence of God yet can't get enough of the presence of God.

Now having gone through thematic expository studies in text after text around revival we now move to a consecutive expository study in I Peter for the remaining time of this year. I love this type of preaching and I love this epistle because I think it is so crucial in light of what we have studied to move throughout our theme of revival. Why? How does a revived Christian and a revived church live in an increasingly pagan, hostile and secularized culture? That is exactly what Peter is equipping the Christians he calls the elect exiles of the dispersion in his epistle. This is a dispersion of believers that are found in every nation that is increasingly hostile to the Gospel witness to the point that it will require suffering. We will see this as we go through this epistle for suffering comes up numerous times in it.

How do you live for Christ winsomely, effectively, faithfully and fruitfully? Revived Christians are not perfect Christians for they are sinners saved by grace. They love Jesus and want to grow in the Lord and serve Him. They have put their trust in Christ alone for their salvation. Christ has given them a new record because He nailed their old one to the cross to pay for it. He gave them a new heart because He took the old heart out and they were born again. He is giving them a new life whereby sin is being killed and obedience is now being put in its place.

They have a mission to take the Gospel to all the nations beginning with their own nation as that revived Christina and revived church engages in that with their joy and passion with the presence and power of Christ alone, how is it they are supposed to live when the culture says

‘you’re an outsider’? Do they live as outsiders? Here is what Peter is going to teach us. I love Peter’s phrase ‘elect exiles.’ They are the elect by the sovereign grace of God and they are the exiles for God in every nation with our citizenship in the Kingdom of God. How do we bring it to the nations where we live, even when it’s pagan, secular and increasingly hostile? Peter is clear and we’ll have five chapters to see it.

Here are a couple of reasons why I’m doing this, starting with a man called Peter. The opening verses of I Peter 1 fall into three categories. There is the author of the epistle which is in I Peter 1:1 and secondly is the audience which is the elect exiles – that is what believers are. God has saved us, set us apart, by His Spirit is living in us and He has told us to be in the world but not of the world. The world considers believers as aliens and sojourners and that is what God has called us to be so we are called outsiders but we live inside the culture not outside the culture. You don’t claim to be an insider or they will look at you like you are crazy. We don’t live inside the culture by letting the culture inside of you. So how do we do this? That is what Peter lays out for us in wonderfully, precise, Christ-centered ways and that the journey we will go through as we go through this epistle. The third category is the address of this epistle and that is that grace and peace are multiplied. I’ll be explaining this as we study this epistle because the rest of the epistle is an explanation of what multiplied grace and peace looks like.

For now I just want to look at the opening statement – Peter an Apostle of Jesus Christ. How did a brash, tempestuous, man named Simon, called to be a Disciple of Christ, become Peter, an Apostle sent by Christ, who is bold but humble and why is that important to look at? There are two reasons. One is Peter writes three books of the Bible and when God gives His Word He uses human authors. Those human authors don’t quit being human and their humanity shows up in their writing even as God’s inspiration, the Holy Spirit preserves it from error. You this in the difference between Peter’s use of Greek and the Apostle Paul’s use of Greek with one being educated around Galilee (Peter) and one educated in the school of Gamaliel (Paul).

I like the way one of my mentors Pastor Al Martin put it. If there is a musical composition in front of you and each one in the orchestra get the same notes, it will sound different when the same note is played by the different instruments. For instance if a trumpet and a flute play the same note, it will sound different coming from different instruments. So a John, a Peter, a James, a Jude, a Paul, as they are writing you will hear something from what they are and what they’ve been as God uses who they are to communicate what He wants to give us inherently and infallibly. So we have I and II Peter and Peter oversees and gives us the Gospel through his secretary John Mark and we have that as the Gospel of Mark. We see how certain things are emphasized when we see who Peter is. We begin to understand why Peter gives us I and II Peter when we understand his background.

A second reason why I want to take time to understand who Peter is, is how does God take someone and disciple them in order to use them with their gifts and abilities? In other words, when we learn what God did with Peter we can take a look at what God is doing with us. The template of how God and His grace is working on Peter becomes an instrument whereby we can understand how God is working on us. So let’s get started with this man called Simon, who is called by the Lord as a Disciple.

I want to give you this profile of Peter so that we can see why this epistle is written the way it is. There is no other person in the Bible that we have more information on than Peter. The only one close, but not really close is David. First I want to give you an overview of what is happening in Peter’s life before Pentecost as the Disciple who starts off with a given name as Simon. He is from a fishing village on the northern part of the Sea of Galilee called Bethsaida

and it was not far from Capernaum but he is not living there now. He had a brother named Andrew and his father's name was Jonah. That is why Peter is called Simon Bar Jonah, Simon son of Jonah. He is married and now lives in Capernaum. We also know that his mother in law lives in the house he lives in. Here is a man who is growing in grace because he will call Jesus to heal his mother in law who gets sick with a fever. She gets healed.

We know from history that not long after the ascension of Jesus there was a church built right on top of this house that Peter lived in located in Capernaum. So we know that his wife and mother in law lived in the house with Peter but we don't know his wife's name. There is a good possibility that his wife traveled with him in the ministry, if not before the ascension of Jesus then after the ascension of Jesus. We see this in I Corinthians 9:1-5 which says *[1] Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? [2] If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you, for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. [3] This is my defense to those who would examine me. [4] Do we not have the right to eat and drink? [5] Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?* So according to this text it seems that the brothers of the Lord and Cephas were not only married but their wives were perhaps spending time in ministry with them.

We know Peter's vocation is a fisherman and he does this with his brother Andrew. The Bible tells us he is in a partnership with James and John who are cousins of Jesus who also become Disciples and then Apostles of Christ. So we know that James, John, Andrew and Peter work together as fishermen. We also see from the Gospel of John that these four men were also to some degree followers of John the Baptist because they are with John the Baptist at Bethany over the Jordan and it's the first time that Jesus meets them.

We know that Peter grew up in Galilee of the Gentiles. That's important because the Greeks, Assyrians and Romans had all put their fingerprints on that area and the result is that the area was dominated by three languages. Peter was conversant in three languages. He was conversant in what we call Biblical Hebrew, its subset Aramaic and in Greek. When Rabbis say Peter is uneducated they mean that he did not go to one of their schools but Peter is a smart man. The fact that he is conversant in three languages shows up in his writings.

Peter also knows his Bible. We are told in Scriptures that his family was strict observers of the Old Testament and all its ceremonial laws. When Jesus talks about letting down the sheets and no longer calling clean what He calls clean Peter responds by saying 'I have not partaken of any of these things in my entire life' (Acts 10:9-14). In other words, Peter grew up in a kosher home. So he wouldn't have had bacon. No wonder when Peter writes I and II Peter that he knows all the Old Testament stories that he uses for principles and illustrations and they just flow right out of his pen. This is who Jesus calls Simon.

Then come the encounters of Peter with Jesus as Jesus begins to shape this brash, tempestuous fisherman. So how does Jesus begin to shape Peter? The first time Jesus meets Peter is by Bethany by the Jordan. Jesus calls Peter through his brother Andrew. Andrew meets Jesus first and then goes to get his brother Peter to come meet Jesus. In the Gospel of John during this account we see that Jesus takes on six followers with four of them being two sets of brothers but then there comes a period of time where Jesus doesn't have contact with Peter. Then the next time Jesus has contact with Peter is on the sea shore of Galilee at Capernaum where the crowds are pressing in on Him and Jesus needs a pulpit to teach from so His pulpit becomes Peter's boat. They pull off a few yards from the shoreline in order for Jesus to teach the people. Peter gets to listen in on that sermon.

It's possible that the very next day Peter takes his boat out with Andrew, James and John to fish but the Scriptures tell us that it wasn't a very good night of fishing. Luke 5:4–11 says [4] *And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."* [5] *And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."* [6] *And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.* [7] *They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.* [8] *But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."* [9] *For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,* [10] *and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."* [11] *And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.* Here Peter is starting to be broken for God to make him from brashness to boldness, from tempestuousness to humility. Peter was right in that he had no right to be near Jesus as a sinner but Jesus has come near to him in grace and mercy. Jesus is breaking him and then He is making him.

Jesus doesn't stop there with Peter. There are so many but I'll just give you a few more encounters. Not long after that Jesus gives Peter authority to heal the sick. No sickness is beyond him, external and internal and Jesus gives him the power to raise the dead in which Peter will use this Apostolic gift of healing and this Apostolic gift of calling. Jesus gives Peter a new name when He tells him he will no longer be called Simon but Peter which translated means Cephas. Then there is the encounter with Jesus as Jesus comes to them in the boat walking on the water. Here we see Peter's brashness also.

Matthew 14:28–33 says [28] *And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."* [29] *He said, "Come."* *So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus.* [30] *But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me."* [31] *Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"* [32] *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.* [33] *And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."* Jesus is breaking Peter to make him when He asks him why he doubted.

They go from town to town with Jesus in His ministry and then they are up around Caesarea Philippi and Jesus asks them what people are saying about Him. Matthew 16:14–17 says [14] *And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."* [15] *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"* [16] *Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* [17] *And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."* Jesus breaks Peter again by telling him that he didn't come up with that response for it was His Father who gave it to him. Then what happens?

Matthew 16:21–23 says [21] *From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.* [22] *And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you."* [23] *But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."* Peter is a saved man that is saying 'no' to the cross. Jesus rebukes Peter and continues to break him even as He is making him.

A few days later they are at the Mount of transfiguration and again we see the brashness of Peter. Matthew 17:3–6 says [3] *And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.* [4] *And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.”* [5] *He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”* [6] *When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified.* Jesus breaks him as the Father speaks and humbles him.

After this head toward Jerusalem and come across a little tax problem. Matthew 17:24–27 says [24] *When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the tax?”* [25] *He said, “Yes.”* *And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?”* [26] *And when he said, “From others,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free.* [27] *However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself.”* Jesus provides the tax just as He promised and He is breaking and making Peter in the process.

They arrive in Jerusalem and Jesus comes to do the work of a servant to wash the feet of the Disciples. John 13:6–10 says [6] *He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?”* [7] *Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.”* [8] *Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.”* *Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”* [9] *Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”* [10] *Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.”* Here again we see the brashness of Peter as Jesus is breaking him and making him.

Then in that same night we see Jesus address his fears. Matthew 26:30–32 says [30] *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.* [31] *Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’* [32] *But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”*³³ *Peter answered him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.”* We see Jesus’ response in more detail to Peter in Luke 22:31–34 which says [31] *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat,* [32] *but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”* [33] *Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.”* [34] *Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”*

After this He takes Peter, James and John to the Garden of Gethsemane and asks them to pray with Him. He goes on a little further to pray as He anticipates the very struggle before Him and He is sweating blood for He will take the cup of wrath to drink to the bottom the hell that is due for the sins of all of His people for all of eternity. He comes back several times and each time He sees that His Disciples have fallen asleep and He breaks them and makes them. Matthew 26:40–41 says [40] *And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour? [41] Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

Then when the traitor and the temple guards come it is Peter who reaches for the sword and cuts off the ear of Malchus, a soldier. Jesus puts his ear back on and heals him. Matthew 26:52 says [52] *Then Jesus said to him (Peter), "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword."* There is another sword Peter will wield and that's the sword of truth. Then in the courtyard of Caiaphas where Jesus is tried Peter is asked three times if he is a follower of Jesus. After Peter denied Him three times and upon hearing the cock crow we read in Luke 22:61–62, [61] *And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."* [62] *And he went out and wept bitterly.*

There is no Peter at the crucifixion for he has fled. Our Savior goes to the cross and dies for our sins. He is buried and rises on the third day as He said. As Mary and the other women come to the tomb He tells them to go tell His brothers He has risen. Mark 16:7 says [7] *But go, tell His disciples **and Peter** that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.* I love how our Lord singles out Peter here for He is making him. Then we don't hear this in the Gospels but Paul tells us in I Corinthians 15:4–5, [4] *that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, [5] and that **he appeared to Cephas**, then to the twelve.* Jesus appeared personally to Peter and He is making him.

Before Jesus ascends He tells Peter to meet Him at the Sea of Galilee. As they are waiting for Him they go out to fish. John 21:4–11 says [4] *Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. [5] Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." [6] He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. [7] That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. [8] The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.*

[9] *When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. [10] Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." [11] So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.*

John 21:15–17 says [15] *When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." [16] He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." [17] He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."*

The last time Peter stood by a charcoal fire Peter denied Him three times in a courtyard and now he is by another charcoal fire with that same Savior, not looking at Him from a distance but right next to Him, risen. Jesus tells him 'you're ready, go feed My sheep.' After Pentecost so much happened with Peter that the Lord did through him. He leads the Apostles to replace Judas with Matthias. He preaches sermons and 3,000 come to Christ, then 5,000 come to Christ and everyday people are coming to Christ. He hands over the church in Jerusalem to James the brother of Jesus. There are multiple healing and people are raised from the dead. He goes to

Samaria, Judea and Joppa to spread the Gospel through the power of the Spirit. He goes to Simon the tanner and before he would have never gone to someone like that because a tanner was considered unclean. He leads Cornelius and his household to the Lord. He sees the power of the Spirit through the Gospel reaching the Gentiles and tells God's people that they cannot deny that all are one in Christ, including Gentiles.

He makes trips to areas that today is known as Turkey and writes them two letters, I and II Peter. He is arrested numerous times and brought to trial. He is freed sometimes supernaturally and then he is told not to preach in the name of Jesus like in Acts 5:27–29 where it says [27] *And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, [28] saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us."* [29] *But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."* He preaches and thousands come to Christ. He takes John Mark as his secretary, develops him and writes two epistles in the Bible and the Gospel of Mark.

So let me give you the takeaway as I review the question we started with. How does a brash Disciple called by Christ named Simon become an Apostle sent by Christ named Peter? It is profound by simple. God by His sovereign grace, will break us to make us to use us. This is the template of Peter for God will break us to make us and the objective is not brokenness. Brokenness is necessary but the objective is wholeness and usefulness. You are no accident. Your parents, your hometown, your place of living, the education you have, for if God's hand is on you He is using all of it. He is even restoring the years the locust have eaten up. A sovereign God is at work in your life.

It was no accident Peter was raised in Galilee having learned three languages for now he has a language to speak when he went to Cappadocia and Bithynia for they don't know Hebrew or Aramaic. They knew Greek and Peter knew that language because of where God raised him. His vocation was used of God for Jesus said 'I'm going to make you a fisher of men.' Peter toils all night and gets nothing and then God fills his nets – welcome to the ministry! You toil and it seems like nothing is happening but stay the course and the Lord says 'cast the nets here' and then the Lord fills them for His glory. He uses those experiences to go the distance where He humbles him and raises him up and says 'Don't be afraid. I am with you. I have come to be with you.'

I don't know the details of Peter's death but I know God broke him to make him and He used him. All the extra Biblical historians agree that Peter died under the hand of Nero just like Paul and probably a few months after Paul in Rome. The traditions tell us that he asked to be crucified upside down. I don't know all about that but I want to tell you about this man called Peter. Simon called to be a Disciple, Peter, sent to be an Apostle, when he took that last breath he didn't hear a cock crow anymore for he heard the trumpet of God and the triumph of his Savior. When He saw his Savior he would hear not perfectly, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' I don't know for sure but I wouldn't be surprised if Peter whose heart stayed in his mouth would say in response 'Well done, good and faithful Savior for I am what I am by the grace of God.' Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for this time we have had in Your Word. Take a moment and let the Spirit of God speak to your heart. As we study I Peter you will see why he says what he says and how he says it because of who he is, from the day God gave him birth to the day God called him to the

day God saved him to the day God sent him and what God did in him but you will also see what God will do for you. He will break us. Jesus will save you from your sins but He doesn't negotiate. You have to come in this way; 'Lord, I'm helpless and hopeless but I have heard the Good News. You're the One who showed me that I'm helpless and hopeless to make me a man or woman of God by the grace of God to the glory of God so Jesus I come.' For those of you who know Him, He is making, breaking, and making and it's all on purpose to make you whole and use you. O God of glory and grace we praise You that we are what we are because of the relentless love of Jesus and we pray in His Name, Amen.

Power Point

FIRST PETER IN BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

THE ELECT AND THE EXILE

The Prologue (1:1–2)

- I. The Gospel Doxology (1:3–12)
- II. The Gospel Call (1:13–21)
- III. The Gospel Community (1:22–2:3)
- IV. The People of God as the Temple of God (2:4–8)
- V. The People of God as the Elect of God (2:9–10)
- VI. The People of God as the Pilgrims of God (2:11–12)
- VII. The People of God and the Life for God (2:13–4:13)
- VIII. The People of God as the Flock of God (5:1–11)

The Epilogue (5:12–14)

THEME VERSES

...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. (I Peter 3:14-15)