

The Exiled Life: 1 Peter 1:1-2

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- [0 : 0 0] You're welcome to have a seat. Today is a first day of a new sermon series of the exiled life.! We're going to be looking at the book of 1 Peter.
- I encourage you, if you have a copy of God's Word, to open God's Word to 1 Peter. You'll find that book after the book of Hebrews, James, and then you'll find the 1 and 2 Peter.
- I think the crux of the entirety of the book of 1 Peter is asking this question, can you live triumphantly in the midst of hostility?
- Is it possible? And Peter is going to encourage the believers in Christ that it is possible to live triumphantly in the midst of hostility.
- And we were going to ask that question and answer this question and see how Peter does that with us this morning. We're going to read just two verses today.
- [1 : 0 6] And so, if you want to join me, 1 Peter chapter 1 and read with me verses 1 and 2. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 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.
- That is Paul's opening remarks and greeting to those who he is addressing. I think it's important for us to kind of get a few, a little bit of a context of the book of 1 Peter and just some things that we find in this letter here.
- I first want to, if there's a map on the screen, I want us to kind of zero in of where are these people located that he's writing to? Where is Cappadocia and Pontus and Galatia?
- And you can see them, it's modern-day Turkey. And so Peter is writing, he is likely writing from Rome. He will later, just a few years from this time when he wrote this letter, he will be martyred, he will be killed for his faith under likely Nero as the emperor.
- Nero being the emperor, he will kill Peter, have him be killed. And Peter is writing from Rome and he's writing to these churches in modern-day Turkey.
- [2 : 4 1] And let's understand how they got there. It says they are the exiles of the dispersion.
- Well, why are they exiles and how did they get there? What's the dispersion all about? Well, there is a scattering of the believers that happened. Jesus leaves us with this great commission, go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.
- And the church had a hard time leaving Jerusalem. And so he allowed affliction and adversity and persecution to happen.
- And that scattered, that was one of the ingredients that helped scatter the church so that they would be on mission. I want you to make disciples of all the nations and you're not leaving. Let me afflict you.
- And that may provide some motivation. So you may remember some of the afflictions that the early church faced. One of the first up is Stephen's martyrdom. At the feet of Saul, they leave their cloaks and they stone Stephen.

[3 : 43] All of a sudden, Jerusalem is not a safe place anymore. You have Saul, who's this persecutor of the church. He's based in Jerusalem and he's on his way to Damascus and he meets the Lord. But had he reached Damascus without meeting the Lord, more persecution was about to ensue.

And so it's hot around Jerusalem. Persecution is hot. And so the church then scatters. And these are the dispersion. And so the church is now, there's believers in Christ up in modern-day Turkey.

And Paul is writing to them. And the people are undergoing persecution there. And he wants to encourage them and say, and communicate with them, you can live triumphantly in the midst of this adversity and hostility.

You can do that. If I were to pick one theme verse, I would pick 1 Peter 5.12. What's the theme verse of 1 Peter?

Silvanus is the man who is the courier, if you will. He's the courier of this letter. And so he is going from Rome to modern-day Turkey. That's Silvanus there.

[4 : 48] He says, A faithful brother, Peter is writing of this man, as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that, and here's the main point of 1 Peter.

What is Peter's hope? He is hoping that he has laid out the true grace of God in which they should stand firm. So, declaring that this is the true grace of God.

Stand firm in it. And so this is what I would call the main theme verse of the whole entire book of 1 Peter, that they are to stand firm in the grace of God.

You can live triumphantly in the midst of hostility without abandoning hope, without becoming bitter, without losing one's faith in Christ, without forgetting the second coming. All of these are going to be themes in the book of 1 Peter.

And he's writing to these believers to say, Yes, it is possible to live, oh, quite triumphantly in the midst of this hostility. Let's then turn our attention to who the author is of this letter.

[5 : 52] Peter. He was born with a given name, Simon, so he's often referred to as Simon Peter. Jesus gave him the name Peter in Aramaic, that means rock, petros.

And so he gives him this name Peter. He is kind of one of the 12 disciples. He's rather the outspoken spokesperson for the disciples.

Sometimes he's a little brash, and sometimes he ought to have remained silent. But he also, though, was courageous, and he was bold.

And he is the one who said of Christ, Jesus is the Christ. He is the Son of the living God. Peter, to share that he may have been a little impetuous sometimes, he writes that, or it's accorded to him, that he boasted that he would never forsake Christ.

Even if all others will, he will not. Christ could count on him. And just some weeks and days later, you find him when Jesus is outside Caiaphas' house, and people recognize him for being a follower of Jesus, and they ask, Aren't you one of his disciples?

[7 : 12] And three times the question is asked, and three times Peter denies Christ, being related to Christ in any way. So maybe being ashamed of this, Peter is perhaps plagued with shame.

The eyes of the Lord meet him in that moment. That Peter then goes back to fishing. He's from Galilee. He and his brother Andrew own a business, a fishing business, and they are in partnership with James and John, other disciples of Jesus.

And when Jesus called them, they leave all of their nets and follow him. But now after he's denied Christ, he returns to fishing, even though the Lord has said, I don't want you to be fishers of fish.

I want you to be fishers of men. And so the Lord, in a very tender moment there, after preparing a breakfast for the men, he finds Simon, and he says, Ask Simon, Hey, Simon, do you love me?

And Peter denied him three times, and Jesus asked him this question three times. Do you love me, Peter? And at the end of that, he says, Feed my lambs.

[8 : 24] And Peter then becomes this bold, courageous apostle of the Lord, and he is the one who goes, who proclaims Christ, one of the first sermons recorded in the book of Acts, and he proclaims the gospel at Pentecost.

Thousands of people come to faith in Christ. He is the one who finds a replacement for Judas Iscariot. He is the one in the book of Acts that performs many miraculous healings.

The Lord uses him to confront Jewish authorities. He unhesitatingly disciplined sinning church members. He doesn't...

And so you see, the Lord used Peter after restoring him, after he had failed, after he denied him. Peter is restored, and he's a very useful person in the kingdom.

Peter is also married. Jesus heals his mother-in-law, so Peter is married among the disciples. He is one who is married. We have an allusion in 1 Corinthians that his wife accompanied him on Peter's missionary journeys.

[9 : 38] And then ultimately he died under Nero in Rome. History tells us that he did not want to die in the same manner of his Savior Jesus, and so he asked to be hung upside down.

And it is in that manner that he was killed. So that's who our author is. And it brings me to the first point. Can we live triumphantly in the midst of hostility?

Yes. One of the points is this. The very author communicates to us this very point, that God delights to use restored believers. God delights to use restored believers.

So if you're here today and you say, Oh, Scott, it's been months. It's been years since I've been in church. I've been apart from the Lord for some time.

Oh, have I got good news for you. It's as if Jesus is coming to you alongside the lake, just like Peter, and says, Do you love me? Then be about my business.

[10 : 48] Feed my sheep. There's good news. God delights in using restored believers. So if you haven't been in church for a while, you haven't spent time in his word for a while, great.

Begin today. Follow the Lord. He's worthy. Second, can we live triumphantly in the midst of hostility?

Yes. It's interesting. I want to pick up on the words in verse 1 because they're a bit of an oxymoron. To those who are elect exiles, the ESV translation puts it.

The elect exiles. If you take the word, these are contradictory terms. If I say exiles, what does that communicate to us?

These people are unwanted. Wherever they came from, they're unwanted there, and so that's why they're now exiles. They don't, they're not welcome where they once were. Number two, they are separated from all that is familiar to you.

[11 : 54] If you're an exile from somewhere, you're, all that used to be familiar to you is not anymore. And so, you have this, you're not wanted word, exiled, with a kin right up next to a word that says, but I chose you.

You're very much wanted. You're so wanted, I chose you. So you have these, I call it oxymoron, these two words that are next to each other that communicate quite radical things, quite different.

And, and the very reason why someone, if you will, is unwanted, in the unwanted position as an exile, is because the very fact that God has chosen them.

We read, well, your citizenship is in heaven. Your whole world view, Philippians, our citizenship is heaven.

From it we await our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Because God has chosen you, you don't do the things you used to do. You don't approve of the things the world approves of anymore.

[13 : 08] And you don't do the things they do. You don't think the way they think. Everything about you is different now. And so, you don't belong in this world.

Your citizenship is in heaven. And the whole reason why you don't belong in this world is because God chose you. Otherwise, if he didn't choose you, you'd be quite comfortable in this world. That's, and so I find it very beautiful that he, Peter, abuts these two words next to each other to communicate.

It's because I chose you, you are now in exile. Now I want to focus not so much on the word exile, but on the word election.

This too, I find very unique. If I were to teach a class on, a theology class, election will maybe be like a 401 class. It's not your 101 class. If we were in college, it's not your 201 class.

It's not your 301 class. I might get to that at the 401 class or this may be a graduate level class. I may just reserve it all together because it's so controversial. And I want to make sure people have good theology underneath them before we get to election.

[14 : 23] I love Peter. He just says right off the top, you know the first doctrine I'm going to take a handle? Let's talk about election. Thank you, Peter. Yeah, we appreciate that. And what Bible translators have done, because of the location of the word, it can make in English it a little hard to follow what the Apostle Peter is doing here.

If I could help us, I would do it this way. Or actually, the NASV, the RSV translations and the New King James translation all do something with this word elect to help us have clarity as to what is being said.

Let me read it in the New King James translation for just as an example. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

Do you see what the authors, the translators of the Bible have done? They have said, it's a little hard to follow that verse 2 is talking about the doctrine of election. So let's move the word elect either to the bottom of verse 1 or the beginning word of verse 2.

That's what some Bible translators have done to help bring clarity. Now what some Bible translators have done in adding clarity, what they have done is maybe hurt the emphasis.

[15 : 51] The very first word to describe these people that Paul is writing to is elect. So what is gained by clarity is lost in emphasis and so, but I want you to see that verse 2 has three aspects of the doctrine of election that I want us to talk about.

So that's going to be the bulk of the rest of the message. And I want to say, I want us to look at those three things that are said about this beautiful doctrine or a God's election.

We are elect, firstly, top of verse 2, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. That's our origin. Where did our election originate from?

Oh, the foreknowledge of God the Father. Secondly, what's our experience? Our election is in accordance or in the sanctification of the Spirit. That's our experience.

And then, what is the goal of this election? Oh, the goal of your being elect, the goal of God choosing you is for the obedience of the Son, Jesus Christ. You're to obey Christ.

[17 : 09] That's one of the purposes of the election. Of you, God choosing you is to be obedient to Him. election unto God means that we have become alienated from this world.

But because of that, we've become alienated from this world. Okay. What I want us to see next is this. Is that our election engulfs us in the purpose of God.

Yeah, I'll even abbreviate it further or shorten it even further. our election engulfs us in God. Not just in these purposes, but in God Himself.

Let me try to illustrate this in two ways. I want you to see that there is a past, present, and future work of God's election, of God's choosing you.

Notice with me the tense in verse 2, chapter 2, the first thing. According to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Okay. I know everyone's going to say, oh, He's going to bring the box.

[18 : 13] I saw it. He's going to do it. I know it. Just work with me. Your imagination is going to be at work. All of creation is in the box.

Stars, grasshoppers, earth, moon, all of creation, all that God has created is in the box. Now we're going to close the box.

Now all that exists now outside the box because this box doesn't exist yet because this contains all of creation. So the only thing that now exists is God. And we know that He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.

So before the box was created, the contents of the box was created, before all those things were created, in the foreknowledge of the Father, He chose us.

I can't even fathom how much God's affection is for each one of us who are in Christ. It began in the foreknowledge of the Father before creation.

[19 : 23] The words thank you are insufficient to describe the gratitude we ought to feel of a past event that occurred.

Secondly, past, present, future. Your election engulfs you in God. How? Well, presently in the sanctification of the Spirit.

The Spirit is working in you presently to bring about holiness. And if you want a book on that, you're like, you're just full of illustrations. The hole in your holiness, I submit to you as a great book to read about holiness.

Sanctification of the Spirit. Presently, future, both now and into the future, unto the obedience of the Son. So, it engulfs you in the person of God, past, present, and future, and then here's the other thing, you've probably already picked it up, it engulfs you in the person of God because all three members of the Godhead are involved in your election and God's choosing of you.

The Father and the foreknowledge of God sanctified in the Spirit to the obedience to the Son. All three members of the Godhead. So, not only past, present, and future, but all three members of the Godhead are involved in bringing about His people, His God's choosing you.

[20 : 54] I may just break out in song that is so beautiful, but I will spare you.

So, think about the theme of 1 Peter. Can you live triumphantly in the midst of hostility? Oh, God loves to use restored believers first.

You say, well, I've failed. I don't care. God loves to use restored believers. Secondly, can I live triumphantly in the midst of hostility?

You can be assured of your election, of God's choosing you. How secure is that? Father, Son, Holy Spirit, past, present, and future. How certain can you be?

Oh, I'm quite certain that I can live triumphantly because I am assured that God chose me. How beautiful is that?

[22 : 01] Come what this world may throw at me, come what may, I can be assured God chose me. I can't describe it more eloquently, but I'm assured of it and I can live triumphantly.

You may not find what I say or what I stand for worthy of much, but I know that God loves me and set his affection on me for some reason.

This election idea of God choosing his people is, yes, rooted in the Old Testament, but we read it in the New Testament.

I'm just going to read some verses with you. John 15, 16, you did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide so that whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he gives it to you.

Our choosing, we, our salvation did not originate with us. It began in the foreknowledge of God saying, I choose you.

[23 : 20] I was, what did I have to offer the Lord? I was dead in my trespasses and sins spiritually. I could not respond to the Lord had he not originally in the first place given me the gift of faith that I might believe in him.

Oh, how, how beautiful. So let's now go to the Old Testament. In Amos chapter 3 verse 2 we read this, you only have I known, speaking of Israel, you only Israel have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for your iniquities.

Is he saying that God is not aware of all the other nations of the world? No, he's not saying that. But what he is saying, he says, I'm only recognizing you Israel as my people.

That's what he's saying. This is the Old Testament now. This gives the basis for why we read in 1 Peter 2, 9, and we're going to cover this in a few more, probably months when we get to 1 Peter chapter 2, but it says, but you are a chosen race.

I'm just going to stop there. I'm not going to, you're a chosen race, just like God chose Israel. Hey, believers in Christ, the church of Jesus Christ, I have chosen you.

[24 : 46] And then in Nehemiah, we read this, you are the Lord, the God who chose Abram, and brought him out of the Ur of the Chaldeans, and gave him the name Abraham.

Now, look where Abram was. It's not like Abram was perhaps the better of all of the rest of the people.

He was an idolater. He lived in Ur of the Chaldeans, and for whatever reason, God said, I'm going to set my affection on this man, Abram, and out of him I'm going to make a mighty nation, Abram.

That's the guy I'm choosing. Why did he choose Scott Liddell? I have no idea. It's not like there was something special about me. But he did.

And this is the background that we have. It's good for us to have when we read in 1 Peter 2, 1, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

[25 : 44] He did the choosing. Now, let's look at the second part, what the Spirit does. As God's elect, he sanctifies us by the Spirit.

If we read in 2 Thessalonians 2, 13, this will be a quick point, but it confirms what we read elsewhere in the New Testament, but we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, beloved, in the Lord.

By God chose you, there's God's choosing, as the first fruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. What member of the Godhead is at work in your present sanctification?

The Spirit. And Peter reminds us of that. So, we have this eternal decree from the Father, and that choosing, now the Lord is at work in our practical holiness, of sanctifying us, making us more and more like Him.

And thank you, thanks to the Holy Spirit for being at work in each of us who know the Lord. Then we get to the last part, to the last aspect of our election for the obedience to Jesus Christ, for the sprinkling of His blood.

[27 : 11] There's a verse that I think cries in the Bible, and it's Ephesians 2.10. The reason why it cries is because 8 and 9 get all the attention, and it gets left out. So we're going to be sure to emphasize verse 10 today.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of your own doing, it is a gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. And then here's verse 10.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. What a gift. That we are chosen by God unto obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ to do good works that He's appointed for us to do beforehand, and we ought to walk in them.

And that's part of the election. That's part of God choosing you. Walk in them, Scott. Walk in them, church. I will conclude in just with a few comments.

So can we live triumphantly in the midst of hostility? yes. Know that the Lord loves to use restored believers.

[28 : 29] He loves that. So if you've failed, take heart. Say, Lord, forgive me. I have not walked with you in some time.

And then secondly, can you live triumphantly in the midst of hostility? Absolutely. Why? Are you assured of God's election?

And the answer to that is yes, we can be assured of God's election because verse 2 is all about God's election. And it confirms that very same thing.

It confirms that very thing. And if you say to me, Scott, today, though, I want to know the Lord.

God's and I, but I don't know if I'm one of the elect. This is one of the dangers of this theological thing and it's one of the hot buttons and the debatable things of why it should be reserved to a 401 class and a graduate level class.

[29 : 35] That being said, you say, I want to know the Lord. Well, there's good news. The offer of salvation is available to all.

Here's what you can also take heart in. God does not wish anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance. And so, I would just invite you today to place your faith in Christ and say, Lord, forgive me.

I'm a sinner, but I believe in your son, Jesus Christ, and his person, that he is fully God and fully man, and his work, that he lived a sinless life, he died a death for sin, and he rose victoriously in the resurrection, lives to intercede for me today, and one day will return.

I believe I have no hope of forgiveness of sin, but only in your son, Jesus Christ, believing in his person, his work. And if you articulate with something like that in your heart, you can be saved.

For those of us who are saved, salvation comes with a responsibility. responsibility. If you're one of God's chosen people, that comes with responsibility.

[30 : 51] Imagine, I think there's a technical word for this, but I forget what they're called. There are people who scuba dive under subterranean caves with water in them.

I don't know why you would do this, but there are people who think that's fun. Those people, imagine you're in a team of five and you're doing that, and you're going into a cave and none of you happen to be watching and now there is not enough oxygen in your tanks to get out.

But you come thankfully to a cavity, an air pocket where you can be on shore, and so you all take a rest for a moment and you take a measurement of all of your gear, and there's only enough battery power for one set of lights so that one person can leave, and there's only enough oxygen in the tanks for only one of you to leave.

And to go get help. And they, the group says, I choose you. And now it's your responsibility to get out.

You have enough oxygen in your tanks, you have enough light, battery in your lights, you can get out. But what do you think is your responsibility? You're chosen.

[32 : 07] Of all the people who have the best chance of living, it's you. You have the chance at life. But you have a responsibility to get help, to tell people there are others down there and they need help.

They're going to die without someone telling them. And that is our responsibility as gospel proclaimers among those who God has chosen.

It is our responsibility. Thank you, Lord, for saving me. But I have to now proclaim the good news of your son, Jesus Christ, that others might be saved.

And I want that to be what we are about as a people at 4th. So church, I don't know what areas you are involved in, where is your workplace?

Where is your neighborhood? Where is your friends and family? Where has the Lord placed you divinely and sovereignly for you to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ that others might be saved as well?

[33 : 16] Would you pray with me? Father, you are good. Lord, I thank you that you have just engulfed us as a people of yours in the person of God.

Past, present, future, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Lord, I don't know everything there is to know, but I know enough of the doctrine of election and this aspect of God's choosing to say thank you.

And it is the foundation for which Paul, Peter, writes his letter to encourage the saints. And so today we are encouraged by your word. And may we live triumphantly as a people of yours in the midst of hostility.

For those of us in this room who have strayed and wandered in our hearts and maybe it's been some time, Lord, thank you for giving us the example of Peter who is a restored saint to labor in your name.

Lord, help us to be a courageous people who live in the midst of adversity, who live in a land where the reason why we are exiles, the reason why we're not really welcome in some way, and the reason why persecution happens is because you've chosen us and you've given us a whole new life purpose.

[34 : 44] Love you, Lord. Thank you that we had the privilege to gather this morning. name. And it's in your beautiful name, Jesus, we pray. Amen. Amen.