

1 Peter 1:1-2

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[0:00] We ask for that you will be in our hearts and our minds by the power of the Holy Spirit. Is everyone here?

Are you there to go? Yeah, I think she's last week. I think that's not a good thing. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, will you are the elect exile of the dispersion?

Think about how many times of the day we greet one another without being much of any good body. How are you? I, I think, and you.

We say to the catcher, we say to the neighbor across the fence, we say to the fore, we pass the hallway, nobody really expects a real answer back to our audience.

The world that runs smooth into a formula that we use, a polite noise, we make to acknowledge that another person exists. There are only so many ways to open a conversation.

[1:27] And most of them stop meaning what they say a long time ago. And in the ancient world, the translators have their formulas, just like we have our formula who lead each other to be exchanged pleasantries.

In the ancient world, you open a letter with your name. You name the people you will write into, and you say, in effect, greetings, which you enjoy, or some other pleasantries.

Now Peter follows that pattern in his letter here. Or what joy he does with it. And that's what I want us to do this morning. In his hand, this formula of greetings, of a love with our youth, becomes more than just a pleasantry.

It becomes a beneficiary. The standard wisdom of joy becomes, in Peter's and not just Peter's apostolic tradition, in all their letters.

It becomes an apostolic pronouncement of grace, a blessing spoken in the name of God. May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

[2:43] That is more than a polite convention of greeting. That is a theologically rich declaration of who these Christians that he's writing to are in the world.

And I want us to see, at the very start of this letter, and at the very start of this sermon series, I want us to see that. Before Peter gives a single word about how to live, he tells these Christians who they are.

Two verses. It's actually, actually in the Greek. It's one long sentence. With one word. Imagine that. Peter would feel false.

Peter and I, even going to be, fall within the N in his English round. If you were to, you know, think of it. One word. And in this long sentence.

And in a series of propositional statements to attend to that word. And in that one sentence, that we just read this morning. In that one sentence, Peter passed the whole message of the letter into that reading.

[3:47] He tells suffering, scarring, scorned believers that they were chosen by the Father, set apart by the Spirit, and bought by the blood of the Son.

And therefore, raised enemies are theirs because of that in abundance. This morning, we're going to walk through this sentence, this one long sentence. The way Peter wrote it.

Looking at three things. The man who wrote it. The people who he wrote to. And then God who holds them past. So let's first look at the man who writes the letter.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Verse 1. I invite you to open your Bible to 1 Peter. That's at page 12. Go to read. In your view back. Now.

Interestingly. Tomorrow is the feast day of St. Peter. Apostle and modern. It's the day that church remembers his ministry.

[4:45] And I show you. This is a plan. In fact, it's probably natural that we are studying this sermon series now. We mentioned studying it about three weeks and four weeks ago. But it's probably natural that we're studying it now.

Right at the eve of the feast day. Who is this man? Peter. Notice first. Notice first. How little Peter saved about himself.

In this opening. He is simply Peter. An apostle of Jesus Christ. That's it. No resume. No defense of his foundation.

But Paul who sometimes had an agony for his apostasy. Because we were questioning it. Peter felt no sense. And he had no need to question. To really give any more than that.

Because Peter is a feature actor. In the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone would know who he is. Everyone does know who he is. And wherever the gospel is preached.

[5:46] And known. Simon Peter's calling. Is also known. And yet. We must not rush past his name. Peter.

That name. Is a nickname. It's not his actual birth name. It's not an individual by experience. The name was given to him. By the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

His given name was Simon. He was a Galilean fisherman. An ordinary man with rock hands. And quick temper. If you read the gospel. You will see that.

Jesus is the one who we named him. Peter. You are Peter. Jesus called him. Petros. Rock. That's what Peter means. And on this rock.

That Jesus declared. On this rock. I. It's a rock here. It means that a boulder. It's a rock. I'm going to be in trouble. On this rock. I will build my church.

[6:41] And the gates of Elf. I will be really against it. That name itself. Was a calling. Simon. Simon. Will. Unsteady. Simon.

Will. Unsteady. Become Peter. The rock. Upon. This. Effective. Of the truth. That Jesus. Is the Christ. The son of the living God. The name.

Peter. Is significant. Is the calling. Given. Turned by the Lord. The Lord. The Lord. And what are the distance. He traveled. To the right of this letter of. I mean by distance. I don't mean just distance. In miles. Or kilometers. I mean the distance. In maturity. And transformation. This is the same Peter. Who. A few verses. After the great confession.

That you are Christ. The son of the living God. This same man. Can he. His aside. To remember. In the gospel. And rebuked him. For talking about the cross. Jesus said.

[7:37] I will go to the Jewish church. And be crucified. And die. And three days. You wait. And Peter took Jesus aside. And rebuked the Lord. He said. Never Lord. This shall never happen to you.

And Jesus. Turned. And said to him. Get behind me. Satan. The same rock. That was a foundation. He came. For a moment. A soul just stumbled over. This is the Peter. Who. In the blood of Gethsemane. Drew his sword. To defend Jesus.

And took one misdirected stroke. Before he was terrified. Why did he do that? Why did he take the misdirected stroke? Because he was terrified. That the death of Jesus.

Will be the end of hope. Without fear. He wanted to fight for the Messiah's peace. With a blade. And Jesus made him.

[8:35] Put the sword down. The same men. Who hours later. Will cautiously shirt back. And deny heaven knowing Jesus.

This is the Peter that arrives. This way. Peter is a complicated man. A fool at times. Courageous at others. A man like us.

In desperate need. Of the good shepherd. To die in need of him. And it was this man. That God was personally tasked. As a under-shepherd. The very thing.

Peter tried to prevent. The very thing he was. Trying to prevent. Which is the death of Jesus. Turned out to be. The thing that accomplished everything.

And he knew that. He kind of came to realize that. The cross Peter feared. Was the cross that saved him. And now. This man.

[9:38] Who once said. This shall never happen. To Jesus. Now write a whole letter. To teach Christians. How to follow Jesus. Down the way of the cross.

The way of the cross. That he had once foolishly. Trapped to prevent Jesus. From walking down. He now walks in. And that's in the way. And now he calls us.

To follow in his strength. So. When Peter calls himself. An apostle. He's claiming to be a witness. That's what he's doing. An apostle.

In the first century. Was someone. With the authority. To bear. Authentic testimony. To Jesus Christ. Someone. Would see the risen Lord.

And was commissioned. To speak in his name. That's what an apostle is. St. Ignatius. One of the early years. Paragraph. 10 years later. Right into the road. And he says. Concerned.

[10:35] I do not commend you. As we are unpaused. They were apostles. I am only a command. Even the early church family.

We did distinction. Between himself. And the apostle. They knew that apostles here. Is a church office. That does not continue. We do not have apostles today.

Contrary to what somebody would. And call it. We do not have apostles today. What we have. Is their testimony. Preserved.

And inspired. As a foundation. Of which the church is built. This is the apostolic condition. That we have. The New Testament. And so.

That is. We do. And so in other words. We do have apostles today. But we don't have. Many apostles. Walking among us. So when we open this letter. And we go through it.

[11:35] As we live. As we are going through. In this coming weeks. We are not merely reading. The memoirs. Of a man in the New East. That's not what we are going through. Fascinating as that may be.

What we are doing. Is we are hearing. The word of God. The letter addressed. To the Christians. Of Asia. By Peter. That letter.

Is also addressed. To the church. Of every age. By the Spirit of Christ. This letter. Is addressed. To us. Here. In Syracuse New York.

And that could change. How we sit under it. Some scholars. Are adding. That Peter. Is not the author. Of this letter. And the reason they do. Is because. There is no story.

In this. About. About the books. The miracles. The upper room. Why would we not write. A letter. And not include. All the things. He knew about Jesus. And all the. His happiness.

[12:31] And his experiences. And he can misunderstand. What Peter is doing. And what Peter's ministry. Is about. Peter is not trying. To get a thank God.

Around his old. First of all. And memories. Rather. What Peter is doing. And what all. The apostles are doing. Is ending down. And ending on.

The absolute message. The gospel. The message. That Christ. Must suffer these things. That are going to be. Into glory. As he writes. In this letter. Peter has not given us.

What the resurrection. Means to be. Simon Peter. Rather. He has given us. Truth. That makes the church. The church. So that's the man.

This is the new. Letter. The reading. Peter. The man. A forgiving failure. A transformed. Power. An eyewitness. An apostle.

[13:26] A boldly. Proclaimer. Of the gospel. Pointing not to himself. But to Christ. And the person. This transformed man. Wants his readers.

To know. Is not by itself at all. He wants them. To know. About who they are. Who they are. In Christ. So he writes.

Peter. The prophet. Jesus Christ. To. Elect. Edgar. The prophet. Of the. Disturbing. Infantus. Galatia.

Capagositia. Asia. And. Athenia. Now. Those names. Of those places. Are the street. Across. What today. Is present.

Day. Turkey. This will be. Northern. Central. Present. Day. Turkey. Not the word. The country. Peter. Now. He writes.

[14:21] To real people. Peter does. Real people like us. In real towns. In real communities. And. Peter.

Hades to words. On them. That turn to the old word. Upside down. He calls them. Chosen. Or elect. And he also calls them. Exiles.

Or sojourners. Temporary residents. One word. The first one. Elect. Chosen. Describes. Their relationship.

Ah. Their relations. Their relationship to God. Their place. In relation to God. The other word. Endout. Describes it. In relation to the world around them.

And we need to hold on to both words. Elect. Endowment. What the first one. Chosen. Speaks of their standing in order. Let's call them down. Another word for that.

[15 : 18] Is elect. Right. The weight of that word. As he arrives in. Think about it. Think about it. He's writing mostly. These 10-time presidents.

The weight of the word. That they are chosen. Must be appreciated. These people that Peter writes to. Are most of them. Peter and Jude. Once would be guided such people with this day.

This is the man who had to be told. Three times in the day. To eat food that wasn't closure. The man who said. He was a gift of the Lord for a Jude. Even to visit the Gentile.

And now. The missing man. Writes to. X-sting. And calls him. By the name Israel. Is called. His chosen people of God.

What would possibly produce that about you? If you listen. There's one answer to that. Jesus. Peter has come to understand.

[16 : 19] That belonging to the people of God. No longer means belonging to a nation. By blood. It means belonging to the Messiah. To Jesus Christ. By grace.

And so. These Gentiles. Are not second classes. And supplications. Admitted as an active thought. They are chosen. Chosen.

The next verse says. According to the core knowledge. Of God the Father. We'll come back to what that means. In a moment. But now. We'll just hear this assurance.

If it works. He said to these people. I think I said. He said to us. Your inclusion. In God's people. Is not an accident. Not a path of mind.

Not in their body. Active thought. It was God's purpose. From the world that all began. To choose you. And then the second word.

[17 : 15] Exile. To speak of their situation in the world. Although they're chosen. They're also enders. They're strangers. Sojourners. Foreigners.

It's a word for someone who lives in a place. Where he doesn't actually hold civilization. A resident alien. An immigrant.

A person passing fruit. Someone whose values and customs. Don't quite match. The people around him. That's how.

She needed his writing. These Christians. In the ancient world. Such people were often viewed. As a sinner. It's also the same.

People did not. But I think. Oftentimes. Such people were treated. As potentially such a person. For good or evil. Never fully at home.

[18 : 14] Whatever they are. And Peter says. That's you. You're a ledger. You're a resident alien. On one level.

These believers. May have no dislocation. In a very visual sense. Some of them may be refugees. Settlers. Scattered across the Roman Empire. Marginalized.

But that's not what Peter means. He's not talking about their. Physical. Or. Early disposition. Peter doesn't have their.

Early citizenship in mind. He doesn't care about their. Early citizenship status. When he calls them. Edger. What he means. Whether or not you've ever. Physically moved.

From the time you were born in. You may say. I'm not an edger. I'm born in Rachel's. To abuse. I live in the same street. This is home for me.

[19 : 08] Maybe you're thinking that. I should meet Peter. Maybe some of them are reading that. And say. Well you're talking to him. I'm not very good. But Peter doesn't have that in mind. He doesn't care about your location. Peter. What Peter wants us to know.

Is that. The moment you belong to Christ. Your relationship. To the surrounding culture. Changes. When the values of the world. And the values of the kingdom of God.

Alive. You discover. If you're in Christ. That you are a foreigner. Wherever you live. You carry. Once you're in Christ. You carry.

A different passport. And Peter. Stacked. A second word on top of that. Exile. Of the destruction. Literally. That would be.

Of the diaspora. We use that word often. That was the word for the Jews. Stacked among the nations. After the exile. The diaspora. Peter takes that loaded.

[20 : 05] Historic word. And lays it over the church. The congregation of the. History of the Gentiles. Why does he do that? Because he wants them to read their lives. Through the story.

Of God's people. He wants them to see. That in the diaspora. The God who was in. Was scattered. Longing for a home. Tempted every day. To blend in.

And disappear. Into the surrounding corner around them. Instead. Of being. Living as. Who they are. Called. To live as.

The same people. Who belong to God. That's always a temptation. For Israel. To blend in. To the surrounding corner. To see. Not to live as. The same people. Who belong to God.

And Peter says. You are also like them. That's you. You are the direct work. Peter says. You are the silent flock. Of the shepherd. Once you were without God.

[21 : 02] And without hope in the world. Now. You have returned. As he will write it this way. You have returned to the shepherd. Of the seer. Of your soul. You are the sent out.

Sent out. You are strangers. Put a moment first. Let's put the two half together. Exiles. In the scripture. Chosen. And exiled. Because you belong to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Peter is the same to us. Because you belong to the heavenly Jerusalem. You are a stranger here. In relation to your true country. You are part of the discouragement.

You are part of the diaspora. Scattered. All over this world. This earth. You won't give for your true home. You won't give to go home.

In relation to the place you have to live in. The US of A. In relation to that. No matter your citizenship. You are in actual spiritual reality.

[22 : 08] You are an alien. A pilgrim. A traveler. This is the key that allows us to be trapped in the entire lecture for us. Peter is writing a traveling style of Christian pilgrims.

Think of the whole Bible. God's people are always taught to be travelers and pilgrims in the world. God calls Abraham and her to wander as a stranger and a soldier.

He meets Israel, our leaders, through the wilderness, towards the home. And Jesus says, I am the way. Christians are people of the way. Always are the pilgrimage towards home.

Towards the world that is our heavenly abode. But this, this matters another lesson. Peter is not telling us to run away from the world.

He's not calling us to hide like our events. Look at where the letter goes. He writes to his pilgrims. To keep their conducts honorable among the Gentiles.

[23 : 14] That's the only thing he would say in his letter. He tells them in his letter. To honor the emperor. To be good neighbors. To be always prepared to give an answer to everyone. Who asks the reason for the hope that is in them.

He writes to them. He tells them. You are straight into the world. Yes. Because you are also ambassadors in the world. The Christian is not called to flee the world.

Nor to be swallowed up by the world. Rather, we are called to live in as ambassadors. You know, the danger of living in the theater as we are. In the dispersion as any God.

The danger is following assimilation. Now, I know one of the things we talk about in our language is that people will visit us and should assimilate. And that's why they do that, I think.

Actually. But, not the same when it comes to our spiritual reality. We are not met with similar in this world. We must remain and retain that distinctive difference.

[24 : 19] We must remain distinct. We must not melt into the cultural melting pot of the world around us. We must leave a mark. We must be distinguished in the world by our actions, by our profession, by our faith.

Peter said, you don't conform. Don't withdraw either. Don't conform to the world and don't withdraw from the world. Live as resident alien, respectful, engaged, useful, law-abiding.

But, on the mistakingly, live as strange as we are. There is the irony in this scripture.

The Christians are not really the homeless ones, are they? That is the great irony that Peter writes to these Christians and to us. Think about it. The world thinks of its own.

The world thinks that there is no God. And there is no more chance to do it. But, it is the other way around.

[25 : 26] The world thinks that Peter writes to these strangers, they will inherit the earth. You, in Christ, will inherit the earth.

The proud city, in Christ, will last forever. Peter calls to the creation writer from Rome, Babylon. At the end of his letter. And this city, great as it seems, thinking it is independent from God, is in reality under God's judgment.

This city will fall. Its wars will crumble. It is justice of destruction. So, one verse, you and God, are the ones going home.

This is actually your home. Yet to be redeemed and transformed. And that's the irony. I see that, as another, as the Bible says, for here we have no last in the city.

No way in the story we have a last in the city. It will be city. The city that is becoming. And so far, Peter has told us who we are. He's telling us that we're children at a house.

[26 : 41] But the deepest thing in these verses is in a description of the Christians at all. The deepest thing is in these two verses, the description of God's work on these Christians.

Look at verse 2. Peter takes one word, children, and unfolds that word in three phrases, in three purposes of the phrase. All three persons of the Bible are going to be loved as he unfolds this chosenness that it are.

And here we ought to see, this isn't yet to develop doctrine of the Trinity. But interestingly enough, three centuries later, at a council in a town called Nesea, in the region of Jithinia, one of the places that Peter writes.

One of the very regions, in New York, is popularly legal country, whole flower, and everything. But the Trinity is in both. And in these verses that we just read.

Peter is saying to us, we're chosen by the Father. We're set apart, set apart, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. And we are claimed by the blood of the Son. And so let's look at the verse 1.

[27 : 53] First, chosen according to the foreknowledge of God's power. And we must be careful with the word foreknowledge here. In the Bible, when God foreknowledge people, it doesn't mean he had information about them ahead of time.

It just means he set his love on earth, ahead of time. To be foreknown is to be the object of God's loving concern from all eternity. For a glorious little bit of show that that is.

And that's the show that he is handing it down to us, and to these anxious kind of believers. He said to us, your faith did not begin with you. Before you ever reach for God, God will reach for you.

Luther writes about this in his song, baptism. I believe that by my own reason of strength, I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord. I'll come to him. You are in Christ.

Not finally because of the decision you made. But because of an initiative God took before the foundation of the world. After the word of this famous 19th century English hymn goes, Now why does he leave with this truth of our election?

[29 : 27] Of all things. Why does he leave with this? Because he's writing for people in a strange land. Perhaps he wants us to know that when life is infusion, where the pocket turns cold, when you were tempted to doubt whether God is good or even made attention, he wants us to know that the rock under our feet is this, that we belong to God and were chosen by him.

According to his foreknowledge, he has placed his loving concern upon him. Secondly, Jesus said, I am probably the right.

You are chosen in the sanctification of the Spirit. If the Father chooses accurate and eternally fast before the foundation of the world, the Spirit's work, the sanctifying work of the Spirit, reaches us in time and in history.

Secondly, sanctifying means to set apart, to make holy. And here it points first to the moment he was set apart with God. When you, heard the Gospel, preached in the power of the Spirit, and the Spirit took hold of you and gave you new birth.

That's what dwelleth. The work of the Holy Spirit in bringing you to self, saving grace. The eternal plan of the Father is not a distraction, floating somewhere over our head.

[30 : 51] The eternal love of God is made real through this Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the one who stirs in you a longing for God.

He's the one who opens your blind eyes and sees the Gospel. He's the one who commits you of sin, who assures you of pardon. and he's the one who then begins the long, patient work of sanctification, of making you holy in how you live.

Election is not cold and abstract. It is the Father choosing you, the Spirit coming all the way down to take hold of a particular person.

someone in this region, someone in this room, and lifting them up out of the ordinary and is punished for the triune God. That's what's going on here.

And notice, he says, you'll see, all the holy. Now, there's been a least people who are more impressed in the whole world than, than, than certainly their neighbors or they are going to make

Christ and they are, they are going to be hard.

[32:00] But inherently, they're not more moral or more fair or more stupid. It means, though, that they can set apart for a purpose. To be obedient is to be set apart.

Like his brother was set apart. To be distinct, to be true, with a measure, you as well, the church, are set apart. And then lastly, he says, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for still moving his work. This third one is really important. The Spirit sets them apart from suffering or being to Jesus Christ for struggling with his work. This Spirit does not bring you to some vague all-purpose spirituality. Peter reaches back as he sits and is struggling with his work. It's one of the most dramatic scenes of the Old Testament. Think of months like that. What happened then? After that, the mountain is shaking, if you remember, an altar is built with three, with twelve pillars.

Sacrifice are being offered. The blood is being collected. Moses reads the words of the covenant aloud, and the people answer. All that the Lord is hoping we will do, they say.

[33:10] And then Moses takes the blood and sprinkles it on the people, saying, Behold, the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you. Obedience is slain by the people, and the blood is sprinkled on them to set them apart.

That's how Israel became the people of God. And that's the evocative language that Peter uses now when he says, You have been set apart for obedience to Jesus Christ and not sprinkling, sprinkling, but is blood.

But notice, obedience and sprinkling of the blood yet is not the blood of oxen, or calf, or youth, or sheep. It's sprinkling of whose blood now?

Jesus. Jesus. The blood that is now used is the precious blood of Christ. Do you see what we disclaim here?

These ex-patriots scattered across the hostile empire have been brought into covenant with God Himself. Not by the privilege of bloodline, not by their own performance, but by the spirit of Jesus Christ's blood through His precious and totally dead.

[34:22] Why did that do you? Well, because at Samuray, did you remember, he said, Oh, the Lord is so good for you. And how would they do with that promise? They failed.

Spectacularly failed. Again and again. The law, the law commanded obedience and the distribution of the new covenant, this new covenant called Abedalus, is totally different.

By the blood of Christ, the blood of the kingdom and the cleavis, it gives you the clear heart. Your obedience, Peter has in mind here, is first, the initial black surrender to Christ as well.

Saying yes to the gospel. Receiving the free gift of God right there. and then, a whole life that follows from that.

God accepts you because of the penalty of your sin and your pain. God claims you because you're not your own people who live. What's with a promise? This is the Peter who writes.

[35:31] This is the Peter who remembers what that means, what that meant for him in his own life. He knows that he's not to go to the cross. Now he builds the church of Christ as his first main apostle.

He builds it on that foundation of what is it based on that cross. He writes to the church and he says this is who you are and he named for the blessing.

Grace and peace be multiplied by you. Grace which means God's love and action undeserved peace shalom which is an ancient Hebrew blessing that the Lord will lift up its countenance upon you and give you peace.

That's a blessing and a very victory he gives to this new Israel of the church. He understands what that means peace in the studio because he's at many times heard Jesus say to him peace and me with you my peace and give to you.

Peter in this context is now extending his sacred grace and peace to you the church. And here's the last thing to see about this blessing. It's one of the worship.

[36:59] It's one of the prayer. When the priests or the bishop give the beneficio over the people the words cannot be imagined. They don't count out in themselves.

These words when they're stroking in faith over those who belong to Christ God honors them. They become a declaration in fact that's what they are.

It's a declaration of God's favor towards his people. So here's this story brothers and sisters. These readings are not like the the benediction that comes regarding God's people when we say peace in Christ grace in peace is not merely a polite formula that we use a polite reading.

It's a benediction and a proclamation of a reality that we are chosen even though we're in this world and grace and peace of God is more like for us.

We must know who we are before we can do living as a poor horse home. And this is why Peter begins this story. So as we begin this journey to proceed together brothers and sisters let's start here knowing who we are.

[38:14] Maybe you came here this morning feeling like a stranger out of separate culture weary of being misunderstood wondering if it's all worth it. Peter's word to you is this homelessness your feeling of homelessness of being a stranger in this world is not a sign that something is wrong with you.

It's the mark that you belong to Jesus. And this is not your own. You're not a wanderer with no address. You may be a wanderer in this world where you have an address.

You are a stranger with a home address. You've chosen people to come into the world. You're sealed by the Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

You are stripped of the blood of Christ. And you are headed for the city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God.

May grace and peace be most right to you. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[39:24] may bless you.