

Aliens in a Hostile World

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[0 : 00] I'm excited this morning about starting a series of sermons through the two letters written by the apostle Peter to Christians.

A certain region of the known world of that day, that part of the Roman Empire, but written to Christians today right here in America.

And certainly a passage or a letter that is very appropriate for Christians who are living all around this globe. It is a letter written to those who are enduring persecution.

Written to Christians who are having a tough time, struggling. Struggling because they are Christians. And so it's a tremendous letter, 1 Peter.

And then eventually we'll get to 2 Peter. And I'm just excited about preaching through both of those letters. And so if you have your Bible with you, hopefully you do.

[1 : 21] I want you to follow along with me as we look at 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 1 and 2 this morning. Primarily that will be our focus. Verses 1 and 2 are part of a larger text.

That really takes us up through verse 12. And we'll be working our way through that. And then there's a bit of a shift from verse 13 and following.

And we'll deal with that in the Sundays to come. I want to begin by just reading verse 1. So if you found it, 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 1.

The letter opens this way. Peter. We know who he was, right? One of the apostles.

One of the inner circle of apostles. Peter. An apostle of Jesus Christ. And I want to give a little bit of exposition or exegesis as I read through verse 1.

[2 : 28] Just to identify. Because I'm not going to spend a lot of time with an overview of the book. But just to make sure we understand. Peter.

Here, of course, one of the apostles. And he identifies himself as an apostle. The word apostle meaning sent one. In a non-technical sense.

I'm an apostle. But not in the sense in which Peter refers to himself. Because he uses the word apostle here in the very technical. Very, we might say, official sense.

Terms of an office. He is an apostle. One of the twelve. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two. So we know the author, don't we?

It's Peter. Written to. Those who reside. As aliens. Scattered throughout Pontus.

[3 : 29] Galatia. Cappadocia. Asia. And Bithynia. Who are chosen. Who are chosen. That's verse 1.

Identifies the author. That's Peter. Identifies. Somewhat identifies. The audience. People scattered in the regions that he mentions or identifies here.

They're part of the. In the Greek. It is diaspora. The dispersion. Not in the sense of the dispersion of the Jews.

The scattering of the Jews. Not in a national sense. But he's using the term in a. A spiritual sense. He's talking about.

Christians. Both Jews and Gentiles. And I believe because of the. Places that he names here. All places that. Were located in.

[4 : 28] The northern and western part. Of what today. Is Turkey. Gentile regions. I believe to the most part. He is addressing Gentiles. Specifically.

Though. Christians. Jew and Gentile. Maybe mostly Gentile. Christians. Who are living in. The northern part. Of the Roman Empire.

And though he doesn't identify. This part about them. Not in a specific sense. At least not yet. They are Christians. Who are under.

Tremendous persecution. And that's why he wrote to them. Christians living in. These regions. These Gentile regions.

Of the known world. Of the day. Who are under. Intense persecution. And he identifies them. As aliens. They're aliens. Or. Refugees.

[5 : 25] We could insert the word. Refugees. They're refugees. Or. We might even use. The word. Exiles. All those would be. Appropriate English words.

To. Define. Or identify. Or to translate. The word that. Peter uses here. This translation. Uses the word. Aliens. Very appropriate.

They're aliens. They're living in a place. That is not their home. They are refugees. In the sense. That they're forced. To live there. In a place. That is not really.

Their home. And I think. All of us. Can understand. The term. What. The idea. Of being a refugee. Though we're not. In a national sense.

We're not refugees here. But if you have. Met. Some. Who are from other countries. Who. Maybe have been forced. To flee their country. And to live here. In this nation.

[6 : 20] You understand. Their. Their. Their isolation. Their feeling of isolation. Their feeling of alienship. If you've ever traveled abroad. And. Maybe.

Like I have. Visited one of the. Former. Countries of the Soviet Union. And it. Doesn't take very long. In fact. Just as soon as you step off the plane.

You feel like an alien. Not only in the sense of culture. But also in the. Sense that you just don't belong there. And others are looking at you. Differently.

Especially if you go to a country. Where. Where you're. Where your. Ethnicity. Is quite different. Or. Your origin. Ethnically. Is different. I've traveled to China.

And certainly I. Stood out there. In China. I didn't look Chinese. And so you. You may be able to understand. Not only. Intellectually.

[7 : 15] Understand. The very idea. Of being an alien. But you also. Maybe. You have experienced it. To be. An alien. But I doubt any of us.

Can really get a hold. Of the idea. Of being a refugee. And yet. We ought to. Because. In a sense. In a very real sense. The audience. That Peter. Is addressing here. These refugees. We're experiencing.

The same things. That we. Experience. Right here. In. The United States. We are. In a spiritual sense.

Refugees. Aliens. In the sense. That this is not our home. Not our home. And because of that.

[8 : 13] We suffer. Because these. Gentile. And. Jewish. Christians. Who had been. Scattered. Were scattered. Just in all the various parts of the world.

Because. They were. Christians. Because of what they stood for. And who they believed in. And. And who they spoke for. And who they promoted. Because of that.

They were aliens. Was not their home. And they were experiencing that. So. That's the audience. So. It's. Pretty simple. We don't need to spend a lot of time.

Peter wrote the letter. And he wrote it to Christians. Living in. Certain areas of the. Roman Empire. Who were under. Intense persecution. They were aliens. They were refugees. Now.

Having considered the. Author. And having considered the audience. The important thing is for us to understand. Peter's approach.

[9 : 14] Peter's approach. He's writing. To those who are under persecution. And his idea. His desire. His. His aim. Is to. Teach them how to live. Victorious lives.

In the midst of. Christian persecution. And so. What is his. Approach. This is the. Part of the. Of the letter. Or part of the sermon. That.

That. That really. Means most to us. We need to understand. His approach. Because. If we can identify. With these aliens. In Peter's day. If we can identify. With them.

In the sense. That we too. Are. Refugees. Or aliens. We're living in a foreign country. And everything we stand for. Is so. Contrary. To what. The world. Stands for.

And believes in. If we can identify. With that. Then. Peter's approach. To them. Is the same. Approach for us.

[10 : 08] And so. We need to understand. What that is. What was. Peter's approach. And I. And it's not real evident. At the. At the outset. And yet. It is there.

Peter tells us. His approach. And it's not. A philosophical. Approach. That is. Peter is not going to now. Lay out for us.

Twelve. Steps. To. To. Making friends. And influencing enemies. In our society. Which is. By the way. Seems.

Seems to me. The subject. Of a number of books. Written. By Christian authors. Self-help books. To help. Christians. Live in this world. In this society. And to.

Lay out some practical steps. So that we can get along with. Others. And even work with pagans. And so forth. He doesn't. Have a philosophical. Approach. His.

[11:04] Was not. A sociological. Approach. That is. To. Somehow. Teach them. To create. A Christian. Friendly. Society. From the bottom up.

That seems to be. The approach. Of a number. In our day. Today. That the answer. To persecution. Christian persecution. Or. Or. The answer.

To. Being. Aliens. In this kind of society. Is just to make. The society. Like us. To make it. A Christian. Kind of society. Whatever. Way. We can do that.

Whatever it takes. So it's a. Kind of a. Sociological. Approach. And it's not. Not in the sense. Of evangelizing. That. That certainly. Is the right. Approach.

To evangelize. The lost. And that's. Why we're here. But I'm talking about. In the sense. Of. Just. Kind of. Changing the culture. So that it's. More Christian.

[11:59] And we do that. From the. Bottom up. We. Feed the hungry. And clothe. The. Those who are naked. And. We try to make sure. Everybody. Has everything. They need. And so. We want to just.

Kind of. Bring into our culture. A. Kind of. A Christian. Atmosphere. From the bottom up. His approach. Was also.

Not. Politically. A political approach. That is. On the other end of it. To. Somehow. Create. A Christian. Friendly. Society. From the. Top down.

Elect. Christian presidents. Who would appoint. Christian cabinet. Members. Elect. Elect. Christian congressmen. And congresswomen.

And so forth. And. Anything wrong with doing that. Not a thing. But that's not the answer to persecution. To Christian persecution. That's not the answer. To how we're to live.

[12:55] In this. Society. That is contrary. And even hostile. Toward everything. We are. And what we stand for. Forever. We're not going to.

Do it. Politically. Though we ought to be good. Citizens. And ought to do everything. We can. To. To be a voice. To be a. A scriptural. Biblical voice.

In this. Society. Certainly. Don't hear me. Discounting. The importance of that. I'm not. I'm just identifying. What is Peter's approach.

He's writing a letter. A letter that needs to comfort. A letter that needs to instruct. These Christians living. In these parts of the world. Where they're under intense persecution. And his approach is not.

Philosophical. Or. Or. Or. Sociological. Or. Or. Political. Also his approach. You would have to agree. Is not militaristic. Over the centuries.

[13:52] Of. Christianity. There have been those. Who have. Tried to change the world. To make it a Christian world. Through. Force. The.

The crusades. And. It's just. Either convert all the pagans. Or kill them. One of the two. That. Certainly. Is not Peter's approach. And that is not. The biblical approach. We can find some merit. In. Trying to. To. Exact some change. In our culture. Politically. And sociologically. And. And. And. There may be some. Philosophical things. To consider. But certainly. We have not been called. To deal with. Our alienation. From a. A pagan world. Through a. Military. Type of approach. Have we? Oh no. And I would say.

Lastly. That Peter's approach. Was not psychological. That is. Instead of trying to deal with. All the externals. Try to help us. Find some ways. To deal with the external.

[14:47] Aspects. Of our persecution. Let's just deal with. The inner part. And so. A. A kind of a. Psychological approach. Would be. To discover ways. That you could. Kind of.

Cope with. Persecution. Kind of cope with it. Kind of. Deal with it. So that you're not just totally destroyed. And so forth. Now there are some aspects of that.

Of course. That have some merit. As long as it's based upon scripture. Sure. But. That was not. Peter's. Approach. What was his approach?

Well. Let's look at verse 2. In fact. Because of the way. The. New American Standard. Translators. Divided.

The verses. We'll have to. Begin with. The last few words. Of verse 1. He's writing to those. Who. Are chosen. According to.

[15:45] The foreknowledge. Of God. The father. By the sanctifying. Work of the spirit. To obey. Jesus Christ. And be sprinkled. With his blood.

May grace. And peace. Be yours. In the fullest sense. And let's read on. Blessed. Be the God. And father. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy.

Has caused us. To be born again. To a living hope. Through the resurrection. Of Jesus Christ. From the dead. To obtain. Obtain. An inheritance. Which is imperishable.

And undefiled. And will not fade away. Reserved in heaven. For you. Who are protected. By the power of God. Through faith. By a salvation. Ready to be revealed. In the last time.

And I could go on. And read. But I'll just stop right there. Now. Let me ask you something. How does Peter.

[16:40] Approach. The subject. Of Christian. Christian persecution. How does. Peter. Seek. To accomplish. His aim. And again. What is his aim?

To teach. These Christians. How to live. Victorious. Christian lives. In the midst. Of Christian persecution. How does he. Seek. To approach.

That aim. Or accomplish. That aim. Not in all. All those other ways. I mentioned. He chooses. A doctrinal.

Approach. Does that strike you strange? That Peter. Would.

Accomplish. His aim. Doctrinally. That is. Peter chose. A doctrinal. Approach. You see. And what doctrine. Does he choose?

[17:34] Oh. And the. The larger. Identification. The larger subject.

It's the subject. Of salvation. The doctrine. Of salvation. That's. The approach. He takes. Here are. These. Beloved.

People. Of God. Living. In parts. Of the world. Where they are. Enduring. Intense. Persecution. Because of their faith. And so. How does he deal with it? How does he help them? How does he teach them. To live victoriously.

In the ministry. He reminds them. Of who they are. In Christ. He. Uses. The doctrine. Of salvation. Does he. Of salvation. Of salvation. Does he. Let's. Bring it down. To the first. Two verses. And answer.

[18:32] The question. Just what. Specific. Part. Of salvation. The doctrine. Of salvation. Does he. Begin. With. He.

Begins. With. The doctrine. Of election. Oh. That dreaded. Dreaded word.

The doctrine. Of election. It's right here. In the Bible. The fact. That the English. Text. This English. Particular. Copy. Of the English.

Text. Uses. The word. Chosen. Does not mean. That the word. Election. Is not there. The word. Chosen. Is the Greek. Word. Eklektos. We get our word.

It just kind of. Comes on over. Into the English. Language. Elect. Elect. Chosen. Electos. And so.

[19:30] It is the doctrine. Of election. In fact. It. Even stranger. When you consider. That. What. Peter. Teaches. His readers. About the doctrine. Of election. Is all.

Put. Right there. In his. Opening. Salutation. His. Address. To them. I mean. Every one of the letters. If you notice.

As you read. The letters. In the New Testament. They all kind of. Begin. With some. Kind of. Some standard. Salutations. You know. Kind of. A standard. Kind of. Opening. For letters. And some of them.

Are quite lengthy. And some of them. Very short. And. You know. A little bit more. Than what we would. Normally do. We would say. Dear. Sherry. If I wrote her. Letter. She's thinking. I wish you would.

Write me a letter. Sometimes. And. Yeah. Usually short. And sweet. And. Some of the letters. In the New Testament. Are kind of short. And sweet. The openings. And. And yet.

[20 : 23] Here. We have. Peter's. Opening. Which really. Contains. Is contained. Within verses. One and two. Some of it. Kind of. Smacks. Of the standard.

Opening. And yet. In those two verses. Peter. Packs. In there. What I believe. And other scholars. Would believe. Is the most.

Concise. Statement. On the doctrine. Of election. That you'll find. Anywhere. In scripture. In fact. Really. The concise. Statement. Of the doctrine. Of election. Is found.

In one verse. Verse two. With. One word. That goes. With it. In verse one. And I'll explain. That. As we go.

It's a concise. Statement. Of the doctrine. Of election. And it is. By the way. As if you didn't know. One of the most. Hotly. Debated.

[21 : 17] Subjects. In the Southern Baptist. Convention. Today. A lot of it. Centers. Right on this. Right here. On this verse. Hotly.

Debated. And yet. I am convinced. Especially. When I consider. This verse. And I consider. And this is what we need.

To consider. Is how. Peter. Applies. This doctrine. To his subject. The subject. Of persecution. How. Peter.

Takes. This. Doctrine. Of election. And uses it. To somehow. Teach. God's people. How to live. Victoriously. In the midst. Of persecution.

So. That's the. The aim. Here. Is. It's not. A. Treaties. On. Predestination. And the doctrine. Of election. It's just. Simply. Stated there.

[22 : 13] Very. Concisely. But the approach. The. Purpose. Is to bring. Us. Great. Comfort. And to. Teach us. How to deal.

With persecution. In a victorious. Way. And yet. Those who. Really. Enjoy. Debating. The subject. Of the doctrine. Of election. Miss all of that.

In fact. I think. Primarily. And all of us. To some extent. Because we can't help it. We're just. Human beings. We approach. The subject. From a. Human standpoint. From human feelings.

Rather than. To approach it. From divine facts. The divine facts. Have been. Listed here. But we. Because we want. To approach it. With feelings. Human feelings.

We miss. The whole message. Miss it. Kind of like. Those two guys. Who were. Riding. Together. Down the highway. And they looked up. And saw. A new billboard.

[23 : 09] There on the side. Of the highway. Brand new one. And it was just. Very striking. In fact. One of them. Commented to his friend. He said. You know that. Did you see that billboard. Back there. I especially. It was. An astounding billboard. I especially.

Enjoyed. The. The. Orange. Color. Of the sign. To which. His friend. Responded.

That wasn't. Orange. That was. Fire engine. Red. Oh. Well. But you'd have to admit. That the gothic font. Was quite outstanding. His friend.

That wasn't. That wasn't gothic. That was. Algerian. I mean. Anybody could see. That that was an Algerian. Font. Used in that sign. So.

They sat there. For a while. And he said. Well. Surely. You'd have to agree. With me. That the. Mountain silhouettes. In the background. Of the sign. Were really. Really neat. And. His friend said.

[24 : 03] Mountains. Those were sand dunes. So. They just sat there. Silent. For a long time. As they. Rode on down.

The road together. And. One of them. Finally said. Say. What did that sign. Say. Anyway. I don't know. I didn't. I didn't.

I didn't. I didn't. We just kind of get. All bogged down. With. Kind of an emotional response. To. Some of the. Some of the.

Terminologies. And. And we. Can't help but interject. Our emotion. In our interpretation. And try to say. Well this. Can't mean this. Because just. Doesn't feel right. Or because it's not fair. Or whatever.

The excuse may be. And we miss the whole message. What's. Peter's message here. He. He is. Presenting to them. This glorious. Truth.

[24 : 56] About the doctrine. Of election. So that they would be. Instructed. And he's going to go on. From there. He'd be instructed. In how to live. Victoriously.

In the midst. Of persecution. And right now. You're thinking. How. How does that work? How do you take. Doctrine. Especially.

That doctrine. And encourage. People about. Persecution. Well. That's what we want. To consider. This morning. That's the whole idea.

Here. In this text. Peter would not. Have started. That way. If it wasn't. The right way. To begin. To help us.

Deal. With persecution. So the aim. Of the sermon. This morning. Is really. Twofold. The first. And primary. Aim. Is the same. As that of Peter's. To teach us. All. How to live.

[25 : 51] Victoriously. In the midst. Of persecution. The second aim. The secondary aim. Is to address. To some extent. Though this is not. Going to be a full. A full.

Fledged. Doctrinal. Sermon. To teach. All the ins. And outs. Of the doctrine. Of election. But my aim. Is. To address. That doctrine. Which of course. Is a slightly different.

Aim. Than. Than. Than Peter's. He wasn't. Trying to convince. His hearers. About that doctrine. They already. Believed it. And so.

That's our approach. And I would also. Add this. Before we get. To my. Three point. Sermon. I would add. This. That. Peter's.

Emphasis. Here. In. Not only. In verses. One and two. But all the way. Through. To verse. Twelve. Is. Emphasis. Is. In. On. Knowing. Things. On.

[26 : 46] Knowing. Rather. Than. Doing. And then. When we get. To verse. Thirteen. And we'll get. To that. In a few. Sundays. We get. To verse. Thirteen. Then the emphasis. Shifts.

From knowing. To doing. But for now. It's knowing. And that's. The. Key. To. The outline. Of my. Message. You should know.

God's people. You should know. Some glorious. Realities. About yourself. In relation. To God. Know. Some glorious. Realities. Number one. Know. Where. You are. Just.

Jot it down. That way. If you keep notes. First of all. Know. Where you are. Let me. Qualify that. Just a little bit. In the sense. Of location.

[27 : 42] In the sense. Of residence. You said. I'm a resident. Of Bartlesville. Oklahoma. Some of you. Might live in. In Dewey. And some other parts. I'm not talking.

About that. I'm talking. About your. Residence. In relation. To. This world. At large. Know. Where. You are. And where are you. You and I. That is. If you are born again. Christian. This morning.

I'm speaking. To born again. Christians. That was who Peter. Was speaking to. If you are a born again. Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me tell you where you are.

You are living in a world. That cannot stand. The sight of you. you're living in a world we are living in a world that opposes our very presence here some of you are thinking well I don't really feel that or sense that well you just test the water a little bit my wife is a very bold lady in many ways and her husband though he's the called preacher he's not near as bold as she is I want to tell you over the last this past week we have taken care of a lot of business got a license plate got a new license driver's license we just did the whole thing even registered to vote did all that and I say and insurance and all those things I would say without exception everywhere we went Sherry we would meet somebody Sherry would say do you have a church home here in Bartlesville and she was asking a certain fellow

[29 : 32] I won't say where he worked it doesn't matter but asked a certain fellow before I got in there and when I got in there she asked it again because she said you didn't tell me where you go to church or if you have a church home and I mean up until that point this guy was such a friendly guy and he really was friendly all the way through but there was a marked change in his countenance when she asked that question again and he had to say nowhere I just felt there was a difference a change there now he went on and helped us and was very cordial and I don't say he was ugly toward us but what I'm highlighting is you just test the waters and see if this world at large is not opposed to your very presence here just test the water stand for God's word when it's not popular confront evil and immorality speak the name of Jesus and you find out how things change

I'm telling you we are living in a world that does not want us here that a world that is intolerant of every form of religion and self-expression except for Christian religion and self-expression and expression of that religion that's where we live that's where we are and why is this so well Peter says it's because we're aliens you see that there in verse 1 to those who reside as what aliens let me tell you why the world does not want us here why the world despises our very presence here because we're aliens we're different stand for something different we speak differently we live

differently we promote

Christ and the world does not want us here we're aliens we're as I've already explained we're exiles in a foreign country we are refugees forced to live here where we do not belong we are aliens what else are we I mean that's not enough I mean there's more here to explain why we're living in a world that's hostile towards us it's not only because we're aliens but and here's the part that Peter intends to help us with we are chosen aliens literally did you know you're an alien in this spiritual sense alien in this world as a Christian because God chose you to be that way here's where the doctrinal election intersects that aspect that context of living that we live in persecution because we're chosen to live that way

God chose us to be aliens in fact it's right here in the text though in the English version of it it's difficult to see certainly in this translation if you have a King James it's similarly written or translated as the New American Standard if you have an NIV some of you might have that you might have noticed that it reads this way to those who reside as elect or chosen aliens you know in the in the Greek text the word eklektos that I mentioned a moment ago that comes into our English has the word elect or here translated chosen that the word does not appear at the end of the sentence or in the middle of the sentence in this case but not the end of verse 1 it actually appears right before the word aliens we are chosen aliens that is the world does not like us and we're here living in this world that's hostile towards us because God has ordained us to be here he has selected us to be here now I suggest to you that that that puts a whole new outlook on the thing in fact

I want you to look if you would to John chapter 15 verse 18 it's something that Jesus said John 15 verse 18 I love to hear the pages of the Bible being turned now if I was at the prison I would say have you found it they would say amen or praise God some of them would say that verse 18 it's Jesus who is speaking and he says if the world hates you by the way the grammar dictates that really it could be translated should be translated since the world hates you since the world hates you here's the explanation you know or you ought to know you know that it has hated me before it hated you verse 19 if you were of the world the world would love its own but because you are not of the world but I chose you out of the world because of this the world hates you because of this because of what see you and I are convinced that the world that we have persecution in this world because the world hates us now I've already said that mentioned that and it's true enough hates us for who we are and what we stand for and so forth but we're not to interpret that persecution from that external vantage point that we are persecuted because the world has rejected us we need to understand that it's for this because of this what he chose us

[36 : 03] I chose you I elected you I selected you I picked you out that's what the word eklektos means it comes from two words it's a preposition and a word the word or the verb is to call and the preposition is out God in eternity passes called you out now he didn't call us up out of the world he called us out from the other unredeemed the lost of the world the condemned of the world he called us out of that and he left us here on this planet and so we are enduring persecution because he has chosen us elected us for this persecution I mean is the slave greater than the master that's what Jesus said remember verse 20 the word that I said to you a slave is not greater than his master if they persecuted me they will also persecute you they will you can count on that and so we are enduring persecution as

Christians not because no one wants us here even though that's true it's not because they hate us and hate everything we stand for though that is true that's not what defines the persecution primarily we are persecuted aliens because God chose us God alienated us you say how does that help it helps us to know this as Peter said know this persecution is not because of rejection not by God certainly does that help that this persecution is not God persecuting us not God rejecting us but importantly it's not man rejecting us in fact they would be perfectly perfectly good with them if we would just stay with them they didn't reject us

God called us out it's not man rejecting us they've rejected Christ but they would be happy with us to stay with them and live like they live in fact one place in Peter's letter he says that it should not be strange to you that the world thinks it's strange that you don't live the way they live they'd be perfectly okay with it now we need what defines us this is what we need to understand here is where the great encouragement and the strength that we can draw that we do not define who we are based upon the world's rejection of us we define who we are based upon God's acceptance of us and I tell you though you may have to think about it a while and let that sink in because you know by and large most Americans don't know how to suffer we don't know how but you let that sink in for

a while you are going to find great encouragement there that

I can endure anything if I know that God is the one I look to God is the one who chose me and I'm enduring the persecution yes not because they're the bad guys necessarily but because God in his in his counsel in his according to his name in his great plan has called me out from the condemned world know where you are number two know who you are this is where it's going to start to help a little bit more I tell you honestly I would have to say that I still grapple with that first point and I even prayed this morning God and how does that help me to know that you alienated me but this second part listen know who you are know who you are

Peter is going to do a tremendous thing here he's going to take one of the most disputed doctrines a doctrine that I would say one of the biggest bones of contention among scholars and baptists today he's going to take that doctrine and he's going to articulate it in such a way so as to cause us to sense that in the midst of our persecution God is putting his arms around us he really Peter really does wrap us in God years ago when our oldest was just a boy little boy we lived in Harrisburg Arkansas I pastored the first Baptist church there across the street pretty close across the street was a pawn shop and it was not maybe typical pawn shop kind of the stereotypical pawn shop you know in fact the owner of it was a member of our church a godly man and he loved our boys and our three boys that time we didn't have

[41 : 59] Jonathan yet did toward the end of it but and they were always giving them something you know out of the pawn shop little toys little things such and on one occasion Matthew of course was very interested in football football cards and they were collecting football and baseball cards that kind of thing and and Don Mulder the owner he had quite a few of those cards there playing cards there and he allowed Matthew to take a box of them home with him to look at and then Matthew brought them back only he didn't bring them all back he kept a few of them and mom and dad found out about that and so Matthew and I walked across the street and Matthew had to turn those cards over to Brother Mulder and tell him honestly that he had taken and Matthew did that laid them out told the whole story and then he just started to cry

I'll never forget it I'll probably get teary eyed just telling the story he started to cry and he put his head on my shoulder just about right there and I put my arm around him he had done the right thing I looked over at Brother Don Mulder and I don't judge his heart but it was obvious in some things he said that maybe he felt that Matthew didn't need to do that and yet he needed to do that he was doing something indicative of an alien being honest and setting things right and I put my arm around Matthew and held on to him as he cried and that is exactly what God if you'll sense it and know it God does with you every time all throughout this life he has left us here for a purpose and by his grace we should be involved in fulfilling that purpose but in the midst of fulfilling that purpose living not of this world but in this world we're going to suffer because we're aliens and God wraps his arms around us in a similar way that's what Peter is doing with verse two in fact he is engulfing us in God in all of his three persons did you notice as I read that text foreknown by the father sanctified by the spirit to obedience to obey

Christ be sprinkled by his blood all three members of the holy trinity are involved in verse two in this doctrine of election and it is as if that Peter is just wrapping us up in God that's how we deal with persecution in this world and he does it this way and we ought to consider number one that we are selected by God the father lovingly specifically uniquely selected in eternity passed by God the father that that is what we find in this word chosen who are chosen said verse one according to the foreknowledge of

God it's right there in plain English and believe me in the Greek it's the same chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the father there's his arms around you in the midst of persecution the foreknowledge see this is where it all began in the sovereignty of God in the eternal heart of God in eternity past very basis the very source of who we are today in Christ began with God choosing us calling us out and he did it according to his foreknowledge and what does that mean does it mean as some have supposed and some would teach that it means that

God had foresight I mean he is God and knows all things can see the end from the beginning and so God looked down through the eons of time and he saw Don Coleman and he saw that I would one day believe and so he put me on the list of his elect he saw I would choose him and so he chose me that's what foresight would mean now follow me here because this is difficult I want to be very sensitive foreknowledge two words again a preposition before fore knowledge a knowledge of something before it happens it would be used in nearly every context and yet when it's used in the

context of some activity of God it means something much more than that it's not foresight and I'll tell you why number one if Peter means or if the

[48 : 27] Bible means that God's foreknowledge is foresight then right off the bat we have a problem with the sovereignty of God why might call it the greatness of God we have a problem with the greatness of God would you look at verse 20 excuse me let's wait on verse 20 let's look at John 15 we looked at John 15 a moment ago now we're going to look at a passage that occurs just before the passage I read a moment ago John 15 and verse 16 the Bible says you did not choose me now really for me that's enough God didn't see that I would choose him because the Bible says he said you didn't choose me but there's more to it than that you did not choose me but

I chose you and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit and that your fruit would remain so that whatever you ask of the father in my name he will give to you in short I chose you to be saved I chose you you did not choose me now let me ask you something if God's choice is dependent upon my choice then who is in control see God did not look down through time and see Paul and say within himself because he has knowledge all knowledge say within himself there's Paul out there I sure hope he will believe in me I hope he'll believe in me because I want to make him a great apostle and he keeps looking oh good he's going to believe in me and so

I can add him to my list who's in control if foreknowledge the foreknowledge of God is foresight then we have a problem with the greatness of God secondly if foreknowledge means foresight then we have a problem with the gospel the gospel of God look at Romans chapter 3 and verse 10 and while you're looking for Romans chapter 3 verse 10 may I tell you that the very heart of our gospel message begins with the man's need for salvation and man needs salvation because he is hopelessly lost in sin dead in sin and so if somehow God could see something the

Bible says can never happen then we've got a problem and what is it that can never happen well the Bible tells us right here in verse 10 as it is written there is none righteous not even one there is none who understands there is none who seeks for God say there are those who would say that God has the foresight they can look down through time and he sees!

one day he is going to seek after God and so he is going to help him to find him and yet the Bible says that there is none who seek after God none not any that seek after God and he goes on all have turned aside together they have become useless there is none who does good there is none not even one I don't know how it could be any plainer than that you see not only does that rule out the possibility that God could look down through time and see Don Coleman that he would one day be good that he would do good things and so then he elects me on the basis of that or if he looks down through time and says that one day this Don Coleman is going because it clearly says no one seeks after

[53 : 15] God there is none who are good not even one not even one foreknowledge is not foresight thirdly Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8 thirdly we also would have a problem with the grace of God if our explanation for foreknowledge is foresight a prescience God just knows things because he sees them before they happen if that be the case then we have a problem with the grace of God God chose me because he saw that I would one day choose him then my salvation is awarded to me based upon my good works specifically my belief Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8 says for by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not as a result of work not as a result of work by the way what is the gift of God here in this passage the grace or the faith the answer is both both even grammatically it must be this that

God's grace you saved by grace through faith that not of yourselves and anything to do with you it is the gift of God not as a result of works and so if foreknowledge is foresight then we have a problem with the grace of God because then my salvation is awarded me because of some work I have done finally we have a problem with the glory of God we have a problem with the glory of God verse 9 continues to say so that no one may boast your people if God's choice was a result of foresight only who gets the credit for my salvation who gets the credit for it or let me insert this word who gets the glory the word boast really could be properly translated glory so that no man or woman can glory

I'm not going to get to heaven one day and be able to look back on any part of this life and find any glory for me that I am there saved in eternity because I made the right choice back there on earth no I'm going to be there because of the great glory of God the glory of God listen we're wrapped up in the arm of God here we're enduring persecution a world that hates us and Peter is wrapping us up in God chosen according to the foreknowledge of God selected picked out called out also we're

sanctified by

God the Holy Spirit sanctified by God the Holy Spirit see selected in eternity sanctified in time listen election and salvation are not the same thing same event part of the same thing same event I talked to a lady some years ago and I shared the gospel with her or at least I asked for a testimony of whether she was lost or saved and she said well in my theology I believe I always have been saved in eternity past God saved me no he didn't he chose you in eternity but you were saved in time through the work of the Holy Spirit the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit would you look at chapter 2 and verse 9 of first

Peter but you are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation by the way chosen race there's that word *eklektos* again he's not speaking to Jews he's speaking to Gentiles and Jews he's speaking to the church a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for God's own possession so that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light for you once were not a people that's where I know he's speaking primarily Gentiles you weren't even a people but now you are the people of God you have not received mercy but now you have received mercy see election is called out and then sanctification is set apart for himself I say I tell you as Christians enduring persecution we need to understand that

[59 : 32] God the father has wrapped his arms around us and in the same way he chose his son to die for us he chose us to be his own people he called us out through his electing purpose and with the arms of the Holy Spirit we are wrapped up in sanctification we have been set apart for God's own possession beloved possession and I tell you whatever may come in this life we are safe in his arms and one more not only the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit but then thirdly we're saved by God the Son selected sanctified saved we might even put it this in these terms signs sealed and delivered that's who we are and all the arms of the

Trinity are wrapped around us he says there in the latter part of verse two to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood now what in the world does that mean well obey we understand but obey what we're talking here or Peter's talking here about the obedience of faith here's where it is becomes a done deal it's actually delivered the Holy Spirit begins to work and setting us apart and and regeneration and and and then it is but it's Jesus who died upon the cross and shed his blood and our faith in his sacrifice his blood that saves us it's signed sealed and delivered we we are selected by God the God the Father in eternity past and we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit God the Holy Spirit right here in time and it is a done deal through the sacrifice of the

Lord Jesus Christ when he shed his blood upon that cross and paid for that covenant we are now in with God obedience through the sprinkling with the blood that speaks of the cross wish we had time to look at Exodus 24 verse 3 and see the Old Testament foreshadowing of this as Moses called upon the people to obey God and they said everything God says we will do we will obey!

And the sacrifice was made and Moses took part of the blood and anointed the altar and he took the other part of the blood and dipped the hyssop in there and sprinkled the blood on the people on the people this is a foreshadowing of that covenant that would one day be ratified and made permanently through the shed blood of Jesus Christ upon the cross see all members of the!

God are involved in victorious lives in the midst of a world that hates us and does not want us here we can do that because we are wrapped up in the arms of God we know where we are we're here in this world as aliens dispersed all around the globe and we know who we are we are uniquely chosen by God and set apart for God and saved by God the Son and then one last thing and I'll be finished saved or rather know what you have by virtue of who you are what is it you have grace and peace latter part of the verse two may grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure it's tremendous and have time to unpack all of that grace is just simply understood as the outer resource we have to live this life victoriously the grace of

[64 : 07] God the dynamic of God that's working in us so that we can do two things so that we can do his will and do his good pleasure grace the outer resource that God gives us by virtue of who we are in him and then peace is the inner result peace peace in the midst of a storm peace sometimes in the midst of a life where it seems like all hell is breaking loose around us we're aliens in a hostile world dear people God has selected us to be there we're here because of him and we're safe in him and secure in him in his sovereign arms around no matter what may happen we can handle it and live victoriously who who