

# Encouragement for God's Elect

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, as we stand ready to speak to your people and to echo your word, we declare that we need you.

! Oh, how we need you. Father, your people have come to hear from you.! We know, Lord, that you are able to do miraculous things.

You are able to use vessels of honor and of dishonor. You are able to cause your word to be heard even beyond the noises, whatever they might be.

And so, Lord, as was prayed earlier, I pray that you would enrich every heart today for your glory.

And so that your name might be praised.

And I pray, Lord, that you would help me. Lord, as I deliver this message today, in the name of Jesus, we pray and all God's people say, Amen.

[ 1 : 17 ] Amen. Amen. For a brief while, we are going to consider Peter's writing.

It's found in 1 Peter chapter 1. 1 Peter chapter 1. and we're going to consider two verses in particular.

Verses 1 and 2. 1 Peter chapter 1 verses 1 and 2. 1 Peter chapter 1 verses 1 and 2.

And it reads, To those, sorry, Peter and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galactia, 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. There are two words. Elect.

[ 2 : 53 ] Exiles. Elect. Exiles. And if you would permit me that word elect, if you would permit me to use a substitute word chosen, that I would want to say to us that the two words that will form the basis of our message that we will talk about today are chosen exiles.

Chosen exiles. Chosen being a substitute word for elect. It means the same thing.

You are elected. You are chosen. In this instance. In this context. So the two words that will be central to our message today are chosen and exiles.

Peter refers to the Christians who were dispersed in what is today modern day Turkey as chosen exiles.

We want to see how Peter used these words as a basis of encouragement to believers who were suffering.

[ 4 : 13 ] Peter used these two words. Chosen exiles. To believers who were suffering. And to bring practical application of Peter's message to us today, we will consider the context in which the original recipients of Peter's letter, you consider the context in which the letter was written to them.

What were their circumstances? And whether their circumstances presented a unique interpretation and application for Peter's message.

In other words, we want to consider whether this message, chosen exile, applied only to them.

Whether there might be application for us today.

Were their circumstances unique? Could we find interpretation and application for the message that Peter conveyed to them, to us today, to the church today?

We hope to show that Peter's doctrines are universally and permanently relevant. And even in the Bahamas, those doctrines are becoming an increasing source of encouragement.

[ 5 : 44 ] Chosen exiles. Once we've done that, we want to look at each of those two words that are central to our message.

Chosen and exiles in turn. My hope is that if you are a believer today, the truth of who you are will be sufficient to overwhelm the suffering you might be enduring now.

And perhaps what you will face in the days and years to come. And my hope is that if you are a non-believer today, that you will see how God provides comfort in every situation.

And that God, my prayer is that God would be pleased to save you. The letter that Peter writes, written, he says, to the chosen elect, and he says to the dispersion in Pontus, Galactia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

So Peter writes this letter to the church in modern-day Turkey, as we said.

[ 7 : 22 ] The church was suffering because of their belief. They were few in number. They were in the minority. They were in the minority.

And they were espousing what was, at the time, a new doctrine. And no doubt, they were being ridiculed.

And they were socially ostracized. They were different. They were impacted, not just socially, but financially as well.

Whether it was in the marketplace. They weren't invited to the parties. In fact, they weren't going in any event. They were not well received.

And they were not thought of highly. The church, members of the church, were under distress.

[ 8 : 24 ] And Peter used these two words, chosen exiles to encourage the church. Those must be powerful words. Chosen exiles.

Here it is that these people are suffering. Peter opens this letter. These words, chosen exiles. In the modern western world, we've had a pretty good run in this part of the world, part of the hemisphere. Unlike the churches that were the original recipients of Peter's message, until recently, we were largely respected, and even left alone, by the minority of persons, who did not share our views of God, or about God, and the place of religion in society.

Until recently, that is. Of course, it has been true for centuries, and continues to be true, that we have fellow Christians, who are, who bear the emotional, and the social, and even physical scars, of their faith.

That's true in other parts of the world, but we have largely been spared, up to this point. But in other parts of the world, some have been put to death, and for sure, this message of encouragement, absolutely, this message of encouragement, would be for them, chosen elect, you're God's chosen elect.

[ 10 : 17 ] What about here in the Bahamas? Let me say that sadly, things in our country are changing rapidly, as it relates to the practice, practice, and even the acceptance, of Christianity, outside the four walls, of the church.

Church leaders are being ridiculed. Christian, Christian views, are not as highly regarded, as they once were.

And being at, the mouth of the United States, and America, in general, we are being influenced, by its culture, which is changing rapidly.

America, is a place, that is undergoing, significant, cultural changes. The internet, travel, globalization generally.

The fact that we are linked, economically, it seems to me, that the Bahamas, cannot escape, the changes, that we are seeing, all around the world.

[ 11 : 31 ] How the views of, Christians, are not respected. And how it is, that if you say, that you stand, for God, you can be sued.

You could lose your license. So prepare, for suffering, as days, and the years, go by.

We can expect, that if you stand, for Christ, that you will suffer. And so today, it might be true, that we are not, experiencing, quite what, the Christians, in this part of the world, to whom Peter, wrote this message.

Perhaps we are not, experiencing the level, of suffering, that they experienced. But you wait long enough, and things, unfortunately, are going to change.

But the truth is, no matter, where we live, no matter where we live, and when we lived, 1 Peter, has relevance, relevance, always has relevance, no matter what, your circumstances, no matter what, your circumstances, 1 Peter always, has relevance.

[ 12 : 55 ] As Karen Joves, wrote, Christians need, to be transformed, in their thinking, about who they are, in Christ. And what, that implies, for relationships, with others, believers, and with society, regardless, regardless of, one's historical moment, or geographical, location.

She goes on to say, 1 Peter, encourages, a transformed, understanding, of Christian, self-identity, and redefines, how, what, is to live, as a Christian, in a world, that is hostile, to the basic, principles, of the gospel.

That's always true. It's always true, that the world, is hostile, to the basic, principles, of the gospel. It's always true, that you and I, are different.

It's always true. It's always true, that, in fact, often times, we don't want to, live, what the Bible says, ourselves.

Much less, those who, are not believers. So that, level of hostility, always, exists. We need, as she says, to, be transformed, in our thinking, about who we are, in Christ.

[ 14 : 18 ] And how we interact, with, the society. The way a Christian, interacts with the society, ought to be different, from the way the world, interacts, from the, with the society.

And so that tension, always exists. It always exists, and it will always exist. And therefore, this word, that Peter writes, Peter writes, to the church, First Peter, is as relevant, to, yesterday, as it is, today. Now, what is quite interesting, when we think about, Peter's encouragement, to the church, Peter says to them, be encouraged, you are, chosen, elect, you are, chosen exiles, he says, you are, chosen, exiles, be, encouraged, Peter says.

Now, one might think, that Peter would, offer a, political, or an economic, or even, a social solution, to, the problems, that they will face it.

One might think, that that would be, Peter's message, to the Christians, today. Here is, a ten point, political plan. Here is, a nine point, economic plan.

[ 15 : 48 ] But Peter offered, no such, no such, subjective, illusionary, or temporary, solution. Instead, Peter reminded, the believers, to whom he wrote, that, they are, chosen.

And he tells them, by whom they are chosen. By the Trinity. Yes, when the culture, turns on you, and when life, throws you, a curve ball, you got to put things, in the perspective.

I think this is the way, Peter, if Peter were here today, this is what he would say. When life, turns on you. When the culture is not, what you expect.

Got to put it, into perspective. Yes, we have a tendency, to measure things, from a, myopic, and, a narrow perspective. But Peter reminds us, that there is a better way.

Peter tells us, there's a better way. It says, right where you are, in the circumstances, that you're in, where things are difficult, where things are not, working out, the way you would like.

[ 17 : 04 ] Peter said, you can stand there, and you can have, joy, and satisfaction, in knowing that you are, God's, chosen.

chosen. You're God's, chosen. Not only that, you are, God's, chosen exile. What does Peter mean, by that?

What is Peter, what is Peter telling us? Why is this, so important? Why is this, such a big deal? Why is it, that you can, smile at the storm? That you can, look at every, circumstances, and be, content. When you realize, who you are, Peter says, get to know, who you are man. So you know, who you are. You stand up straight. You won't be afraid, of what's happening, of what they're saying, about you.

You won't be afraid, that you're not, you wouldn't be concerned, that you're not accepted, by, the crowd. And Peter uses, the word chosen, in 1st Peter, chapter 1.

[ 18 : 14 ] Peter simply means, that God, chose the believer, to be saved, and not the other way around. See what Peter says, in verse 2.

Peter says, to the, to those who are, elect, who are chosen, according to the, foreknowledge of God, the Father.

God, that's a big deal. The fact that, God has, chosen you, and Peter writes, he has, chosen believers, according to the, foreknowledge of, God, the Father.

Chosen by God. If you're a believer today, you have been, chosen by God. Listen, guys, I know the guys, can appreciate this. Imagine if you were, out there, playing sports, and, and Michael Jordan, chose you to be, on his basketball team.

You know already, you're a winner. There's a smile, on your face. Chosen by Michael. Well, here, Peter is saying, you've been, chosen by God.

[ 19 : 33 ] And he's saying, that's why, this is such an encouragement, to the church. He's saying, nobody can talk that. And we've got to see, in a moment, Peter says, you haven't just been chosen, you have been chosen, from the foundation, of the earth.

And he didn't just, foreknow, but he, foreordained it. He chose you. He chose you, not for anything, that you've done, or will do.

But he chose you. He put his hands on your life. This choosing, is what we call, the doctrine of election.

The Bible supports, this doctrine, which, for many, is hard, to accept.

We see it, throughout, scripture. Consider, Ephesians chapter 1, verses 4 through 6. The apostle Paul writes, blessed be the, God, and father, of our Lord Jesus, Christ, who has blessed us, in Christ, with every spiritual, who has blessed us, with every spiritual blessing, in heavenly places.

[ 21 : 01 ] Even as he chose, even as he, chose us, in him, before the foundation, of the world, that we should be holy. So what did he do?

He chose us, God chose us in him, before the world, was created. That's what the Bible says. We were chosen, believers, were chosen, before the foundation, of the world.

That's what the Bible says. That's not what I say. Chosen in him, before the foundation, of the world. Why? So that we, should be, blameless, before him. But he goes on to say, in love, he predestined us.

Predestination. He predestined us, for adoption, as sons, through Jesus Christ. According to the purpose, of his will.

To the praise, of his glorious grace. With which, he has blessed us, in the beloved. Chosen, before the foundation, of the world.

[ 22 : 06 ] Peter says, consider yourself chosen. Whatever, your circumstance is. You don't have money, in your pocket?

Peter said, you're chosen. People laughing at you. Peter said, you are chosen. Peter says, the society, disregards your views.

Peter says, you're chosen. Chosen by God. He says, it trumps everything. It trumps everything. It doesn't matter, it doesn't matter what it is.

It doesn't matter, what the circumstance is. He says, you are chosen. And just in case, there might be some, who, are not persuaded, persuaded by, the doctrine of, of election.

I want to remind you, of what, Paul writes, about Jacob and Esau, in Romans chapter 9. In Romans chapter 9, verses 6 through 22.

[ 23 : 18 ] you remember, you remember, you remember, how Paul, writes about, God having, chosen between, Jacob and Esau, how that, it was God's, divine, choice.

Paul writes, in, in verse 9, of, of Romans 9. For this is what, the promise said.

Well, in verse 10, he says, and not only so, but, when Rebecca, had conceived, children, by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were, not yet born, and had done, nothing, either, good or, bad.

Notice that. These two boys, had done nothing, good or bad. Paul says that, very specifically. In order that, God's purpose, of election, might continue. In order that, God's purpose of election, might continue.

Not because of works, but because, of him who calls. Sarah was told, the older, will serve, the younger.

[ 24 : 37 ] As it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau, I hated. God demonstrating, his sovereign choice.

Jacob I loved, but Esau, I hated. And then Paul asks, a rhetorical question. He says, what shall we say then?

He says, what shall we say then? If God says, I've made a choice. I've looked at these two, and I have made a choice. Not before they were born, I made a choice.

And the older will serve, the younger. Not for anything that they have done. Paul says, what shall I, what shall we say then? And he asks another question.

Is there injustice, on God's part? And he answers, by no means. For he says to Moses, I will have mercy, on whom I have mercy.

[ 25 : 41 ] And I will have compassion, on whom I have compassion. I'm telling you, this choice, having been chosen by God, is a big deal. We have been chosen by God.

He decided in, eternity past, to have mercy on us, to choose us. And then consider 2 Timothy 2.10. Paul writes, Therefore, I endure everything, for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain, the salvation, that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

I endure everything, for the sake of the elect. There is no question, about God's sovereign choice, in scripture.

How God chooses, whom, he will save. But I realize, I realize, that, it is our nature, to think that, to think that either, we chose God, or perhaps, God is, not righteous, because, we think, maybe he condemned others, to hell.

[ 27 : 07 ] Well, the truth is, we don't choose God. And the fact, that we would think so, just, is a demonstration, of our own pride. And this notion, that God condemns others, to hell, is not true at all.

The truth is, that God, doesn't condemn anybody, to hell. God just chooses, to, elect some, to put his, hand on some.

Peter sets out, in these two verses, that we are examining, that not only, are Christians, chosen by, God the Father, the entire Trinity, is involved, in the work.

I'm telling you, Peter is saying, you got to be excited, about this stuff. You are chosen, and it's not just, he says, the entire Trinity, is involved, in the work, of your salvation.

Look at what Peter says, about the involvement, of the Holy Spirit. He says, to those who are, chosen, according to the foreknowledge, of God the Father, in the sanctification, of, the Spirit.

[ 28 : 36 ] Often times, when we, speak of, sanctification, we are thinking, about our own, efforts, in pursuit, of holiness. Here I believe, that Peter is writing, about the work, of the Holy Spirit, in the process, of salvation, to grant believers, imputed, sanctification.

That is to say, the act of the Holy Spirit, sets the believer, apart, so that he might, serve God. the Holy Spirit, was actively, involved, in our salvation.

Giving to us, imputed, sanctification, setting us apart, for God. But, chosen by God, before the foundation, God the Father, from the foundation, of the earth, sanctified, by the Holy Spirit. moreover, we see the role, of the Son, in the process, of salvation. Peter says, to those, who are, chosen, for obedience, to Jesus Christ, and for sprinkling, with, his, blood.

Peter makes, two distinct points here. first, believers are saved, so that we might, be obedient, to Christ. Of course, obedience is, expected, in an ongoing way.

[ 30 : 11 ] But in the act, of salvation, it is the acceptance, of Jesus, as Lord. Indeed, Jesus himself, said, no one comes, to the Father, except by me.

But, we have, we see here, that Peter, is telling us, that Jesus Christ, is actively, involved, in our, salvation.

The second aspect, of Jesus' involvement, in the process, of salvation, has to do, with his death. Peter writes, here, about the sprinkling, of blood, referring, to the death, of Jesus Christ.

one writer, writing on this, opined, that while Peter, could have had, in view, the sprinkling, of blood, for the forgiveness, of sins, as found, in Leviticus, 4, or Exodus, 12, where the, sprinkling, of blood, on the doorpost, on the night, of the Passover, was a sign, that the angel, of death, would, preserve, God's people.

It is likely, that it referred, to Exodus, 24, verses 1, through 8, where Moses, confirms, the covenant, between the Lord, and his chosen, people.

[ 31 : 39 ] Here, the people, made a commitment, to God, while they were, traveling, from a foreign land, and they were, sprinkled, with blood, we see, later, in the chapter, that God's, glory, descends, and stays, with them, to the promised, land.

These foreigners, traveling, to the promised, land, chosen, by God, sprinkled, with the blood, at the time, sprinkled, with the blood, of animals.

Christ. But we have, a better covenant. We have, a better covenant, sprinkled, with the blood, of Jesus Christ.

The writer, goes on to say, and I quote, given this background, Peter, wants his, converted, Gentile audience, to understand, that they are, in the same, sort of situation, as God's people, in Exodus chapter 24.

Like them, they have, been taken, out of their, old home. They have now, been constituted, as God's chosen, covenanted, people, through the, blood sacrifice, of Jesus Christ.

[ 32 : 59 ] and their, obedient response. They must now, commence their, pilgrimage, through the wilderness, to the promised land. And as they travel, they will also know, God's glory, resting on them, even, amidst, difficulties.

Even amidst, difficulties. So when Peter, speaks here, about, us being, chosen by God, Peter has in view, a covenant, a commitment, that we make.

That the blood, was sprinkled, on us. And we are, covenanted people. And we are, indeed, making a pilgrimage, just as was done, with the, Israelites, as they left, Egypt. God's chosen people. Covenanted people, through the blood, through the blood, sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to obey him. And we know, that the, glory, the Holy Spirit, is with us, to lead us, and to guide us, and to direct us, even amidst, difficulties, that we, face, and encounter. And that's just, half of the story. Peter said, you have, been, chosen. You have, been, chosen. [ 34 : 34 ] The other word, that Peter uses, he says, you are, an exile. Peter, says, to the church, by way of encouragement, you are an exile.

You know, normally, when somebody tells you, you are an exile, that's not a word, that, should encourage you. That's not a word, that's, normally intended, to encourage one. But in this context, Peter says, listen, you need to, view yourself, as a chosen exile. In normal, everyday language, when we use the word, exile, we refer to someone, who is in a country, where he, or she, has, limited status.

As someone, who is not a citizen. It must be understood, that Peter, was not here, referring to, believers, as non-citizens, in that traditional, sense of the word. It wasn't talking about, them, not being citizens, of the, places, or the countries, where, they lived. That's not what Peter, was talking about. Peter was speaking, more broadly.

[ 35 : 43 ] Peter were here, today, he wouldn't say, just because you don't have, a Bahamian passport, you are, an exile.

That's not what Peter, was talking about. Peter, talking about, a more enduring, citizenship. One that is, out of this world. Peter was saying, to the church, this world, is not, your home. You're just, passing through. He was saying, that, this world, this earth, what we can see, this is not it, this is, but temporary.

This is going, to pass away. There's something, more eternal. You are, an exile. You are, away from your home. You are, a chosen exile.

[ 36 : 48 ] Chosen by God, from the foundation, of the earth. And where you are, today, is not, your home. Peter was saying, that's the perspective, that you should have.

And when you have, that perspective, when you realize, that this thing, ain't yours. When you realize, that you've been, chosen by God.

Now this place, is not your home. Think about it. What can, come against you? What can really, beat you down? Nothing really. When you have, that perspective, in view.

When you have, in view, that you can, wear this thing, loosely. It's not your home. It's not your home. You're not going, to be here permanently. You have a home, that's already, been built for you.

That's what Peter, was saying. Peter was saying, listen, this place, is not your home. But Peter, in this book, 1 Peter, Peter devotes, much of this book, telling Christians, what it means, to live as, exiles.

[ 38 : 00 ] And in this book, which you are encouraged, to read, he talks about how we, an exile, ought to deal with sin. An exile, ought to deal with authority, and relationships, and the workplace, and character issues.

Peter says, you're an exile. You're an exile, and this is how you ought to live. You're a chosen exile. But can I tell you, I want to tell you, some character traits, that we should see, in an exile.

First one that comes to mind, is humility. Humility. The truth is, we did nothing, to earn our salvation. It was, the sovereign will, of God. Yes, we are, we are, beneficiaries, of sovereign grace.

It is sovereign, because God, is over the entirety, of the universe. That's what makes it sovereign. God is sovereign. He is over the entirety, of the universe.

[ 39 : 12 ] And he does, whatever, whatever, pleases him. He is sovereign. No one can, thwart his will. Psalm 115, 3 says, our God is in heaven.

He does, whatever pleases him. Whatever pleases him. And if that were not true, if it were not true, that God is sovereign, then he can't be God.

So if he is God, he is sovereign. Daniel chapter 4, verse 35, we read, all the peoples of the earth, are regarded, as nothing.

He does, as he pleases, with the powers, of the heaven, and the peoples, of the earth. No one can hold back, his hand, or say to him, what have you, done?

God is sovereign. And he extends to us sovereign grace. Grace, that which we do not deserve, gives it to us.

[ 40 : 27 ] Sovereign God extends to us sovereign grace. There is no place for pride. There is just place for humility in our hearts. As we consider this grandiose thing that we have, having been chosen by God, a sovereign God, from the foundation of the earth.

no one, can snatch, us, out, of, his, hands.

And the life that we will live, is far greater than the life we now live. And it does not yet appear, what we shall be.

It is, amazing. It is, amazing grace. It is, sovereign grace. What other attribute might we have, ought we to have, as a people in exile, chosen exile?

You ought to live with a sense of gratitude. gratitude. Gratitude to sovereign God who saved us.

[ 41 : 54 ] It is true that we owe him our very lives. And the truth is, when you really think about it, even that's not enough.

Even our very lives are not enough. how can a mortal, how can a mortal repay a sovereign God? It's not possible. How can a mortal repay a sovereign God?

He can't. the best we can do is obey him. The best we can do is extend gratitude to him.

how else might the reality of us being chosen, exiled, find expression in our lives.

It ought to give to us a sense of security and permanency of our salvation. There should be no doubt about it. We are secured.

[ 43 : 03 ] Paul writes, Peter writes to us that the Trinity was involved in our salvation. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit chosen from the foundation of the earth by a sovereign God.

Sanctified by the Holy Spirit. the blood of Jesus Christ sprinkled for us.

We should have a sense of security and a sense of permanency about our salvation. No one can snatch us from his hand.

When God does a work, God does work of salvation, he does it completely. So you and I, despite our shortcomings, despite our failures, you and I can rest in this truth when God saves us.

He saves us completely. You got to give me an amen there. Amen. Amen. And how else might we be affected?

[ 44 : 30 ] What else might it look like? You ought to wear this world loosely. You know, when you visit a foreign country, you don't ordinarily get caught up in its internal affairs.

You know, you leave that for the citizens. You don't vote. You don't get involved in their politics. you stay out of certain things. You might have views, but you keep those to yourself sometimes.

It depends. But you know there is, you know that there is no permanency in your state, in that foreign country.

And so you always keep your eyes fixed on your return to your country. much more than we as believers should be focused on heaven.

You know, where? This world loosely. Not to be disturbed too much by the things that are going on around us.

[ 45 : 40 ] obviously we are expected to be salt and light in this world. We are to understand that there are some things that we are not going to be able to change.

that our attitudes, our decisions, our attitudes and our ambitions should be influenced by an awareness of our eternal destiny.

Let me say that again. The decisions you make, the attitude that you have, your goals and your ambitions, should be influenced by your awareness of your eternal destiny.

This place is not your home. And so the decisions you make, the attitude that you have, the ambition that you have, should all be influenced by your eternal destiny.

You should, we as believers, should view all of these things, should view life in general through the prism of the home that awaits us on the other side.

[ 47 : 06 ] so if you believe it today, if you are a believer today, aren't you glad you're a chosen exile?

Chosen exile. You can leave this place today saying, I'm a chosen exile. I look at your faces and I don't see a lot of happy people.

Maybe you're hungry, hungry, but I gotta tell you, you are a chosen exile. That's a big deal for a believer, a chosen exile. Chosen exile.

There's nothing the world can throw at you that can match that description. Nothing the world can throw at you. When you're persecuted for Christ's sake, you can declare that you're a chosen exile. when you're wrongly talked about, you can declare, I'm a chosen exile. But you can't stretch the money far enough.

[ 48 : 19 ] You can still say, I'm a chosen exile. When the children are misbehaving, you can say, I'm a chosen exile. when they're demanding that you do something that is totally against your conscience and your scripture and the scriptures, and you refuse to do it and you lose their promotion, or they say, man, you're not one of the boys.

They don't invite you anymore, or they don't give you that thing that you think you deserve. you can say, I'm a chosen exile. This place is not my home.

I'm a chosen exile. Chosen exile. What a perspective to have. What a perspective to have. And I pray to God that we all have the mindset and the perspective of a chosen exile.

Let us pray. pray.