

Series: Saved, Settled, and Sanctified
You are not Alone
1 Peter 1: 1-2

The first epistle of Peter provides great insight for the believer. In this letter, Peter provides great spiritual instruction regarding our relationship and security in the Lord, our daily walk with Christ, and the glorious return of our Lord. It also provides a picture of life within the early church. At this time, the church was gaining ground, becoming well established throughout the world. Peter is not writing to an individual, but five congregations of believers. These local churches would have been made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Although their backgrounds were different, they all shared common ground. They were all believers, part of the body of Christ, and they all faced intense persecution for their faith. Peter sought to encourage their faith and strengthen their resolve for the Lord and desire for spreading the Gospel.

These words may seem distant and irrelevant to many, but in fact they are timely and needful in our day. The landscape in America, and around the world is changing. Christians in other countries are facing intense persecution for their faith, and the majority in America are growing increasingly intolerant of our faith. A storm is looming on the horizon for believers in America and we must be prepared to endure for the Lord. In order to do that, we must learn to abide in Christ and abide in His Word. Our faith will be tested, and only the strong and committed will survive.

Today I want to begin a series entitled: Saved, Settled, and Sanctified. If we are to endure, we must be saved by grace, settled in the faith, and walking with the Lord. As we begin, I want to look at the [details](#) of Peter's introduction and consider the thought: [You are not Alone](#).

I. The Greeting Presented (1) – [Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia](#). We can glean much from this word of greeting.

Notice:

A. The Appeal – Peter immediately identifies himself to the churches within the Roman provinces. Just receiving a word from Peter must have brought encouragement to them. He was well known among the church. We too know the story of Peter. He was the leader of the 12 apostles, but his life had experienced trials and adversity. He had proclaimed Jesus as the Christ, only to deny Him prior to the crucifixion. He had questioned his faith even after the resurrection, but something happened in the life of Peter following his encounter with the Lord on the shores of Galilee. He was a different man when he boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Christ at Pentecost in Jerusalem. He was a champion of the Gospel now and held great influence within the church.

- It must have been comforting to know Peter cared for them and understood their struggles. They could identify with Peter because he too had faced difficulty and doubts. They needed his reassurance to continue the faith. We too need the support and encouragement of each other, more now than ever. Troublesome times are ahead for the church, and we will need to band together, rallying around one another to endure the struggles that await us. If you aren't thankful for fellow believers now, you will be in the not too distant future.

B. The Authority – Peter also reminded them that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ. His salvation had been obtained the same way; they were on equal footing with the Lord, but his words carried weight and authority. He had spent time with the Lord, walking with Him and learning of Him. Peter was a chosen vessel of the Lord, used to encourage believers and preach the Gospel. The Spirit had inspired the writing of this letter. Peter wanted them to take these words to heart, not because he had written them, but because he had a word from the Lord. Instead of listening to the chatter and threats of those around them, Peter wanted the churches to abide in the Word of the Lord.

- Society would have us abandon the Word of God. They deem it irrelevant, outdated and archaic. They see no value in the Scriptures and refuse to submit to God's will and design for humanity. They refuse to embrace Jesus as the sole means of salvation. They view the Word as restrictive to progress and opposed to modern, accepted points of view. Regardless of what the world around us says, we must abide in the Word. Through it we were convicted of sin and convinced of our need for Christ. It provides instruction for our lives and enables us to hear from God. If you haven't already, I urge you to allow the Word of God guide your life in all faith and practice. If God said it, that settles it!

C. The Audience (1b) – Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Peter reveals the audience to whom he is speaking. This referral provides needed insight as well. Consider:

1. Their Struggle – Peter refers to them as strangers scattered throughout. They had been persecuted for their faith and many of them were forced to leave their homes. They were scattered throughout the world, simply strangers and pilgrims in a new land while on their Christian journey.

- I have no way of knowing the struggles we will face, but I am convinced they will come. We may not be forced to flee our homes, and then again we might. Whatever struggles we face, we too will soon be considered strangers in our own land. We will not be accepted by society, viewed

as outcasts and irrelevant. When these struggles come, and they will, we must be prepared to endure, abiding in Christ and in His Word.

2. The Significance (1b) – Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Peter addressed this epistle to the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia: all Roman provinces. They all shared a common faith and similar struggles. Peter wanted the churches to know he hadn't forgotten them and they were not alone. Although society did not embrace their faith, there were believers scattered throughout the world who did. There were other churches praying for them and supporting their efforts as well.

- I am convinced the church will prevail. She has been bought with a price by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. He didn't die for the church to allow her to be swallowed up by the world. Struggles will come, and when they do, keep in mind we are not alone. We have a Savior who loves us and desires to provide all we need to live victoriously, even in adversity. The appearance and attendance of the church may change, but she will never perish. It may get to the point that we feel alone at times, but there will be other believers with whom we can confide and draw strength. If you aren't thankful for fellow believers, you ought to be. I truly believe the struggles we will endure will serve to refine us. The petty disagreements that hinder many today will not even be spoken of. We will celebrate and cherish those of like faith!

II. The Grace Proclaimed (2) – Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Along with his greeting, Peter reminds them of the grace they enjoy. Consider:

A. Their Election – Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father... This is a doctrine clearly spoken of in Scripture. It is the subject of debate and controversy for many. I do not have the time to address it fully, nor the understanding to answer all the questions you may have. In fact, it is not my desire to delve into the doctrine of election deeply today. Peter speaks of the elect of God, those chosen of Him according to His divine foreknowledge and sovereign plan. God knew our need for redemption due to the fall in sin. He provided the means of salvation through the sacrifice of His Son and has ordained the salvation of those who receive Jesus Christ by faith in His finished work on the cross.

- Peter did not desire to create debate or confusion. In fact, he desired the opposite. He reminded the churches of their glorious position in the family of God. The world may have rejected them, but they had been chosen of God. When faced with adversity, they could rejoice in their

secure position with the Lord. We need to be settled in that position as well. If one is certain of his standing with the Lord, he can face whatever the world brings, knowing he has been chosen of God. Always keep your standing with the Lord in focus when faced with adversity.

B. Their Sanctification (2) – [through sanctification of the Spirit](#)...Peter also reminded them of the power they had within. Having been chosen of God and received Christ as Savior, they enjoyed the indwelling of the Spirit. He served to lead and guide their lives, equipping and empowering them to live according to the desire and will of God.

- The forces of this world possess great power and influence, but we have a decided advantage. The Spirit has the wisdom and ability to empower us to face whatever the world brings against us. When our faith is challenged, and we are tempted to give in to the demands and temptations of the world, we have a source of strength to help us overcome. We do not have to bow to the dictates of society. We can overcome victorious by the help of the Lord in the Spirit.

C. Their Salvation (2) – [unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ](#)...Peter also reminded them of the grace of God that brought their salvation. Jesus Christ offered Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin. He redeemed them from sin and reconciled them to God. They were no longer alienated from God, but abiding in Him through Christ. Their eternal destiny was settled and secure in the Lord.

- If you have been saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, you have nothing to fear. We have no way of knowing what tomorrow may hold, but we do know who holds tomorrow. Regardless of what I face in this life, I am saved and secure in the Lord. I am kept within His mighty hand. If He doesn't soon return, I will one day lay aside this body of flesh in death, but at that moment I will enter His glorious presence. That affords great confidence and boldness in the faith. Though man may persecute my flesh, I am secure in Christ!

D. Their Provision (2) – [Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied](#). Peter knew the struggles they faced. Many of them were weary and some may have contemplated abandoning the faith. He sought to remind them of the grace of God available to all who believe. They were the recipients of God's unmerited favor, poured out lavishly on those who belong to Him. His grace afforded peace that would surpass all understanding. By the help of the Lord, they could endure the trials ahead, and emerge from them triumphant.

- No doubt every believer here today has found comfort in the grace and peace of God at some point in life. We all deal with adversity, pain, uncertainty, and heartache, but God's grace

allows us to persevere in the faith. Likely we will need it more in days to come than we have imagined, but even then, grace will be sufficient. God will provide the grace we need to endure the struggles ahead and make it through. Christ did not provide for our salvation in order to abandon us in the journey. Those who abide in Him will enjoy sufficient grace for the trials ahead.

Conclusion: Peter sought to encourage and strengthen the believers with this epistle. He understood the trials they faced because he too had endured similar situations. He sought to help establish their faith and ground them in the Lord. He knew if they were to endure, they would need the Lord's help and guidance.

I am not a prophet of doom, but I am convinced we are facing a storm unlike we have ever experienced. Adversity is coming for those who are committed to Christ and determined to follow Him. Those who are settled in the Lord will make it through, although it will be difficult. Those who are not abiding in Christ, grounded in the Word, will be swept away by the waves of adversity.

First of all, I must ask: do you know Christ as your personal Savior? Have you received Him by faith in salvation? If not, I urge you to do so. You will need Him more than you can possibly know. Second, Christian, are you abiding in Christ? The storm that is brewing is not for the faint of heart. If you are not abiding in Christ, you will succumb to the pressures and demands of the world. Abiding faith in Christ, strengthened and settled in Him is our only hope. If your relationship with the Lord is not what it should be, now is the time to get that settled. If you wait until the storm hits, you may be unwilling to do so then. Come now while the Lord is speaking to you!