



This letter was written to bring comfort and strength to Christians who were being persecuted for their faith.

1 From Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. To God's people who are scattered like foreigners in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

2 God the Father decided to choose you as his people, and his Spirit has made you holy. You have obeyed Jesus Christ and are sprinkled with his blood.

I pray that God will be kind to you and will keep on giving you peace!

A Real Reason for Hope

3 Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, he has given us new life and a hope that lives on. **4** God has something stored up for you in heaven, where it will never decay or be ruined or disappear.

5 You have faith in God, whose power will protect you until the last day. Then he will save you, just as he has always planned to do. **6** On that day you will be glad, even if you have to go through many hard trials for a while. **7** Your faith will be like gold that has been tested in a fire. And these trials will prove that your faith is worth much more than gold that can be destroyed. They will show that you will be given praise and honor and glory when Jesus Christ returns.

8 You have never seen Jesus, and you don't see him now. But still you love him and have faith in

him, and no words can tell how glad and happy **9** you are to be saved. That's why you have faith.

10 Some prophets told how God would treat you with undeserved grace, and they searched hard to find out more about the way you would be saved.

11 The Spirit of Christ was in them and was telling them how Christ would suffer and would then be given great honor. So they searched to find out exactly who Christ would be and when this would happen. **12** But they were told that they were serving you and not themselves. They preached to you by the power of the Holy Spirit, who was sent from heaven. And their message was only for you, even though angels would like to know more about it.

Chosen To Live a Holy Life

13 Be alert and think straight. Put all your hope in how God will treat you with undeserved grace when Jesus Christ appears. **14** Behave like obedient children. Don't let your lives be controlled by your desires, as they used to be. **15** Always live as God's holy people should, because God is the one who chose you, and he is holy. **16** That's why the Scriptures say, "I am the holy God, and you must be holy too."

17 You say that God is your Father, but God doesn't have favorites! He judges all people by what they do. So you must honor God while you live as strangers here on earth. **18** You were rescued from the useless way of life that you learned from

your ancestors. But you know that you were not rescued by such things as silver or gold that don't last forever. ¹⁹You were rescued by the precious blood of Christ, that spotless and innocent lamb. ²⁰Christ was chosen even before the world was created, but because of you, he did not come until these last days. ²¹And when he did come, it was to lead you to have faith in God, who raised him from death and honored him in a glorious way. That's why you have put your faith and hope in God.

²²You obeyed the truth,[▷] and your souls were made pure. Now you sincerely love each other. But you must keep on loving with all your heart. ²³Do this because God has given you new birth by his message that lives on forever. ²⁴The Scriptures say,

‘Humans wither like grass,
and their glory fades
like wild flowers.
Grass dries up,
and flowers fall
to the ground.

²⁵But what the Lord has said
will stand forever.”

Our good news to you is what the Lord has said.

A Living Stone and a Holy Nation

2 Stop being hateful! Quit trying to fool people, and start being sincere. Don't be jealous or say cruel things about others. ²Be like newborn babies who are thirsty for the pure spiritual milk that will help you grow and be saved. ³You have already found out how good the Lord really is.

⁴Come to Jesus Christ. He is the living stone that people have rejected, but which God has chosen and highly honored. ⁵And now you are living stones that are being used to build a spiritual house. You are also a group of holy priests, and with the help of Jesus Christ you will offer sacrifices that please God. ⁶It is just as God says in the Scriptures,

‘Look! I am placing in Zion
a choice and precious
cornerstone.
No one who has faith
in that one
will be disappointed.”

⁷You are followers of the Lord, and that stone is precious to you. But it isn't precious to those who refuse to follow him. They are the builders who tossed aside the stone that turned out to be the most important one of all. ⁸They disobeyed the

message and stumbled and fell over that stone, because they were doomed.

⁹But you are God's chosen and special people. You are a group of royal priests and a holy nation. God has brought you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Now you must tell all the wonderful things that he has done. The Scriptures say,

¹⁰‘Once you were nobody.
Now you are God's people.
At one time no one
had pity on you.
Now God has treated you
with kindness.

Live as God's Servants Should

¹¹Dear friends, you are foreigners and strangers on this earth. So I beg you not to surrender to those desires that fight against you. ¹²Always let others see you behaving properly, even though they may still accuse you of doing wrong. Then on the day of judgment, they will honor God by telling the good things they saw you do.

¹³The Lord wants you to obey all human authorities, especially the Emperor, who rules over everyone. ¹⁴You must also obey governors, because they are sent by the Emperor to punish criminals and to praise good citizens. ¹⁵God wants you to silence stupid and ignorant people by doing right. ¹⁶You are free, but still you are God's servants, and you must not use your freedom as an excuse for doing wrong. ¹⁷Respect everyone and show special love for God's people. Honor God and respect the Emperor.

The Example of Christ's Suffering

¹⁸Servants, you must obey your masters and always show respect to them. Do this, not only to those who are kind and thoughtful, but also to those who are cruel. ¹⁹God will bless you, even if others treat you unfairly for being loyal to him. ²⁰You don't gain anything by being punished for some wrong you have done. But God will bless you, if you have to suffer for doing something good. ²¹After all, God chose you to suffer as you follow in the footsteps of Christ, who set an example by suffering for you.

²²Christ did not sin
or ever tell a lie.
²³Although he was abused,
he never tried to get even.
And when he suffered,
he made no threats.

Instead, he had faith in God,
who judges fairly.

²⁴ Christ carried the burden
of our sins.

He was nailed to the cross,
so that we would stop sinning
and start living right.
By his cuts and bruises
you are healed.

²⁵ You had wandered away
like sheep.

Now you have returned
to the one
who is your shepherd
and protector.

Wives and Husbands

3 If you are a wife, you must put your husband first. Even if he opposes our message, you will win him over by what you do. No one else will have to say anything to him, ² because he will see how you honor God and live a pure life. ³ Don't depend on things like fancy hairdos or gold jewelry or expensive clothes to make you look beautiful. ⁴ Be beautiful in your heart by being gentle and quiet. This kind of beauty will last, and God considers it very special.

⁵ Long ago those women who worshiped God and put their hope in him made themselves beautiful by putting their husbands first. ⁶ For example, Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her true children, if you do right and don't let anything frighten you.

⁷ If you are a husband, you should be thoughtful of your wife. Treat her with honor, because she isn't as strong as you are, and she shares with you in the gift of life. Then nothing will stand in the way of your prayers.

Suffering for Doing Right

⁸ Finally, all of you should agree and have concern and love for each other. You should also be kind and humble. ⁹ Don't be hateful and insult people just because they are hateful and insult you. Instead, treat everyone with kindness. You are God's chosen ones, and he will bless you. The Scriptures say,

¹⁰ "Do you really love life?
Do you want to be happy?
Then stop saying cruel things
and quit telling lies.

¹¹ Give up your evil ways
and do right,
as you find and follow

the road that leads
to peace.

¹² The Lord watches over
everyone who obeys him,
and he listens
to their prayers.
But he opposes everyone
who does evil."

¹³ Can anyone really harm you for being eager to do good deeds? ¹⁴ Even if you have to suffer for doing good things, God will bless you. So stop being afraid and don't worry about what people might do.

¹⁵ Honor Christ and let him be the Lord of your life. Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope. ¹⁶ Give a kind and respectful answer and keep your conscience clear. This way you will make people ashamed for saying bad things about your good conduct as a follower of Christ. ¹⁷ You are better off to obey God and suffer for doing right than to suffer for doing wrong.

¹⁸ Christ died once for our sins.
An innocent person died
for those who are guilty.
Christ did this
to bring you to God,
when his body
was put to death
and his spirit
was made alive.

¹⁹ Christ then preached to the spirits that were being kept in prison. ²⁰ They had disobeyed God while Noah was building the boat, but God had been patient with them. Eight people went into that boat and were brought safely through the flood.

²¹ Those flood waters were like baptism that now saves you. But baptism is more than just washing your body. It means turning to God with a clear conscience, because Jesus Christ was raised from death. ²² Christ is now in heaven, where he sits at the right side of God. All angels, authorities, and powers are under his control.

Being Faithful to God

4 Christ suffered here on earth. Now you must be ready to suffer as he did, because suffering shows that you have stopped sinning. ² It means you have turned from your own desires and want to obey God for the rest of your life. ³ You have already lived long enough like people who don't know God. You were immoral and followed your evil

desires. You went around drinking and partying and carrying on. In fact, you even worshiped disgusting idols. ⁴Now your former friends wonder why you have stopped running around with them, and they curse you for it. ⁵But they will have to answer to God, who judges the living and the dead. ⁶The good news has even been preached to the dead, so that after they have been judged for what they have done in this life, their spirits will live with God.

⁷Everything will soon come to an end. So be serious and be sensible enough to pray.

⁸Most important of all, you must sincerely love each other, because love wipes away many sins.

⁹Welcome people into your home and don't grumble about it.

¹⁰Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well. ¹¹If you have the gift of speaking, preach God's message. If you have the gift of helping others, do it with the strength that God supplies. Everything should be done in a way that will bring honor to God because of Jesus Christ, who is glorious and powerful forever. Amen.

Suffering for Being a Christian

¹²Dear friends, don't be surprised or shocked that you are going through testing that is like walking through fire. ¹³Be glad for the chance to suffer as Christ suffered. It will prepare you for even greater happiness when he makes his glorious return.

¹⁴Count it a blessing when you suffer for being a Christian. This shows that God's glorious Spirit is with you. ¹⁵But you deserve to suffer if you are a murderer, a thief, a crook, or a busybody. ¹⁶Don't be ashamed to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God that you belong to him. ¹⁷God has already begun judging his own people. And if his judgment begins with us, imagine how terrible it will be for those who refuse to obey his message. The Scriptures say,

¹⁸"If good people barely escape,
what will happen to sinners
and to others
who don't respect God?"

¹⁹If you suffer for obeying God, you must have complete faith in your faithful Creator and keep on doing right.

Helping Christian Leaders

5 Church leaders, I am writing to encourage you. I too am a leader, as well as a witness to Christ's suffering, and I will share in his glory when it is shown to us.

²Just as shepherds watch over their sheep, you must watch over everyone God has placed in your care. Do it willingly in order to please God, and not simply because you think you must. Let it be something you want to do, instead of something you do merely to make money. ³Don't be bossy to those people who are in your care, but set an example for them. ⁴Then when Christ the Chief Shepherd returns, you will be given a crown that will never lose its glory.

⁵All of you young people should obey your elders. In fact, everyone should be humble toward everyone else. The Scriptures say,

"God opposes proud people,
but he helps everyone
who is humble."

⁶Be humble in the presence of God's mighty power, and he will honor you when the time comes.

⁷God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to him.

⁸Be on your guard and stay awake. Your enemy, the devil, is like a roaring lion, sneaking around to find someone to attack. ⁹But you must resist the devil and stay strong in your faith. You know that all over the world the Lord's followers are suffering just as you are. ¹⁰But God shows undeserved kindness to everyone. That's why he appointed Christ Jesus to choose you to share in his eternal glory. You will suffer for a while, but God will make you complete, steady, strong, and firm. ¹¹God will be in control forever! Amen.

Final Greetings

¹²Silvanus helped me write this short letter, and I consider him a faithful follower of the Lord. I wanted to encourage you and tell you about the gift of God's undeserved grace, so that you will keep on having faith in him.

¹³Greetings from the Lord's followers in Babylon. They are God's chosen ones.

Mark, who is like a son to me, sends his greetings too.

¹⁴Give each other a warm greeting. I pray that God will give peace to everyone who belongs to Christ.>

Notes

> **1.22** *You obeyed the truth:* Some manuscripts add "by the power of the Spirit."

> **5.14** *Christ:* Some manuscripts add "Amen."