

Intro (Section Header)

GM!!! // New / Listening online ...

Starting new series, going through the book of 1 Peter.

Written at a time when it wasn't popular to be a Christian.
B/C of that they suffered a lot for their beliefs.

So this letter was written to encourage Christians across a wide region.

And its message is still relevant today.

It teaches us who we are and how to hold fast to our faith.
We constantly need to be reminded of this b/c following Jesus is so counter-culture.

That is the great difficulty of following Jesus.

Our values are so different to the values of this world.

And those values lived out often make us targets of ridicule and possibly worse.

Jesus was condemned by the legalists (kept all rules) ... and he was rejected by the licentious (hated no rules).

The legalist and licentious are always calling us to join their side.

These conflicting messages of worldly wisdom can corrupt and distort our faith.

They cause Gospel amnesia ...

We forget who we are. Who we belong to and Why!

So Peter kicks off this letter by reminding us who we are...

1 Peter 1:1

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,”

Notice ... not “church” ...

You and I are exiles. //

Here is not our home.

The word for exile is often translated ... sojourner

That is not a common word today, **[just sojourning bro]** but a sojourner is like someone with a temporary workers visa. [military / marines]

They live as resident aliens for a prolonged period. Work, become neighbors, part of the community.

But at some point a sojourner heads home, b/c they never forget they BELONG to another nation. **[pilgrims passing through]**

Paul calls out real places where Christians were scattered. // Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

He is saying, "That is where you live, but you don't belong to them."

What he wants us to understand is that

Here is not home.

Here is a far country from where we long to be.

Home is heaven.

Not like angels playing harps on fluffy clouds.

Heaven is the place where Jesus rules and reigns w/o opposition or rebellion.

Heaven is no more sorrow, suffering, or sin.

Heaven is what we long for.

But we can't snap our fingers to get there.

We are HERE for a long time.

We are away from HOME for a long time.

And absence doesn't always make the heart grow fonder.

In our waiting and longing for home often times we start to...

- 1. fall in love with here more than home, or**
- 2. think home has forgotten us.**

Too often Christians fall in love with here instead of our true home.

STORY:

Job took me to CR for long periods. [away from my family].

Would be gone for weeks/months. But as cool and beautiful as CR is; it's no match for home with my family.

What would it look like if I fell in love with being in CR more than being home?

- **Too busy to keep in touch with wife & kids.**
- **Wouldn't act like I'm married.**
- **Forgot about paying the bills.**

But b/c I didn't forget about home I lived differently. Even though I was in a far country I sojourned in CR with home on the forefront of my mind. → [Worked hard. Didn't flirt/date. Made sure the bills were paid. Emailed/called.]

One of the biggest fights we have to fight as Christians is this drift into loving Here more than Home.

We begin to neglect the things that keep us rooted in remembering why home is better. [why we want to be there]

Would have been weird if Hayley and I agreed: while in CR no phone calls, emails, no sending pictures.

NO!! opposite ... made sure packed phone, chargers etc.

What habits do you have that keep your love for Home burning strong?

- Public / private worship [old school, timeless]

When I was away in CR seeing pics from home was so helpful and encouraging. Little taste / reminder.

That is what we do when we come together ...

That is why we pray and get into the Gospel ...

Living photo album [taste of home].

Our love for home gets rekindled.

And when Hayley would email, or text, or call ... it was the best!

[I'm remembered ... haven't been forgotten]

Sometimes it can feel like God is distant and forgot about us.

But the truth is that he will never do that.

While we may live far from home we are never forgotten.

1 Peter 1:2

“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.”

This sojourning we are doing far from home is not b/c God drove off to heaven and left us behind accidentally.

[parents in the room ... we've all “forgotten our kids” b4]

No! God had this all planned out! → “according to the *foreknowledge of God the Father.*”

Acts 17:26

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, **having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place**

“God has determined the times and places we will live.”

There is a comfort knowing that God planned for our life to be this way.

“To sojourners dispersed throughout Havelock, New Bern, Harlow, Newport, Cherry Point ... “

You live here at this time of history // FOR A REASON.

That means you are not the product of a cosmic accident.
You are more than a mass of particles driven by chemical reactions.

You are here b/c of God's great purpose.

He isn't an impersonal distant God.

He is God the Father ... who is righteous, caring, and loving.

He is a dad with a plan. [not the little dutch boy]

He didn't give us a plan and stand at a distance saying get to it & good luck.

His plan is worked out in his presence.

While we are living far from home we live IN God's presence.

1 Peter 1:2

“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.”

This sojourning happens with God. [Actually surrounded by Him]

What we gather from this little phrase is that the whole realm of our Christian existence is lived with or IN the Holy Spirit. [ALSO GOD]

And he isn't there as a silent partner. He is busy at work in our lives.

To sanctify is to free from sin and purify from sin.

This is what the Holy Spirit is doing in us ALL THE TIME.

1 Peter 1:2

“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.”

[MEDIA NOTE: Leave Passage Up]

The Holy Spirit is setting us more free from sin ... which means we are becoming more obedient to Jesus.

2nd'ly ... He is cleansing us from our sin when we do sin.
[sprinkling with his blood - 1John1:9]

[MEDIA NOTE: Take Passage Down]

That gives us confidence that we are not forgotten or forsaken.

God, the Holy Spirit, is at work transforming us from the inside-out.

Jesus said we can know a tree by its fruit. A good tree produces good fruit / bad produces bad.

But fruit is simply a manifestation of what is happening on the inside.

We don't like that b/c that is out of our control.

A disciplined person can change their behavior to do things they don't like.

But it takes a change of heart to love being obedient to Jesus and want to repent of sin.

These are fruits [PROOFS] of the life lived IN the Spirit.

[?fruits of spirit?]

And when we see God's faithfulness at work today it gives us a hope for his promises tomorrow.

// God's presence today is a guarantee we will possess His promises tomorrow. //

We live far from home WITH a living hope.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again **to a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

We are born into a life filled with broken promises and hopes that have failed us.

But now by the mercies of God we are reborn into His promises and His hope.

Not only did Jesus die on the cross to us free from sin.

He rose from the dead set us free from death!

Through faith in His death and resurrection we are born again into a living hope.

Too often we emphasize the power of the cross and neglect the power of the resurrection.

The cross helps us today. It reminds us that our sins are forgiven and washed away with Jesus' sacrificial death.

But the resurrection says that we have died to our old self and are a new creation.

We are born again, [Ephesians ... sealed], through God's power to an inheritance.

Ephesians 1:13-14

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were

sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

The Holy Spirit is a deposit, a foretaste of the inheritance we will get one day. [LIVING HOPE]

The cross freed us from sins power.

One day we will be freed from its very presence. [at res. of JC]

This inheritance of ours is a resurrection into eternal life.

We will live forever and ever: **imperishable**.

It will be the experience of life absent of sin: **undefiled**

It is life in the perfect fullness and **unfading** vigor, passion, and joy!

It is life lived before the unmediated presence of God.

This is our living hope we are saved into by God's grace.

And it is a living hope being guarded by God's power through faith!

We don't earn it in our own strength.

We don't tell God at any point ... "thank you very much I got it from here."

Why? [honest] B/C we would fail.

You and I live far from home, in a place that isn't friendly to our faith.

We need God's power guarding our faith in this living hope! B/C ...

Our living hope fuels our faithfulness.

1 Peter 1:6-9

⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not

now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

These 4 verses start with the phrase “In this you rejoice” and closes with the phrase “rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory”.

You would think what is sandwiched in between there is a waterfall of blessings.

“In this you rejoice ...” new cars, big houses, \$\$\$, long life, world peace

Nope ...

“for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,”

What in the world is wrong with this guy?

How can we rejoice if we are being grieved by various trials?

It all depends what our joy-source is.

If it's health, wealth, and prosperity ... than we will find no joy in the trial.

People, Possessions, Power is where you find joy if you love Here more than Home.

But Peter tells us the unbeatable joy-source is Jesus.

⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,

When Jesus is our greatest love we will see the greater purpose within the grieving trial.

Trials test the genuineness of our faith.

[pressure produces cracks or diamonds]

Christian Faith loves and believes in Jesus w/o seeing him.

This faith and our faithfulness is fueled by our living hope that one day we will see Him.

This keeps us from giving up.

Our living hope ...

fuels our faith when it is hard to believe.

fuels our faithfulness when it is hard to obey.

**And our living hope not only keeps us from giving up ...
it keeps us from shutting up.**

Our living hope comes through hearing the Gospel.

1 Peter 1:10-12

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

God was speaking the Gospel through his prophets long before Jesus came.

The Gospel isn't something relegated to the New Testament part of the Bible.

The Gospel is everywhere. From Genesis to Revelation. And all of it proclaims this living hope we have in Jesus!

[PAUSE]

God is proclaiming this same message through his church today!!

We aren't meant to keep this living hope to ourselves. We share it with our friends, neighbors, co-workers, students, family...

God sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die in our place for the forgiveness of our sins.

He raised Jesus from the dead in power, conquering death.

Jesus ascended into heaven where he is ruling and reigning until he returns for the final judgment of the living and the dead.

Response

Not a Christian:

Do you have this living hope?

Is your “home” here or heaven?

Trust in Jesus’ death and resurrection and God will save you into this living hope.

Christians:

Do you love Here more than Home? [Forgot where Home is]

Perhaps you feel like Home has forgotten you ...

- Where is God in my trial? [don’t see the greater purpose of the trial ... more faith ... more hope].

Call to Come: Communion & Giving

Communion is a time to remember. It is a time to get restored by re-storying ourselves again in the Gospel.

We are reminded that Jesus died for us: body broken / blood shed.

We not only remember his suffering but we also remember his triumph.

On the night he was betrayed, when he instituted this meal, he told his disciples he would not eat it with them again until he received the kingdom.

So we take it in faith, with a living hope, that Jesus is trustworthy.

We will feast with him one day.

We are not forgotten.

We have not forgotten.

Let's eat and remember.

PRAY