

1 Peter – A Survey

1. **Author** – The Apostle Peter is widely recognized as the author. Support was early and strong, though there have been some who have disputed his authorship.
 - a. 1:1 – references himself
 - b. 5:1 – he claims to be an eyewitness to Christ’s suffering
 - c. 2:23, 3:18, 4:1 – these are strong allusions to the life of Christ
2. **Destination** – Northern provinces of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Churches were most likely of Jewish and Gentile believers. Even though verse 1 seems to imply Jewish believers dispersed throughout various Roman provinces, 1 Peter 1:14, 1:18, 2:9-10. 4:3-4 would apply specifically to Gentiles.
 - a. Though Peter was the apostle to the Jews, this letter may have reflected a time when the church became less identified as a Jewish sect and simply became “Christian”, which would have been another reason for impending persecution.
3. **Date and Place**
 - a. Date: 62-68 A.D. – just prior to or during the time of Nero. Nero’s persecutions broke out in 64 A.D. Peter was crucified in 68 A.D.
 - b. Place: Rome (reference is “Babylon” in 5:13). Tradition holds that Peter spent his last years in Rome.
4. **Occasion and Purpose**
 - a. The primary theme is suffering. Peter wrote a warm and pastoral letter to give hope and encouragement to the saints in the midst of or on the eve of suffering. This letter is instructive and does not deal with any particular heresy or sin.
 - b. Edwin Blum (EBC) *“Their basic problem is to live for God in the midst of a society ignorant of the true God. Because they are Christians, they are misunderstood and subjected to cruel treatment. Peter’s pastoral purpose is to help these early believers see their temporary sufferings in the full light of the coming glory. In the midst of their discouragements, the sovereign God will keep them and enable them by faith to have joy.”*
 - c. Key Words: suffering (17x), holy (6x), subject (6x), faith (5x), hope (5x), exiles/strangers (4x) and good (14x), as in doing what is right and good
 - d. Key verse: 1 Peter 4:19: *“Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.”*

5. Theologically Rich

- a. Doctrine of God – Carson, Moo and Morris: *"Peter is giving us a full and satisfying knowledge of who God is and what he is doing."*
 - i. Father – 1:12 and 17
 - ii. Creator – 4:19
 - iii. Redeemer – 1:18-19
 - iv. Judge – 1:17, 4:5 and 17
 - v. Holy – 1:15-16,
 - vi. Good – 2:3
 - vii. Faithful – 4:19
 - viii. Gracious – 1:13, 2:9-10, 4:10-11, 5:10

- b. Doctrine of Christ
 - i. Passover Lamb of Exodus - 1:16-21
 - ii. Rejected by men – 2:4
 - iii. Suffering servant of Isaiah 53 – 2:21-25
 - iv. Scapegoat of Leviticus – 2:24
 - v. Righteous for the unrighteous – 3:18
 - vi. Resurrected – 1:3 and 21, 3:21
 - vii. Lord – 1:3 and 25, 3:15 and 22
 - viii. Coming Again – 1:7, 2:12

- c. Eschatology (Doctrine of the Last Things) – regular references to the hope of our eternal inheritance and to the Lord's return (1:4-5, 2:12, 4:7 and 13, 5:10)

- d. Ecclesiology (Doctrine of the Church) – Peter never mentions the word church, but he has a very high ecclesiology. He directly applies the OT references of the people of God to the New Testament church (2:4-10, 5:1-4).

- e. Doctrine of Sanctification – Peter's view of sanctification is both positional (set apart) and progressive.
 - i. We are to live holy lives (1:13-2:3)
 - ii. We are to live as a holy people – together (2:4-10)
 - iii. We are to practice holiness in our relationships at society (as citizens and servants, toward enemies) and at home (as husbands and wives) (2:11-3:12)
 - iv. We are to do good, even in the midst of suffering (3:13-4:11)
 - v. Our motivation for holiness is because of our "living hope" (1:13-21) and avoidance of judgment (4:17)

- f. Strong Old Testament influence – Scholars cite 9 direct references and 20 allusions to OT passages

- g. Strong influence of the events and words of Jesus – Scholars cite 18 allusions