

Your Guide To

1 Peter

Field Guide For Exiles



FIVE POINTS BAPTIST  
TREASURING JESUS TOGETHER

## INTRODUCTION

What does it look like to live faithfully as a Christian in a society that is hostile to the Gospel? This is a question that most Christians in the West are now asking themselves. The truth is, our society has been slipping down this slope for a while now. There was a time when the church's teaching was seen as moral even by those who did not accept its faith. But those times are largely behind us. To believe the Bible nowadays could lead to you being labeled bigoted, narrow-minded, homophobic, transphobic, and the list goes on. So how did this shift occur so rapidly in our time?

The landmark Supreme Court case *Obergefell vs. Hodges* (June 26, 2015) seems to have solidified this posture. The legalization of same-sex marriage opened a Pandora's box when it comes to freedom in sexual expression and ushered in an aggressive sexual revolution which demands society's enthusiastic embrace. And as we have all seen in various headlines through recent years, those who resist could be met with legal penalties. As large companies, various media outlets (movies, T.V. shows, books, mainstream media, social media, etc.), and educational institutions throw their support behind this revolution, it seems that this change in American attitudes toward the church's teaching will only continue to accelerate.

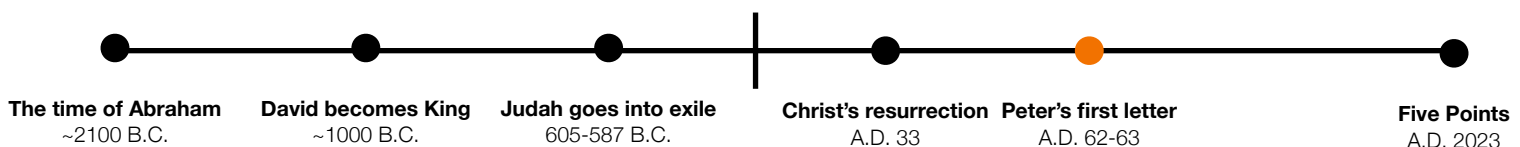
So, again, what does it look like to live faithfully as a Christian in a society that is hostile to the Gospel? How do you honor Christ when you realize that your beliefs could lead to the loss of your job? How do you respond when once close friends begin to distance themselves from you because of the seriousness with which you take your faith? The answer to these kinds of questions will not be found in the posts of popular social media personalities or 24 hour news cycles. The answer is found in God's Word. The fact of the matter is, God's people throughout the ages have always been strangers and exiles in this world, even under the best cultural circumstances. And remembering this two-fold identity — that we are both God's people and strangers & exiles in this world — is the key to engaging our culture faithfully with the Gospel. And this is exactly what 1 Peter is all about. It truly is a field guide for exiles.

## WHO WROTE 1 PETER?

Peter, one of Jesus's 12 disciples and later apostle to the Jews (Gal. 2:7), is the author of this letter. Even though this position has not gone unchallenged, D.A. Carson and Douglas Moo in their *Introduction to the New Testament*, do a good job of responding to every argument that has been presented against Peter being the author (pp. 642-643). In sum, we are on very solid ground to believe that the apostle Peter is the author of this letter.

## WHEN WAS 1 PETER WRITTEN?

We know that Peter arrived in Rome sometime in the 60's, but was martyred at some point after A.D. 63 under Nero. Thus, a date of 62-63 A.D. is the most probable.



## WHO WAS THIS LETTER ORIGINALLY ADDRESSED TO?

Due to the mention of loving one another (1 Pet 1:22), showing each other hospitality (1 Pet 4:9), & instructions for church leaders (1 Pet 5:1-5), this letter was intended to be read in churches in all the areas listed in his greeting (circled in orange on the map below). After it was read in one church, he intended for it to be sent to the others.



Peter's Addressees (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, & Bythnia) — 1 Peter 1:1

## WHY DID PETER WRITE THIS LETTER TO THESE CHURCHES?

The Greco-Roman world in which Peter's audience lived was one where pagan religion was infused in every part of life. In his *Theology of 1 Peter*, Davids describes it well: "The foundation of the family was its deities, and various deities related to each level of society right up to the state. That meant that the appropriate worship of these deities was important, for if the family gods were offended, the family would collapse, with ramifications for the city and the state" (pp. 113-114). Why is knowing this important? Because converts to Christianity came to be seen as a threat to the fabric of society. And in an effort to get them to turn back to their former paganism, various types of pressures were exerted against them: mockery, social ostracism, loss of job, etc. When we understand this historical-cultural context, we can begin to see the parallels between the first audience of Peter's letter and us today. While the persecution they faced wasn't state-sponsored (yet) or necessarily violent (yet), their culture viewed them as posing significant harm to societal stability, much as ours increasingly view us today. And the same pressures that were applied to them are starting to be applied to us as well.

So how ought we respond? Peter basically calls for a two-fold strategy. First... “In a phrase, Peter calls on his readers to exhibit ‘piety under pressure’ as a means of glorifying God and of witnessing to a hostile but watchful world” (Carson & Moo, 636). In order to do this, they would need to remember who they are: “Peter encourages suffering Christians by reminding them of their present identity as God’s people and their secure hope of ultimate blessing — both rooted in the death, resurrection, and victory of Christ” (Carson & Moo, 651). And so we too must resolve to be a people who pursue ‘piety under pressure’ by remembering our glorious new identity given to us through the finished work of Christ.

## **OUTLINE OF 1 PETER**

### **I. Word of Introduction & Greeting (1:1-2)**

- A. Letter from the Apostle Peter (1:1a)
- B. To the Elect Exiles in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, & Bithynia (1:1b-2)
  - 1. According to God’s foreknowledge (1:2a)
  - 2. In the sanctification of the Spirit (1:2b)
  - 3. For obedience to Jesus Christ & sprinkling with His blood (1:2c)

### **II. Live As God’s People (1:3-2:10)**

- A. The Christian’s Identity in the Midst of Suffering (1:3-12)
  - 1. The certainty of the believer’s salvation (1:3-9)
  - 2. The Old Testament roots of this salvation (1:10-12)
- B. Live in The Present in Light of the Future (1:13-2:3)
  - 1. Set your hope on future grace (1:13)
  - 2. Pursue holiness (1:14-21)
  - 3. Love one another (1:22-25)
  - 4. Crave the Word of God (2:1-3)
- C. Another Reminder of the Christian’s Identity (2:4-10)
  - 1. The believer & non-believer’s relationship to Christ (2:4-8)
  - 2. The believer’s identity from God’s perspective (2:9-10)

### **III. Instructions for Holy Living (2:11-4:11)**

- A. General Exhortation to Pursue Holiness (2:11-12)
  - 1. As sojourners and exiles (2:11a)
  - 2. Abstain from fleshly passions (2:11b)
  - 3. Pursue holiness among the Gentiles (2:12a)
    - a) So that they will glorify God on the last Day (2:12b)
- B. Instructions to Christians in Various Stations (2:13-3:12)
  - 1. Call for all Christians to submit to governing authorities (2:13-17)
  - 2. Call for servants to submit to their masters (2:18-25)
  - 3. Instructions for husbands and wives (3:1-7)
  - 4. General exhortation to all Christians (3:8-12)
- C. Reminder of Christ’s Victory (3:13-22)
  - 1. Resolve to honor Christ as Lord (3:13-17)
  - 2. Do this while remembering Christ’s ultimate victory (3:18-22)
- D. Another Call to Holy Living (4:1-11)
  - 1. A call for separation from pagan cultural practices (4:1-6)
  - 2. A call to genuine Christian community (4:7-11)

### **IV. Closing Exhortations (4:12-5:11)**

- A. Preparing for Suffering (4:12-19)
  - 1. The proper response to suffering (4:12-16)
  - 2. The theological rationale for this response (4:17-18)

3. Call to entrust one's self to God (4:19)
- B. To Leaders of the Churches (5:1-5)
  1. Exhortation to the elders from a fellow elder (5:1)
  2. Shepherd the flock among you all (5:2-4)
    - a) Exercise oversight
      - (1) Not under compulsion, but willingly
      - (2) Not for shameful gain, but eagerly
      - (3) Not domineering, but setting a godly example
      - (4) Shepherd in light of the return of Christ
  3. Call for younger men to submit to the elders (5:5a)
  4. Call for all members to relate to one another with humility (5:5b)
- C. Shifting Our Perspective on Suffering (5:6-11)
  1. Pursue humility by relying on the Lord (5:6-7)
  2. Remember the devil's schemes (5:8-9a)
  3. Remember your global brothers and sisters (5:9b)
  4. Remember your future (5:10)
  5. Doxology (5:11)

#### V. Closing Greeting (5:12-14)

- A. Identification of Letter Carrier (5:12)
- B. Greetings from the Chosen in Babylon (5:13)
- C. Imperative to Greet One Another (5:14a)
- D. Benediction of Peace to Those In Christ (5:14b)

#### 2024 PREACHING SCHEDULE

DATE	PASSAGE
Jan 7	1 Peter 1:1-2
Jan 14	1 Peter 1:3-12
Jan 21	1 Peter 1:13-2:3
Jan 28	1 Peter 2:4-10
Feb 4	1 Peter 2:11-12
Feb 11	1 Peter 2:13-25
Feb 18	1 Peter 3:1-7
Feb 25	1 Peter 3:8-12
Mar 3	1 Peter 3:13-22
Mar 10	1 Peter 4:1-11
Mar 17	1 Peter 4:12-19
Mar 24	1 Peter 5:1-5
Mar 31	Peter 5:6-14