



1 Peter

The Journey Home

Beginning the Journey

1 Peter 1:1-2

Message #1 of 12 – S677

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Sunday Morning Service

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Beginning the Journey

1 Peter 1:1-2

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter** it is the next book after James
- Today, we begin a new series through the first letter from Peter
- In my life I have done a fair amount of travelling
- I have been on planes, trains, boats, and automobiles
- In the Navy I travelled to some interesting places
- During about twenty years of sales I have travelled to some fairly exotic locations
- I got to be pretty good at travelling, but I never really did enjoy it
- I often enjoyed the destination, especially some of my tropical and Caribbean trips, but the travelling part wasn't that much fun to me
- There was one part of the trip that I always enjoyed – coming home
- No matter where I went, it wasn't home
- Home was not as exotic as some of the places I went, but it was home
- The title of this series is **The Journey Home**
- In the opening words of Peter's letter he reminds us that this is not our home – we are pilgrims, or travelers in this world
- He is going to remind us of the hope we have of a better home
- And that hope is so important to us, because sometimes the journey home is hard
- On one of my trips to Indonesia, on the way back I got the worst migraine headache that I have ever had in my life
- That is a long, uncomfortable trip as it is – it is way worse when it feels like someone is banging on the inside of your skull with a hammer
- We are all on a journey, we call it life
- Sometimes that journey is going to be easy, even fun
- Sometimes it is going to be hard
- Peter is going to try to help us to make the journey home in a way that glorifies God, blesses others, and grows our faith

- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today's text as a sign of reverence for God's Word
- Read **1 Peter 1:1-2**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Beginning the Journey**
- We refer to this as the book of 1 Peter, but in reality it is a letter
- We also refer to these as epistles – which is a fancier way of saying letter
- We refer to it as 'First' Peter because it is the first of two letters written by Peter that ended up in the Bible
- Let's jump right into the text for today
- **1 Peter 1:1a**
- It was very common for a person writing a letter to begin it with their name
- We end our letters with our name
- Though in a way we do the same thing by writing our name on the envelope – that is, if anyone is actually writing letters anymore
- Peter is one of the most familiar characters of the NT
- His given name is Simon – Jesus renamed him in Matthew 16
- He is also referred to as Cephas, which is Aramaic for Peter
- He was one of the twelve disciples chosen by Jesus to be His closest companions
- Peter was also part of a smaller group that experienced Jesus in ways the others didn't
- He and James and John got to go up the Mount of Transfiguration
- They accompanied Jesus into the Garden of Gethsemane
- And Peter has the distinction of being the only other person besides Jesus to walk on water
- Peter was compulsive and headstrong, often acting and speaking without thinking
- Keep your finger in **1 Peter** and turn to **Matthew 26**
- He was also radically spiritual and totally human

- At Caesarea Philippi he responded to Jesus' question of who they thought He was **Matthew 16:16**
You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- And then in the next breath Peter earned a rebuke from Jesus for not understanding Jesus' purpose and mission
- Peter may be most famous for doing something he told Jesus he would never do
- **Matthew 26:30**
- This was on the night that Jesus was betrayed
- **Matthew 26:31-33**
- Maybe there was a little pride there – they will, but I won't
- Jesus knew better than that
- **Matthew 26:34-35**
- And if you have been around the church very much, you probably know how this account ends
- Peter did exactly what Jesus said He would do, and what Peter said he would never do
- Turn back to **1 Peter**
- That event broke Peter's pride – and then Jesus mercifully and graciously restored Peter
- Peter plays a pretty prominent role in the first 12 chapters of Acts which chronicle the beginning and growth of the Christian church
- In our first verse Peter identifies himself as an apostle of Christ
- An apostle is a special messenger commissioned by Christ Himself
- Peter then tells us who the letter is written to
- **1 Peter 1:1b**
- These are all regions of what we would call Asia Minor or modern-day Turkey
- Peter will use three terms to describe these Christians
- And each of these terms can be applied to us as Christians also
- Peter refers to the recipients as 'pilgrims of the Dispersion'
- We will look at the second word first - 'Dispersion' comes from the Greek word 'diaspora' and means to be scattered

- This was a term used for the Jews who were scattered outside of the Promised Land
- By the time that Peter wrote this, right before his death around 64 to 67AD, the church was a mixture of Jews and Gentiles
- As Christians we have been scattered around the world
- The second word ‘pilgrim’ has the meaning: someone of foreign nationality and temporary residence
- We have the term ‘resident alien’ – though I imagine that is now not politically correct
- The NASB says it this way “To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia...”
- Peter was writing to Christians who were scattered to distant lands, who were living as resident aliens
- And this is one of the main messages of 1 Peter – this is not our home

Philippians 3:20

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

- If you are a Christ-follower, then we are waiting for the last flight to our home – heaven
- And everything we do in this life is the journey we are on while we wait
- So we are pilgrims and we are dispersed – the third word is in verse 2
- **1 Peter 1:2a**
- Peter is writing to the ‘elect’
- That little word is one of the deepest and most wonderful of doctrines in the Bible
- In the simplest possible terms it means that God chose who would be saved
- If you are a Christ-follower here today, it is because God chose you
- And as one of the chosen elect I say praise God, thank you Jesus
- What if someone is not a Christ-follower, does that mean they are not chosen by God? I don’t know
- This is what I would tell them – believe in Jesus, Believe what the Bible says about Him, believe that He died for your sins, believe that He is coming to get you someday to take you to heaven

- Paul told the Philippian Jailer **Acts 16:31**
Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved...
- You see only a person chosen by God can believe
- If you are a Christ-follower you were chosen by God to go to heaven
- Heaven is your home – not after you die – right now
- As we live this life we are pilgrims, or sojourners, or travelers in a land that is not our home
- And Peter is writing to people like all of us to tell us how to live on this journey
- Continuing in verse two, we see what we can call the triune work of salvation
- Does God the Father save us – Does God the Son Jesus save us – Does God the Holy Spirit save us? The answer is yes!
- The First aspect of the triune work of salvation – **The foreknowledge of God**
- This means God chose you to be a Christ-follower in advance
- In fact, He chose us before the foundation of the world **Romans 8:29**
For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- God the Father chose the elect before they were born, before they had done anything good or evil
- If you are a Christian today, it was because God wanted you
- You were chosen by God and we see as get further into the book that God also chose the journey you are on
- Second aspect – **Sanctification of the Spirit, for Obedience**
- The Holy Spirit plays a role in our salvation also
- Peter uses a big theological word – sanctification
Sanctification: The act of becoming more personally dedicated to God; especially by becoming distinct, devoted, and morally pure.
- It is the Holy Spirit who starts working in us even before we are saved to draw us to God the Father, to make us aware of our need for salvation through Christ
- And then once we are saved, It is the Holy Spirit who works in us to help us grow into the image of Christ
- One of the things that the Holy Spirit is doing is helping us to obey God

- Not so that we can be some kind of religious zombies, but because God has created the world to function according to certain spiritual rules
- And only by obeying God can we be in harmony with God
- On the journey through this life, we make life easier for ourselves when we obey our guide, the Holy Spirit
- The third work of salvation – **the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**
- Now to us modern Western Christians, that makes little sense to us
- But to those who had a Jewish background, and even if they had a pagan background it would have made sense
- In the OT there were three basic types of sprinkling of blood
- Each of them was symbolic of the future work of Christ on the cross
- To begin with, to sprinkle blood you needed to sacrifice an innocent animal
- First type of sprinkling – **Sealing of a Covenant**
- In Exodus 24 after the people said they would abide by the terms of God’s covenant – Moses sprinkled them with the blood of a sacrifice
- At the Last Supper, Jesus told the disciples that His blood would be spilled for a new covenant
- The second type was for **Setting Apart for Service**
- When Aaron and his sons were being appointed as the priests, Moses sprinkled them with the blood of a bull
- Symbolized that their whole lives were dedicated to the Lord
- The third type – **Spiritual Cleansing**
- This is depicted most graphically on the Day of Atonement
- The High Priest would take blood into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle it onto the mercy seat – the golden lid on top of the Ark of the Covenant
- By doing that, the sins of the people were covered over
- All three types point to the cross and finished work of Christ
- God chose you, Jesus died for you, and the Spirit is helping you as you wander through this world on your journey to heaven
- Peter ends verse two with a blessing

- ‘Grace to you’ – Peter is talking to Christians, so this is not saving grace – it is the grace we need so that we can make the journey to our home, heaven
- And as Christians, they are at peace with God, so the peace Peter is calling down on them is the peace of God
- On the journey we call the Christian life, it will not always be easy, it is God’s grace that will help us to keep going
- And the journey is not always peaceful, but if we have the peace of God, we can be at peace even while the world rages around us
- Next time Peter is going to talk about the hope we have
- It is this hope that keeps us going when the road we journey upon gets rough
- Don’t miss it – come back next week
- Remember – next week one service at 9:30am
- And we also start the Sunday evening service at 6:00pm – How to Study the Bible – hope to see you there
- Amen
- **Pray**