

The St. Peter Option: To Everyone an Answer

Living as Exiles in a Foreign Land

1 Peter, 2 Peter, Christian Vocation, and the Table of Duties

2. Encouragement for Christians Dispersed in a World of Darkness

1 Peter 1:1-2 and the entire epistle

A. The challenges of first-century Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia

- i. The ancient culture in which these Christians and the early church lived.
- ii. The problem of persecution in the ancient world and the deep-seated spiritual problems which are parallel to the challenges of the Church and Christians today. (There is nothing new under the sun).

B. How does Peter address the persecuted Christians of the first century?

- i. Peter calls them pilgrims, or sojourners, or temporary residents (which means, in part, that preserving life in this world is not the objective for the Church or Christians). They remain in this world for the glory of Christ, for the refining and exercising of their faith in Jesus, and to bear witness to Him for the sake of those who hate and persecute them.
- ii. Peter does not scold them for their ignorance, nor rebuke them for their spiritual deficiencies, he rather comforts them and builds them up in the Gospel of Christ. (Redemption in Christ is a thread that runs through the epistle and reminds us of Luther's explanation to the Second Article of the Creed).
- iii. Peter calls them "the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father"
- iv. Peter extols the Holy Spirit as the one who will sanctify them for the obedience of faith in Christ as they are sprinkled with Christ's blood for the forgiveness of their sins.
- v. Peter addresses them with the greeting: "Grace to you and peace be multiplied"
- vi. No matter the threats to their faith, the persecution, and the suffering Peter builds them up with the Gospel of Christ.

Suggestions for Prayer—

Psalm 43 "Hope in God; He is Your Joy"

Hymn 768 "To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray"

Baptismal Doxology

For the Church Living as Exiles in a Foreign Land

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again
to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away,
reserved in heaven for you,
⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith
for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
⁶ In this you greatly rejoice,
though now for a little while, if need be,
you have been ^lgrieved by various trials,
⁷ that the genuineness of your faith,
being much more precious than gold that perishes,
though it is tested by fire,
may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,
⁸ whom having not ^lseen you love.
Though now you do not see *Him*,
yet believing,
you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,
⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.