

Lesson 2: First Peter 1

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

A. The first verse tells us who wrote this epistle, and it tells us to whom it was written. (These issues were discussed in detail in Lesson 1.) Notice that if Peter was not the author of this letter, then the very first word in the letter is a lie, which would be quite unusual for a letter that commands its readers to be holy as God – who cannot lie – is holy!

B. This opening is hardly a customary hello – “it is theologically rich and densely packed with themes.”

1. Notice that Peter refers to himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, with no further elaboration. Paul, by contrast, refers to himself as an apostle nine times in his greetings, and each time he adds additional explanation. Why? Peter's apostleship was never in doubt; Paul on the other hand constantly had to defend his apostleship.

C. These opening verses take words that had originally applied only to the Jews, the Chosen Nation, and it applies those words to Gentile Christians, who most Jews believed were outside the mercy of God.

1. Peter refers to his Gentile readers as the "elect" or "chosen."

a) This title had once belonged to Israel alone.

(1) Deuteronomy 7:6 For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

b) But Israel rejected Jesus, and so their inheritance was taken away and given to others. (Matthew 21:43)

c) And so the church today is the true Israel, the new Israel, the new Jerusalem. Paul refers to the church as “the Israel of God” in Galatians 6:16.

d) All the privileges that had once belonged to Israel now belong to the church, and Peter begins his book by emphasizing that dramatic change – the church is now the chosen or elect of God. Peter fully understands the message he received in Acts 10 when he visited the house of Cornelius.

e) We are the chosen of God – and that title is both a blessing and a challenge. God always chooses people for service.

2. Peter also refers to his readers as scattered strangers.

a) In the Greek, the word "elect" modifies the term "strangers" – so we are elect or chosen strangers. In fact, we are strangers or exiles because we have been chosen.

b) The Greek word for "scattered" is diaspora or dispersion. The Greek word translated "strangers" means "one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives." We get the word "parish" from the Greek word used here for "strangers." We are the dispersed aliens.

c) Of course, diaspora was the technical name for the Jews that were scattered in exile in all the countries outside the bounds of Palestine.

d) But now, Peter says, the real diaspora are Christians who are aliens here away from their true, heavenly home. Do we see ourselves as scattered strangers away from our home, or have we perhaps become quite at home here in this world? Do we like Moses see ourselves as strangers in a strange land? (Exodus 2:22)

(1) Hebrews 13:14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

e) Barclay: "The Christian sees all things in the light of eternity and life as a journey towards God. It is this which decides the importance which he attaches to anything; it is this which dictates his conduct. It is the touchstone and the dynamic of his life."

f) Interestingly, Peter in 5:13 figuratively says that he is writing the letter from Babylon, which was an Old Testament

city of exile for the people of God. Peter knew he too was exiled from his true home.

D. Verse 2 presents three great facts about the Christian life and our status as chosen people.

1. Fact #1: We were chosen according to the foreknowledge of God.

a) The church was not established by man – it was not made by human hands. We in the church are the chosen people of God – but we did not choose ourselves. God established the church, and God adds people to his church when they are saved.

b) The term "foreknowledge" here means chosen by God for a special plan or purpose. For example:

(1) In Romans 11:2 Paul asked whether God had rejected his people whom he foreknew (same Greek word).

(2) In verse 20 of this chapter, Peter will tell us that Christ was foreordained (same Greek word) before the creation of the world.

2. Fact #2: We were chosen through sanctification of the Spirit.

a) And how are we sanctified? Listen as Paul tells us:

(1) 1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

(2) Ephesians 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

b) Peter here links our election with our sanctification. Paul makes the same connection in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 where he says that God from the beginning has chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

3. Fact #3: We were chosen unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

a) The obedience here is our obedience to the gospel. It is the obedience of faith in Romans 1:5 and 16:26.

b) But what is the sprinkling of blood? In Exodus 24 the people were sprinkled with blood following their acceptance of the old covenant. Those today who have obeyed the gospel have also been brought into a covenant relationship with God. The sprinkling with blood – following obedience – denotes that new covenant relationship with God.

c) Believers enter the covenant by obeying the gospel and through the sprinkled blood of Christ, that is, his perfect cleansing sacrifice. God and man each have a role to play in salvation – Man obeys and God cleanses.

4. Notice that Peter has given us a description here of the Trinity – the Father foreknows, the Spirit sanctifies, and the Son cleanses.

II. ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

A. "It will take us a long time to appropriate the riches of this passage, for there are few passages in the New Testament where more of the great fundamental Christian ideas come together."

B. The passage begins with the theme of the entire paragraph – God is to be praised for the salvation he has provided to mankind, and that salvation is described as a new birth.

1. Although the world speaks separately of "Christians" and "born again Christians," God recognizes no such distinction. Every Christian is a born again Christian because every Christian has been raised from the waters of baptism to walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:4) There are no unbaptized Christians. (John 3:5; Galatians 3:27)

2. Why is our conversion called a new birth? Because when one becomes a Christian, there comes into that person's life a change

so radical that the only thing that can be said is that life has begun all over again for that person.

C. Peter next tells us that we have a great inheritance.

1. The word used here for inheritance is the same Greek word that was used in the Greek version of the Old Testament for the inheritance of Canaan, and so once again we see Peter applying terms to the church that had once been applied only to Israel.
2. Our inheritance is imperishable, undefilable, and unfading. It cannot be destroyed, it cannot be polluted, and it cannot decay or lessen in beauty.
3. While a Christian's adversaries may destroy all that he has here on this earth, there is a reward that no force on earth can touch. **(Matthew 6:20** “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.”)

D. The passage also tells us something about our life here on this earth.

1. We are kept by the power of God through faith.
 - a) The Greek word used here for "kept" is a military term – it means that our life is garrisoned by God and that he stands sentinel over us. But how are we kept through faith?
 - b) We are not protected from suffering. Indeed, Peter tells these Christians that they will suffer, and Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:12 that all Christians will suffer persecution.
 - c) We are not prevented from becoming unfaithful. Jesus told us in Revelation 3:5 that some would become unfaithful in the face of persecution and would have their names blotted out of the book of life.
 - d) God protects us by protecting what matters most – our eternal inheritance. As Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:12, “For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

E. But what about Jude 1:24, which says that God “is able to keep you from falling”? God protects his people by his power as they faithfully await his coming, but they must wait faithfully. Nowhere does God promise

protection for the unfaithful. He promises to keep the boat afloat and the fort guarded, but he will not prevent us from jumping out of that boat into the abyss or leaving that fort and joining the enemy camp. Indeed, I imagine each of us today knows people who have done just that very thing. As Jude says, God is able to keep us from falling, but we must remain faithful or fall we most certainly will.

iii. ⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: ⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: ⁸ Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: ⁹ Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

A. As we discussed in Lesson 1, these Christians were about to experience persecution. Peter in these verses reminds them of three reasons why they can stand anything that may come upon them.

B. First, they can stand anything because of what they are able to look forward to.

1. The trials are temporary; the inheritance is eternal. As Paul said in Romans 8:18, “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

2. Christians can lose many things in this world, and many of these Christians were about to lose all they had in this world, including even their own lives. But there is one thing that a Christian can never lose, and that is hope. The world around us is hopeless and Hell-bound, but we have an eternal hope that is sure and steadfast.

a) Hebrews 6:18-19 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

b) Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

c) Is there anything more sad than a life without hope? It has been said that hell begins where hope ends. To those outside of Christ, Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:13 and again in

Ephesians 2:12 says that they “have no hope.” We, by contrast, Paul says in Romans 8:24-25 are “saved by hope.”

C. Second, Peter says, these persecuted Christians can stand anything by remembering that every trial is a test.

1. Before gold is pure, it must be tested in the fire. Trials make us stronger; trials purify us.
2. Peter says in verse 6 that these Christians would undergo "manifold temptations" or "various trials." The Greek word for "manifold" means "many colored." Peter uses that word only one other time, and it is in 1 Peter 4:10 where he uses the same word to describe the grace of God. Our troubles may be many colored, but so is the grace of God.

D. Third, Peter says they can stand anything because at the end of it, when Jesus appears, they will receive from him praise, glory, and honor.

1. How many of us in this life do our best work and our greatest efforts not for pay or profit but in order to see the light in someone's eyes and hear their words of praise?
2. Our Christian life is no different. Those who endure know that in the end they will hear "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" from their Master, and that hope Peter tells us is the recipe for endurance when life is hard and faith is difficult.

E. The phrase "if need be" in verse 6 is interesting. It suggests that our suffering is not just the result of fate or chance, but is part of God's plan for our lives. And verse 7 gives us the reason – suffering is the crucible for our faith. It tests the genuineness of our faith. Also, Romans 5:3 and James 1:2-3 tell us that suffering produces patience.

F. Finally, Peter in verse 8 draws a contrast between himself and his readers. He, unlike his readers, had seen Jesus in the flesh, and what a wonderful privilege that was! Listen as Jesus describes it:

1. **Luke 10:23-24** And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see: ²⁴ For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.
2. The call for faith without sight is common in the New Testament because as soon as the church expanded outside of Palestine it

was the experience of most Christians. It is the experience of every Christian today. Christians are called to focus on that which we cannot see today, but wait in hope to see on the last day.

a) 1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

IV. ¹⁰ Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: ¹¹ Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. ¹² Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

A. Few passages in the Bible have more to tell us about how the Old Testament prophets wrote and how they were inspired, and few passages have more to tell us about the wonderful privilege of being a Christian.

B. Verse 10 tells us that the Old Testament prophets "enquired and searched diligently" or "searched intently and with the greatest care" about the salvation that has now come.

1. In 2 Peter 1:21, Peter will tell us that "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Here he tells us that they did not always understand what they were moved to say. (We have two examples of this in Daniel 8:15 and 12:8.)

C. The Old Testament prophets learned about Christ from the Spirit of Christ that was in them. (The phrase "spirit of Christ" is used elsewhere only in Romans 8:9.)

1. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God and is the Spirit of Christ. It is through this Spirit that the word of God was written down by inspired men. (2 Timothy 3:16)

2. Is the God of the Old Testament the same God we see in the New Testament? Absolutely! The Spirit of Christ was at work in the Old Testament.

D. The Old Testament prophets testified about the sufferings of Christ and the glory of Christ. For example, Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 speak of the sufferings of Christ, and Psalm 2, Psalm 16, and Psalm 110 all speak of the glory and triumph of Christ.

1. Note here that the glory follows the suffering. Neither Christ nor his people receives the crown of glory without first wearing the crown of thorns. Peter wants his readers to know that they too will experience glory after suffering.

E. One commentator wrote of having once seen a blind lamplighter tapping his way from lamppost to lamppost, bringing light to others that he would never see himself. Likewise, the prophets lit lamps that we can see, but they could not see.

1. Peter in verse 10 tells his readers that the prophets spoke of the grace that has come to you. However much these readers may be suffering, they stand in a privileged position that even the greatest of the ancient prophets did not enjoy.

F. Going even further, verse 12 tells us that even the angels desired to look into those things that are now reported to us. The Greek suggests that the angels are straining to see, as if over the battlements of Heaven, what God has done for mankind through Jesus Christ.

1. "[Verse 12] tells us that the preacher's message is of things which the angels long to catch a glimpse. There is no excuse for triviality in preaching. There is no excuse for an earth-bound and unlovely message without interest or thrill. The salvation of God is a tremendous thing!"

G. The Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven in verse 12 is likely a reference to Pentecost when Peter preached the very first gospel sermon. Notice here that the proclamation of the gospel in the New Testament is placed on the same level as the prophecies of the Old Testament. Both are the inspired word of God.

H. Peter's point here is that believers in Jesus Christ are incredibly blessed to live in the time when the prophecies of the Old Testament have come to pass. The prophets wondered about it; the angels looked at it from afar; we actually experience it. We are insiders, while the prophets and the angels are in some sense outsiders.

v. ¹³ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your

ignorance: ¹⁵ But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; ¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

A. The phrase "gird up the loins of your mind" is deliberately vivid. In the East, men wore long flowing robes that hindered fast movement. They wore a broad belt around their waist, and when they needed to move they pulled the robe up within the belt to give them freedom of movement. Peter is telling his readers that they must be ready for the most strenuous mental endeavor. "They must never be content with a flabby and unexamined faith."

1. Perhaps Peter was recalling Jesus' statement in Luke 12:35-36. ("Luke 12:35-36 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; 36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord.")

2. Hope will not become a reality without disciplined thinking. Thinking in a new way does not happen automatically; it requires effort, concentration, and intentionality.

B. He also tells them to be sober. This word could mean to refrain from drunkenness in the literal sense, or it could mean to remain steady and well-balanced in their minds. The context favors the latter meaning. "They must become intoxicated neither with intoxicating liquor nor with intoxicating thoughts."

1. It is easy for a Christian to be carried away with the latest fad or with a sudden craze, but Peter tells us to maintain the steadiness of one who knows what he believes. The term "sober" here means complete clarity of mind with its resulting good judgment. We must not become anesthetized by the attractions of this world.

2. The world may be content to live in a drunken stupor brought about by drugs, alcohol, and mindless entertainment, but we as Christians must never be that way. We must be ready; We must be alert; we must be focused. We must be sober.

C. Peter in verse 14 tells us two things about the Christless life.

1. The Christless life is a life of ignorance.

a) **Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

b) Most students heading off to college will be told the exact opposite – the beginning of wisdom is to forget God.

2. The Christless life is a life dominated by lust and desire.

a) These lusts and desires may be physical. We know from Scripture and from secular history that homosexuality was rampant. But heterosexuality was also rampant! Jerome tells us that in Rome there was one woman who was married to her 23rd husband, she herself being his 21st wife.

b) But these lusts and desire can also be mental. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:3 of those that were “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.”

c) Every person is eventually called in their life to make a choice between truth and desire – one will win and the other will lose in that person's life. Either we subject desire to truth or we subject truth to desire. God is calling us to do the former; the world is calling us to do the latter.

D. Peter in verses 15-16 has a simple but profound message – Holiness is not an option for a Christian!

1. We are commanded to be holy. Why? Because God is holy. "Be ye holy for I am holy." The pattern for our holiness is God himself.

a) **Ephesians 1:4** According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

b) **Matthew 5:48** Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

2. To be holy is to be different. The temple was holy because it was different from other buildings. The Sabbath was holy because it was different from other days. The Christian is holy because he is different from other men.

3. If we are not different, then we are not holy. Holy people do not blend in with the world. Holy people are noticed! Holy people may live “in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation” but they “shine as lights in the world.” (Philippians 2:15)

4. Notice that verse 15 tells us to be "holy in all manner of conversation." To be holy is to separate oneself from evil, and that

command embraces ALL of life. No part of our lives is outside the dominion of God.

vi. ¹⁷ And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear: ¹⁸ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: ²⁰ Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, ²¹ Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

A. Peter tells us two things here about the judgment of God.

1. First, God's judgment is impartial.

a) Acts 10:34-35 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵ But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

2. Second, God judges men based on their works. We may not be saved by our works, but we are certainly judged by our works!

a) In Titus 1:16, Paul describes those who profess to know God, but in works deny him. By contrast, in 1 Thessalonians 1:3, he remembers their "work of faith." James tells us in 2:24 that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." In Romans 2:6, Paul says that God will "render to every man according to his deeds."

b) **2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

B. In verses 18-19, Peter tells us that the price of our redemption was the greatest price that could possibly be paid – the precious blood of Christ. And, because of the judgment of God and because of the price that was paid for our salvation, Peter tells us to live in "reverent fear."

1. Peter uses "fear" to remind us that we must always be thinking of God and spiritual matters. We must set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:1-3)

2. But Peter also uses "fear" to remind his readers that it is not their persecutors who need to be feared, but God, who is not to be trifled with or presumed upon, because his judgments are impartial and ultimate. The one to whom believers pray as Father is the same one who will judge them impartially on the last day.

C. In verse 18, Peter tells his readers that they had been redeemed from the vain conversation (or empty life or aimless conduct) received by tradition from their fathers.

1. Before they had received the gospel, these believers had a culture with its values and religion, indeed perhaps a high culture, but however sincere they may have been about it and however beautiful it was, it was empty. The Greeks and Romans certainly did not see their cultures as empty, but empty they were.

2. The word for "tradition" used here does not mean an old tradition that is wearing out or declining. Instead it means a vibrant tradition that is conveyed from generation to generation. Yet no matter how vibrant, Peter tells us it is empty without Jesus Christ. It is not saving; it is not noble; it is not worthwhile. It is empty. It is hollow. It has no substance.

3. But there are many different paths to God, right? Wrong! Read John 14:6. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

D. In verse 19, Peter describes Jesus as a lamb.

1. In speaking of Jesus as a lamb, Peter is pointing back to two Old Testament pictures: (1) the suffering servant in Isaiah 53, and (2) the Passover lamb in Exodus 12:5.

2. **John 1:29** The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

3. Peter's description here points to the total perfection of Jesus Christ as a sacrifice.

a) The phrase "without defect" does not appear in the Old Testament, but is used here to reinforce the superiority and perfection of Christ's sinless sacrifice.

E. Jesus Christ was foreordained for this work before the foundation of the world. He was chosen for a special purpose. We often think of God

as first being the creator and then the redeemer, but here we see Jesus Christ as our redeemer before he was our creator.

F. The incredible privilege of the Saints is once again stressed in verse 20 – "but was manifest in these last times for you."

G. Finally, Peter in verse 21 ties our faith and our hope in God to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1. The New Testament writers seldom separate the cross from the resurrection. They seldom separate the sacrifice of the Christ from the triumph of the Christ, and Peter has been weaving these two themes together throughout this chapter. The prophets testified of the suffering of Christ and the glory of Christ, and here the lamb that was slain is raised from the dead by the power of God and given glory.

H. We have seen three commands in these verses: hope (verse 13), be holy (verse 15), and live in reverent fear (verse 17).

VII. ²² Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see *that* ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: ²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. ²⁴ For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: ²⁵ But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

A. The phrase "ye have purified your souls" in verse 22 tells us that despite what Calvin and the denominations may say, man does play a role in his salvation. We play an active and vital role in the plan of God – we are obedient to his gospel.

B. Having established the basis for holy living in the character of God and in the cost of their salvation, Peter now turns to its consequences. How do we then live?

C. The result of conversion is a sincere love for your fellow Christians – and that statement is immediately followed by a command to deepen and intensify that love.

D. "Loving fellow Christians is obviously no minor issue, but a central concern of both Peter and the whole New Testament."

1. 1 John 4:20-21 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? ²¹ And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

E. Peter's argument here is that we should love one another because we have all been begotten by God.

1. We are brethren (brothers and sisters). Why? Because we have all been born into the same family. How can we have fellowship with those who reject baptism? How can we call someone our brother or our sister who has not been born into our family? If they are not part of God's family, they are not our brethren.

F. In the beginning God generated life through his word. Now God regenerates life through his word. And what is this life giving word? Verse 25 says that it is the gospel that was preached unto them.

G. We learn two important lessons about God's word here.

1. First, God's word will endure forever – unlike man and the glory of man, which will wither and fall away.

a) In a world of unending change in which nothing seems to last and anything can become new and improved, it is a great comfort to have the unchanging, everlasting, unfading word of God!

2. Second, God's word must be preached if it is to accomplish its purpose.

a) Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

H. Peter's quotation in verse 25 is from Isaiah 40:8, but the context tells us that Peter had more than just that one verse in mind:

1. Isaiah 40:8-11 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. ⁹ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it* up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! ¹⁰ Behold,

the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him. ¹¹ He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

2. Peter's message is that these wonderful promises from Isaiah 40 are fulfilled in the proclamation of the gospel.