

Tuesday Evening Bible Study  
Series #9: 1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter  
Session #3: 1 Peter 3:13 – End  
Tuesday, September 26, 2017

**Christian Behavior in the Face of Harassment**

Overview of 1 Peter

- A. Salutation (1:1-2)
- B. Thanksgiving: A Living Hope (1:3-12)
- C. Body of the Letter (1:13 – 5:11)
  - a. A new identity of the people of God (1:13 – 2:10)
    - i. A call to holy living (1:13-22)
    - ii. Loving one another from the heart (1:22-25)
    - iii. The living stone and a chosen people (2:1-10)
  - b. Christian conduct in the given structures of society (2:11 – 3:12)
    - i. Live as servants of God (2:11-17)
    - ii. The example of Christ's suffering (2:18-25)
    - iii. Wives and husbands (3:1-12)
  - c. Responsible suffering in the face of society (3:13 – 5:11)
    - i. Suffering for doing right (3:13-22)
    - ii. Good stewards of God's grace (4:1-11)
    - iii. Suffering as a Christian (4:12-19)
    - iv. Tending the flock of God (5:1-11)
- D. Epistolary Conclusion (5:12-14)

Notes

- The issue in this section is not necessarily one of suffering in the face of persecution, but rather of suffering in the face of alienation.
  - Christians seem asocial
  - Christians are alienated because they won't live the way their Pagan neighbors do. However, if one is being judged and died by human standards, the author is offering comfort that one will survive in spirit, according to God.
  - Non-Christians are speaking badly of Christians, treating them as evildoers, defaming their conduct, and insulting them because of their belief in Christ.
- Still, the letter warns the Christian community not to be surprised if they face persecution—"a fiery ordeal."
- Christ's decent into hell and took up dead saints has some vague references in the NT (Romans 10:7; Ephesians 4:8-9; Matthew 27:52) as well as his triumph over angelic powers (Philippians 2:10; Colossians 2:15). There are also references found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Century apocryphal writings (*Ascension of Isaiah*, *Odes of Solomon*, *On the Pasch*, *Gospel of Nicodemus*)

- The end of the body speaks to the leadership of the church.
  - Elders = presbyteroi (presbyter or priest)
  - Christ serves as a model for shepherding.
  - 1 Peter probably presumes at least a two-tier ministry of presbyters & bishops. The role deacons played is less clear here.
- “She who is at Babylon” serves as imagery in post-AD70 Jewish literature to refer to Rome that destroyed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple, as Babylon had destroyed the first.

### Questions to consider

1. Have you ever felt alienated because of your Christian beliefs? What was the situation?
2. Reflect again on how 1 Peter can help us live a Christian life in the modern world. What are the challenges that we might face?

### Resources

Notes from HarperCollins Study Bible (NRSV), 1989

“1 Peter” in *Sacra Pagina*, Daniel J. Harrington, ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2008)

Raymond E. Brown, “First Letter of Peter” in *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997)

*The CEB Women’s Bible*, 2016