

Studies in I Peter (7)

Peter's Description of the Christian

Introduction

- A. The believers in Asia Minor were going through a time of suffering and persecution from the people among whom they were living.
I Peter 1:7; 4:12-19
- B. Peter wrote to explain the place of trials in the Christian's life and to strengthen and encourage the believers. I Peter 1:8; 2:19-25
- C. The text:

Peter, and apostle of Jesus Christ, to God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.
I Peter 1:1 NIV

I. The Believer is Elect -- In Relationship to God.

A. Explanation:

The word "elect" means chosen. It explains, from the divine side, why we are believers. In eternity past God chose those upon whom He would bestow the benefits of salvation. Our names were written in the Book of Life (Revelation 13:8; 17:8) and we were given to the Lord Jesus as a reward for His great suffering to redeem us.

B. Instruction:

1. Election reminds us that God is sovereign.

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Ephesians 1:11

2. Election reminds us that sin has brought spiritual death.

As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God ... For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:10-23

3. Election reminds us that salvation is not by works.

For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.
Ephesians 2:8,9

4. Election reminds us that the believer belongs to God.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?
I Corinthians 6:19

II. The Believer is a Stranger -- In Relationship to the World.

A. Explanation:

In the Bible the "world" refers to the way of life lived by the non-Christian. It is a life largely produced by Satanic influence (Ephesians 2:2,3), and is under the condemnation of God (James 4:4). In salvation the believer was taken out of this world, spiritually, and made a member of the Church. (John 15:19; 17:16).

B. Instruction:

1. We are strangers to the world because of redemption.

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.
Galatians 1:4

2. We are strangers to the world through salvation.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own. But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John 15:19

3. We must live as the strangers to the world that we are.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

III. The Believer is Scattered -- In Relationship to Divine Plan.

A. Explanation:

The Greek word translated "scattered" is the word "sown" which was used to describe the sowing of seed. The thought is that God had placed the believers through the various provinces according to His divine plan for the sake of their witness.

B. Instruction:

1. God's plan of evangelism is the believer and his witness.

Ye are the salt of the earth . . . Ye are the light of the world
Matthew 5:13,14

2. The believer's place in God's plan.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. I Peter 2:12