

Epistle of First Peter I

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I've been promising for quite a while to start this series in 1-Peter. And in doing so, I want to mention that the translation that I have done here is not some sort of official translation to replace the *King James Version* or to replace the *New King James Version* or whichever version of the Bible you have. But, as a study aid to help us to understand more the message that Peter has for us.

It's really quite a book and I think it's very important for us to realize how it fits in for us today, because we are literally being bombarded on every side by everything. Almost everywhere you go, you feel oppressed by the radio; you feel oppressed by television; you feel oppressed where you're working; you feel oppressed just going shopping.

- 1-Peter is the book of *hope*;
- James is the book of *faith*;
- 1-John is the book of *love*.
- 2-Peter, 2nd-3rd John and Jude are all the *warnings* about the transition from the true religion of God into the false religion that we see around us today.

So, what was happening then was the background of building things up to what later became the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches, which we now see the end result of that today.

When I get done with 1-Peter, then I'm going to go to 1-John. And then I will come back to 2-Peter and then 2nd & 3rd John and Jude and work those three together, because, or work those four rather, because 2nd & 3rd John are really short and 2-Peter is only three chapters and Jude is only one chapter. And they all pretty well cover the same thing as to what was happening internally within the Church.

Now, let's cover a little bit of background concerning about the book of Peter. The book of Peter was written by the Apostle Peter somewhere around 64_{A.D.}. We find in the New Testament that Peter actually is identified under four names: Peter, Simon, Simeon and Cephas. His full name is: Simon Peter, the son of Jona or Bar-Jona.

One thing we can clearly establish was that Peter was *not* the first pope. Absolutely *not* the first pope, could not have been the pope. And we're going to see some of the things in this background, before we get into the book of 1-Peter, that Peter never thought of himself as the pope, never treated others as if he were the pope and never had anybody treat him as if he were the pope.

Let's go to Luke 4 and we will see something about Peter that even the Catholic Church does not like to recognize is in the Scriptures. Just

like with Jesus, they *do not* want to recognize the fact that it talks about in Mark 6, where the people said, 'Who is this Jesus, we know Him, and His mother is Mary and He's the son of the carpenter, Joseph. And His brothers: Simon, Jude and James, are they not with us to this day? And the daughters?' Well, the Catholics don't like to admit that Jesus had brothers and sisters—neither do they like to admit what we find here:

Luke 4:38: "Now after going out of the synagogue. He [Jesus] went into Simon's house. And **Simon's mother-in-law** sick... [How are you going to have a mother-in-law unless you're married? So 'Simon's wife's mother' (*KJV*)] ...and they asked Him *to intervene* for her. Then He stood over her and rebuked the fever... [I thought that was interesting, He just stood over her and said, 'Fever be gone.' Whatever He said, it was gone.] ...and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them" (vs 38-39). So, Peter was married.

We're going to see something here in this statement by the Apostle Paul concerning his particular status and the status of the other apostles. 1-Corinthians 9:3: "My defense to those who are examining me is this... [that is in his apostleship of Christ] ...Do we not have a right... [the *King James* says 'power,' but it should read: 'authority'] ...to eat and to drink? Do we not have a right [authority] to take with us a sister, a wife, as also the other apostles, and the [brethren] brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?" (vs 3-5).

'The brothers of the Lord' here happens to be the brothers of Jesus. Not just brethren as we say: 'Well, we're all brethren, brethren.' But 'the brothers' are the brothers of the Lord 'and Cephas, who is Peter.' Peter's wife followed him around wherever he went. So, Peter didn't have the same kind of ministry that Paul had. It was more of what you would call a *regular* ministry. He took his wife with him.

"Or I only and Barnabas, do we not have a right to refrain from working?" (v 6). He's saying all the others didn't work. Peter came from the city of Bethsaida—we find that in John 1:44.

We're going to see something very interesting here concerning Peter, and concerning those that were with him and we will find that Peter and James and John, and Andrew—now, Andrew was the brother of Peter; and James and John were the sons of Zebedee.

Luke 5:10: "And in like manner also *upon* James and John, *the* sons of Zebedee, who were

partners with Simon...” They were fishing partners with Simon. Let’s look and see what happened here in this particular situation. And of course, this would be one you will know why then when Jesus said, ‘Come and follow Me’ they followed Him because there’s a good chance that they knew Jesus as they were growing up, too.

Verse 5: “Then Simon answered *and* said, ‘Master, we have labored though the entire night, *and* we have taken nothing; but at Your word, I will let the net down.’ And when they did this, they enclosed a great school of fish; and their net was breaking. Then they signaled to their partners, those in the other ship, that they should come *and* help them; and they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. And when he saw *this*, Simon Peter fell at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord’” (vs. 5-8).

We find that Peter understood the nature of human beings. He didn’t consider himself the next or the first pope or anything like that. He considered himself a “sinful man.... For great astonishment came upon him and all with him, on account of the *miraculous* haul of fish that they had taken... [then it talks about James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were the partners of Simon] ...Then Jesus said to Simon, ‘Fear not; from this time forth you shall be catching men. And after bringing their ships to land, they forsook everything and followed Him’ (vs 8-11).

Let’s understand that Peter did have certain things in the way of leadership. In certain cases he spoke sort of as the spokesman for all of those who became the apostles. We’re going to see certain things here as we come along, concerning the Apostle Peter. I’m not going to cover all of them. We could give an extensive background. I know in most commentaries you can probably pick up three to five pages all about Peter and everything. But, I didn’t want to get bogged down into that other than to just have enough of the background here so we can understand a little bit about Peter.

Matthew 16:15: “He said to them, ‘But you, whom do you declare Me to be? Then Simon Peter answered and said, ‘Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God’.... [The other apostles or disciples didn’t say that at that particular time. We’ll come back and cover this a little bit more when we get to v 18.] ...And Jesus answered *and* said unto him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona... [*son of John*] ...for flesh and blood did not revealed *it* to you, but my Father, who *is* in heaven’” (vs 15-17).

All right, let’s go to Mark 1:36, and we will see a little bit more about the leadership of Peter, and he did exert *some* leadership. Now, we need to understand something about Mark. Mark was the

one who wrote for Peter and later for Paul; probably also later for John. So, what we have in the book of Mark, we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ probably as given to Mark *by* Peter. In the book of Mark we have Peter, or Simon, nearly always placed first. And we see that all the way through the Gospels that Peter, whose name is also Simon or Cephas, was always placed first because he did exert *some* leadership. This did not give him authority over everyone, as we’ll see a little bit later on—and this didn’t make him the first pope.

Mark 1:36: “And Simon, and they that were with him, went out after Him... [That is, Jesus got up real, real early while it was still night and went out and prayed, so they followed Simon...] ...And after finding Him, they said unto Him, ‘Everyone is looking for You.’ But He said unto them, ‘Let us go to the towns and neighboring countryside, so that I may also preach there; because I have come for this *purpose*.’ And He preached in all their synagogues in Galilee, and cast out demons. And a leper came to Him, beseeching Him and kneeling down to Him, and saying to Him, ‘If You will, You have the power to cleanse me.’ Then Jesus, being moved with compassion, stretched out *his* hand *and* touched him, and saying to him, ‘I will; be cleansed.’ And as soon as He had spoken, the leprosy immediately departed from him, and he was cleansed” (vs 36-42).

Let’s look at some more concerning what Peter and John and James. We’re going to see that not only did Peter have a leadership position, but also James and John. Luke 9:28: “Now it came to pass about an eight days after these words, that He took Peter and John and James...” Notice the way it is listed there: Peter and John and James. Now, this James was the son of Zebedee. Later, James, the brother of the Lord, was the one who apparently was, you might say, the central leader at Jerusalem. Although, he, in that particular case, did not assume any position anywhere near what people would understand as the office of a pope. Then when we come to the way the epistles are laid out—how are they laid out? We just studied James—right? And he was the brother of the Lord. So, his writing would take preeminence over anybody else’s.

Then we have Peter, and then we have 1st, 2nd, 3rd John. Then we have the second brother of Jesus, Jude. So we find this order pretty much all the way through. So, “...he took with Him, Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And it came to pass that as He prayed, the appearance of His face was changed, and His clothing *became* radiantly white. And suddenly two men *appeared*, talking with Him; they were Moses and Elijah. who appeared in glory *and* spoke of His departure, which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem” (vs 28-31).

All of this then had to be a vision, as we will see. Some people say, ‘Well, Moses and Elijah are going to be the two witnesses and they’re going to be resurrected and come in Jerusalem, they’re the ones that are going to carry on that work of the two witnesses.’ But, we don’t see anything in the Bible to substantiate that. We find in the account in the book of Matthew—the parallel account here: “tell the vision to no man.” This was a *vision*.

Verse 32: “But Peter and **those** with Him... [so James and John then were mentioned as ‘those’] ...were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory, and the two men who were standing with Him. And it came to pass *that*, as they were departing from Him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good for us to be here; now let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah’—not realizing what he was saying” (vs 32-33).

And it’s pretty true that Peter was what they call ‘impetuous.’ He would say things, put his foot in his mouth. You know, he said to Jesus, ‘Boy, I’ll go to the death, I’ll go to prison, anything with you Lord.’ And Jesus looked at him and said, ‘Peter, before the cock crows you’re going to deny me three times.’ So, here again, he didn’t know what he was saying.

Verse 34: “But as he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they feared as those *three* entered into the cloud. Then the voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved. Listen to Him!’ And as the voice ended, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and told no one in those days of anything they had seen” (vs 34-36).

I suspect that this was a special thing that Jesus let Peter and John and James experience so that there would be some *conviction* in them above and beyond, so when it came time for preaching and teaching and leading, that they would have the *conviction* to do so. Because there’s one thing you can never do, if someone *really believes* something, and *knows it for sure*, you’re never ever, ever, ever going to take that belief from them. This is why they had this miraculous vision and why it was not to all of the other disciples. You can’t have a situation where *nobody* is in charge, so Peter obviously was the leader. He didn’t have to get up and say he was in charge, it was by the fact of what was being done and what Jesus was doing with him.

We find that was really quite a thing! And, I’ve often wondered, I wonder how they felt when they were up there? When we get to 1-Peter we’ll see that he mentions it that they were witnesses of His suffering and also that they saw His glory.

Now, let’s come to Mark 14 and we find the same thing again when Jesus prayed. Peter said a couple of things there. Remember the one in Matthew 16 when Peter was beginning, or Jesus was telling Peter things He was going to suffer, and Peter said, ‘Lord, we’re not going to let those things happen to You.’ Then He turned around and rebuked Peter and said, ‘Get you hence from Me, Satan.’ So, that’s pretty tough language.

All right, let’s pick it up here in Mark 14:29: “Then Peter said to Him, ‘Even if **all shall be offended**, yet I *shall* not.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I say to you, today, in this *very* night, before *the* cock crows twice, you shall deny me three times.’ But he spoke more adamantly, if it were necessary for me to die with You, I would not deny You in any way.’ And they all spoke in the same manner also” (vs 29-31). So, we have here again, Peter taking the initiative, then all the rest of the apostles are mentioned as “they all.”

Verse 32: “Then they came to a place that was *called* Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ And He took Peter and James and John with Him... [so the same three again, He took with Him] ...and He began to be deeply troubled and heavy-hearted. And He said to them, ‘My soul is filled with anguish, even to death; remain here and watch.’ Then He went forward a little, dropped to the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, ‘Abba, Father, all things *are* possible with You. Remove this cup from Me! Yet not what I will, but what You *will*.’ Then He came and found them sleeping. And He said to Peter, ‘Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not able to watch one hour?... [After Peter said, ‘Hey, I won’t deny you.’ Jesus comes back and says, ‘Couldn’t you even watch for one hour?'] ...Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak” (vs 32-38).

Let’s look at some other things concerning Peter. When it came time to prepare the Passover who did He send? Luke 22:8: “And He sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go *and* prepare the Passover for us that we may eat.”” Jesus used Peter and John, Peter, James and John in a more particular and personal way than He did the others. So, there was some leadership that Peter exerted.

Now then, you know the account, we find this concerning what Jesus told Peter, v 31: “Then the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon, listen *well*. Satan has demanded to have you, to sift *you* as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren.... [That can have the immediate effect of all of those that were with Jesus—the 120 that were there on the Day of Pentecost. It could have also to do with just

the immediacy of the apostles as brethren. In this case it's not talking about the brothers of the Lord. And then we have the same thing here.]: ...And he said to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.'" (vs 31-33)—parallel account of the other one. Then we know in John 21:15-19, we have this in relationship to Peter, where it is, "if you love Me, feed My sheep. If you love Me, feed My lambs."

Was Peter *the "Rock"* upon which the church was built? Every time you watch anything to do with any of the ceremony of the pope, they always bring this out. Every mass, isn't it true, don't they go through Matt. 16? Just the public ones I've seen, where the pope is involved, they don't do it.

Matthew 16:17: "And Jesus answered *and* said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood did not reveal *it* to you, but My Father, Who *is* in heaven. And I say also to you, that you are Peter..." (v 17-18). Now, you probably have it in your notes, if you don't check your margin, probably there. The word *Peter* is 'petros'—that is the masculine use of the word.

"...but upon this Rock... [The Greek for *rock* here is 'petra'—which then is, in that particular sense "feminine"—although it's referring to Christ. But then it's sort of a play on words, because it's also referring to the church and "upon *this* Rock"—and 'petra' means *a huge, massive, great, large, craggy stone or cliff.*] ...**I will build My church...**" (v 18). He said, "...I will build **MY** church..."—it's not Peter's church. He didn't say, 'Peter, you will build *your* church.' He didn't say, 'Peter, you will build **My** church.' And obviously it is the Church of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, and it's built on Him, as we will see—it's not built upon any man.

"...and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it" (v 18). Which means *the mouth of the grave shall not overcome the Church*. That's what it's talking about. Now, *if* this was referring to Peter as the *rock*, did Peter die? *Yes!* So then, the grave prevailed against Peter. But the grave is not going to prevail against the Church.

Let's see what kind of 'rock' or what kind of 'stone' that Peter is called. And here's where we get one of the other names of Peter. John 1: 43_[transcriber's correction]: "And he led him to Jesus.... [Andrew brought Simon—Andrew is the brother of Peter.] ...And when He saw him, Jesus said, You are Simon the son of Jona. You shall be called Cephas,' (which is being interpretation, 'a stone')." And this one means *a little stone*. This is *not* referring to a 'petra'—stone, but this is referring to a 'petros'—stone—a *small* stone. Some translations even translate it *a little stone*.

1-Peter 2:6: "For this reason it says in the Scripture, 'Behold, I place in Zion the chief Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and one that is believing on Him will never be put to shame.'" Now, the reason that I bring this is because if Peter were considered the head of the Church—the pope as the Catholics claim—why then would he refer back to here in his own epistle that that is referring to Christ.

Verse 7: "The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who are believing; but to those who are disobeying, *the* Stone that the builders rejected, this one became *the* Head of *the* corner; even a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense to those who are stumbling at the Word *and* are disobeying, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed" (vs 7-8). Here he's directly referring to the Rock *as Christ*, not to himself. Nowhere do we find in any of the sayings of Peter, any of the writings of Peter, that it refers to himself as the "rock" on which Jesus built the Church. ***The Rock is Christ.***

Let's look at a couple of other Scriptures to see this: 1-Corinthians 10:4—the Greek here is a little bit different word: it is 'lithos' but it means *stone* or *rock*. It's talking about the children of Israel as they were led by God out of Egypt into the wilderness. 1-Corinthians 10:4: "And *they*... [the children of Israel] ...all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And that Rock was Christ." Here again you can tie this in with many other Scriptures to show that Jesus was the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament, Who became Jesus Christ of the New Testament and He is called "***that Rock was Christ.***"

Let's look at some of the Psalms and see that that is absolutely true and upheld throughout the entirety of the Bible. No man is going to have a Church of God built upon him. We'll go through several of the Psalms here and see how it refers to God as 'the Rock'—'my Rock, my Fortress, my Hightower'—and all of those things.

Why was David considered such an *unusual example* of a king? Say, like if you compare it to Saul. Why was he considered such an unusual example as a king? He wrote all kinds of Psalms. What was the outstanding quality of David? ***Humble—a man after God's heart.*** Isn't that correct? *Yes!* A man who, when he was in trouble, and when Absalom was rebelling against him, one of the just the ordinary sinners as David was leaving the castle to get away from the attack of Absalom and the troops, the man came up and shook his finger and cursed the king. One of the soldiers with David said, 'Boy, you know, we better do him in, you can't curse the king. Ah, leave him alone, I deserve it.' So, not only that, he was humble and he

was honest. He knew when he was wrong and making the bad mistakes, you see. But, he was also a man who had a great deal of love. Remember what happened when Absalom was chasing him? He wouldn't fight him! And, unfortunately, when Absalom was being chased by Joab and the troops, he was going through the thick of the woods and his long, flowing hair got him caught in a tree and so he was hanging in the tree by his hair. And one of the soldiers came by and killed him and said, 'I've done you a good favor, I've killed your son. Ohhh, Absalom, my son, my son!' But, he had the guy who killed him done in. So, the great love that David had, you know, he *really loved* God! That's why he was *a man after God's heart*.

Psalm 61:1: "...Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth I cry unto You, when my heart is overwhelmed: **lead me to the rock higher than me**" (vs 1-2). Knowing that the only salvation is through Christ. It talks about the man who built on the rock, and that Rock is Christ (Matt. 7:24-25).

Verse 3: "For You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower against the enemy. I will dwell in Your tabernacle forever; I will take refuge in the hiding place of Your wings" (vs 3-4). There's a lot you can get out of that—can't you? You can talk about the Feast of Tabernacles; you can talk about protection; you can talk about safety; you can talk about letting God fight your battles for you; and so forth.

Psalm 62:2: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my fortress; I shall not be greatly moved.... [v 6]: He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved." Apparently this was some sort of a chorus that went along with the hymn. So, the way that this was sung, that was the chorus: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved." That would make a pretty good hymn.

All the way through the Psalms in these times, David talks about God as his Rock. Now, this ties right in with 1-Cor. 10:4, because this refers right back to the episode there: '...and they followed that Rock, and that Rock was Christ.'

Psalm 78:35: "And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer." That is when God slew them, they got in trouble and were sinning, and God corrected them. Then "...they remembered that God was their Rock..."

Psalm 89:26: "He shall cry unto me... [the one looking to God for salvation] ...'My Father, You are my God, and the Rock of my salvation. And I will make him My firstborn, higher than the kings

of the earth" (vs 26-27). And so, this then goes into a type of Christ again.

All right, let's go to the New Testament now—Ephesians 2. We talk about the stone. We talk about the power of God. We talk about the foundation of the Church. Here Ephesians is really a tremendous chapter, to show us that Peter did not have the Church built upon *himself*.

Ephesians 2:18: "For through Him we both... [Jews and Gentiles] ...have **direct access by one Spirit to the Father.**" And I want to mention here very clearly that that is so very important in relationship to what we are doing, our calling and everything as we get into the book of 1-Peter.

- We're not dealing with a religion.
- We're not dealing with a church.
- We're not dealing with just an organization.

We have direct access to the Father.

I've been getting quite a bit of mail here recently about the calendar thing—so I may have to get into that again. It seems like some of these things never, never end. But, the sacred name for the Father, in the New Testament, is *the Father*. That's what it is. Simple! Direct! But, we have that "...access by one Spirit to the Father." Not unto the pope, not unto the priest, but unto the Father. And this is what really needs to be just kept in mind and right in the forefront of our very brains, if we could say. But it's with *one Spirit*.

I really felt that when I was back there in Atlanta it was really just wonderful. With all of us being there and studying and talking and fellowshiping and it was just great, and that's the way it is when you get together with God's people, that have God's Spirit. Even though you have never met them, that fellowship is there *because of the Spirit*—and it's the work that God the Father is doing. And everyone has access to God the Father and He's as close as the next prayer: 'Our Father in heaven.'

So remember that when you're in trouble, you have difficulty, whatever your problem may be—and we're going to have plenty of them around. I can guarantee you with this book here, *The New Age Cults and Religions*, and what's happening in the world, there's going to be plenty of problems and difficulties around.

In talking to a woman last night on the phone, back in Georgia, she was saying that it seems as though that God is protecting everyone of us from the things that are in the world by having us in the smaller groups. Now, she's teaching her children at home. She can afford to do so. I said, 'Hey, right on.' If you can afford to do so and it's something you can do, by all means. And she really feels that God is protecting us that way. Well, when I was

back in Oklahoma and visited with Don Marshall, he felt the same thing. He said, ‘Can you imagine how many people you can help by audio-cassettes and video-cassettes. In this way we can feed the brethren and not have to have a great high profile of some great church out here in the world. We’ll truly be like salt—a little here and a little there. And when salt is in the food you can’t see it, can you? So, that very well may be and who knows what’s going to happen in the future. Man I tell you—well, we won’t get all carried away here.

We have “...access by one Spirit unto the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone” (vs 18-20). The apostles and prophets *have* a place in the church. They were the ones who were the foundation of it—correct? But, they then built the church on whom? Themselves? *No, on Christ!*

“...being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 20-22).

Luke 20:9: “And He began to speak this parable to the people: ‘A certain man planted a vineyard, and leased it out to husbandmen ... [to take care of it] ...and left the country for a long time. And in *the harvest* season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, so that they might give him *some* of the fruit from the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him *and* sent *him* away empty. And after that he sent another servant; but they also beat him and scorned *him* and sent *him* away empty. And after that he sent a third *servant*; but they also wounded him *and* cast *him* out.’ Then the lord of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps when they see him, they will respect *him*’” (vs 9-13).

Verse 14: “‘But when they saw him, the husbandmen reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.’ And they cast him outside the vineyard *and* killed *him*. Therefore, what will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others.’ Now, after hearing *this*, they said, ‘May *it* never be!’ But He looked at them *and* said, ‘What then is this that is written: “*The* Stone that the builders rejected, this one has become the head of *the* corner? Everyone who falls on that Stone shall be broken; but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder’”” (vs. 14-18). It is true, when you fall upon that Stone in repentance, you are broken. When you accept Jesus as your Savior. But,

it is also true that if you *fight against Him* you’re going to be ground to powder.

Verse 19: “And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hands on Him in that hour, because they knew that He had spoken this parable against them; but they feared the people.” They knew what the score was. They knew, they pretty well figured that Jesus, if they didn’t get rid of Him, He would soon have all the people following Him—as they viewed it. What He was really doing, was prophesying what was going to happen to them, because of their rejecting of Jesus.

Let’s go to the book of Acts and just follow through just a little bit here, just a little bit. Well, yeah, we’ll just pick up a few verses as we survey some parts of the book of Acts. I don’t want to belabor the point, but this is to show that Peter was, at that particular time, one of the leaders, if not *the* leader of the apostles.

Acts 1:15: “And in those days, Peter stood up in *the* midst of the disciples...*and* said...” That he’s the one that went ahead and led the way on getting the replacement for Judas Iscariot, who fell.

Acts 2:37: “Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’” (vs 37-38) So, Peter was the one who did the leading all the way through.

Acts 3:1: “Now Peter and John...” There we have John included in it. And John was there with him. We find later that Peter was the one who did the speaking after they were arrested.

In Acts 5 we find the account where they were bringing their proceeds of the selling of the land, and we see what happened there with Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5:3: “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why did Satan fill your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...’ [v 8]: ...And Peter said to her... [v 12]: ...And many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles... [so they were all doing things] ...(and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch. And none of the others dared to join them, but the people magnified them; and believers were added all the more to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women) insomuch *that the people were* bringing out the sick into the streets and putting *them* on beds and stretchers, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them” (vs 3, 8, 12-15).

Here at this point would be the perfect point to make Peter the pope, but he wasn’t. We see no account of Peter being carried around on a chair. We

find no account that he exalted himself above the others—he was just merely the leader. Acts 15—I'll just draw your attention to it. Even though Peter was sent of God to Cornelius—you can find that in Acts 10 & 11—Peter was the one who was doing the leading; but when we come to Acts 15, James, the brother of the Lord, was the one who gave the, who gave the summary of everything, and helped write the letter and they sent it out to all the brethren.

Let's go to Galatians, the second chapter, and let's find out something concerning the ministry of Peter. Then we'll get right into the book of 1-Peter. Let's notice something here very important: *If* Peter *were* the one on whom the Church was built, then *why* would Paul correct him publicly? Now, that's quite a question. Which then is another thing which *disproves* that Peter was the first pope.

Galatians 2:4: "Now *this meeting* was *private* because of false brethren brought in secretly, who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage; to whom we did not yield in subjection, *not* even for one hour, so that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you. But *the gospel that I preach did not come* from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me; God does not accept *the person of a man*.)..." (vs. 4-6).

That's a pretty strong statement. He's saying it really doesn't make any difference, if these other men were apostles: 'It really doesn't make any difference to me. God doesn't accept any man's person.' Oh, but people do—don't they? Oh yeah, they love to have the pope. They love to hear the pope.

"...For those who are of repute conferred nothing upon me. But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been entrusted with the gospel* of the circumcision" (vs 6-7). There you can say that Paul had equal status with Peter. But also, what was involved in the whole situation here?

Verse 8: "(For He Who wrought in Peter for *the apostleship* of the circumcision wrought in me also toward the Gentiles;) and after recognizing the grace that was given to me, James... [brother of the Lord] ...Cephas [Peter], and John, those reputed to be pillars—gave to me and Barnabas *the right hands* of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision. *Their only request was* that we remember the poor, which very thing I was also diligent to do. But when Peter came to Antioch..." (vs 8-11). We could put in there: and he was received as the pope. Kissed his ring, kissed his feet and he gave them the keys. I'm being *very*

facetious here. That is not what happened.

Paul says, v 11: "...I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned; for before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party" (vs 11-12).

Here preserved in the pages of the New Testament, is the confrontation that Paul brought against Peter, because Peter *was sinning publicly*. There can be no doubt that Peter was *not* the pope.

Last thing we need to cover, let's go to the last verse in 1-Peter, and we will see just a little notation—not the last verse, the next to the last verse. 1-Peter 5:13: "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you; as does Mark, my son"—Mark, the one who wrote the book of Mark. Some people say that that is referring to Rome. Well, I would have to disagree with that. I would have to think that since there were so many Jews in Babylon that's actually where Peter was. He was in Babylon. "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you; as does Mark, my son." I would just have to take it at face value and say that Peter was in Babylon. Because he was the apostle to the Jews or the circumcision.

Now we come to the first part of the Epistle of 1-Peter, and let's begin there with all this background. I'm sure there's a lot more background that could be given, I'm sure there are other things that could be given concerning Peter. But in the very first verse we find a couple things here, which are a little bit different than we may anticipate since he was the apostle to the circumcision.

1-Peter 1:1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ..." That's a very interesting salutation in itself—isn't it? He didn't say, *the chief apostle*; he didn't say: *the leading apostle*; he said: "*an* apostle—and in the Greek it is: "Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ."

"...to the elect strangers..." (v 1). I'm debating whether to leave that 'called out' (KJV), because the word means: *selected; called out; elected*. I may change that to 'selected' in the final copy. I think it's very important that it's all being edited very, very finely, because it's going to be, in some ways, a very explosive book, because I'm going to totally trash the 15th Passover as being just a tradition of men. Some of the comments in there totally trash the Mass, the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper. And then I'm going to have in there about the nature of God, the nature of man and the flesh that Jesus had—and they're going to be some people who are going to be vociferously against the fact that Jesus *really was flesh!* I mean, to us, since we've gone over it, what the last two or three years—we

understand it. But, there are going to be people out there, it's going to hit them like a bombshell. And, I'm also going to make it very clear that the 14th day of the 1st month is the Covenant Day—and if you are not in covenant with God, and ***if you don't keep the 14th Passover you are not in covenant with God.*** It's going to be pretty hard-hitting. I need to have everything phrased in the right way, so that it's going to get the message across, be strong as can be, but not lay myself open in such a way that I can just be totally wiped out.

I don't know if I'm going to make that 'to the selected ones' or 'called out ones'—*called out ones* really is better.

“...strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia...” (v 1). With the exception of Bithynia, all of that area was the same area that the Apostle Paul preached in. It's very possible that Peter was writing from Babylon, which it says he was, and this letter was sent up into that area, but also included Bethany. And, it's possible that this was written *after* Paul was martyred. Now, some people claim that Peter and Paul were martyred together in Rome. I would have to say this gives evidence that I doubt whether that was so. Because, why would Peter be writing to those areas that **Paul** had his basic ministry in? And write this general letter? And this general letter was written in a time when there was a lot of distress. When, at that time, the brethren were literally being assaulted upon by the world. And he talks in here about the fiery trial. He talks about the difficulties that are in here.

Literally we are the *elect*, we are the *select*—the *called out ones*. And you can put in your notes there, Matt. 22:14, 'Many are called but few are chosen.' It's actually the chosen ones—that might even be better: 'to the chosen ones.' When you're *chosen*, you're *called out*; you answer the calling. Why are many called and few chosen? Because very few repent. Very few are willing to answer the call.

1-Peter 1:2: “...according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you.” That's telling us an awful, awful lot.

“...according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father ...” We have to be called of God. He's got to lead us out of this world.

Let's go to John 6, another basic Scripture. We have to realize that ***none of us*** can come to the knowledge of the Truth on our own. We cannot go out, and as human beings in this world that's deceived by Satan the devil, with the nature that we have, the heart is what? '*Desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, who can know it.*' So, we can't just take our natural, carnal minds and say,

'Aha, I'm going to discover the Truth in life'; because '*it hasn't entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for him.*' It hasn't gone into his ears.

God has to call us. And He has to lift the veil of deception from our eyes. And, in a sense, it is very good that it is that way. As a matter of fact, that's the only way that it can be. ***God has to call us.*** He has to open our minds. And, I tell you, some of the things that people believe about the Bible and the so-called myths in here, you can see that God has to call you to open your mind to it. And when you do, boy, the Bible is just, it's really something! You put it all together. But here, it's absolutely true:

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, who sent Me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day” That's why when we get the address that is given to us by Peter here, according to the pre-determined knowledge of God the Father—and that's something I think we need to emphasized more and really keep in mind. That it is God the Father Who is dealing with us through Jesus Christ. And that's something that should give us a great deal of hope.

I know this last week it was kind of tough for me, all the things going, I had to get out there, after being gone for about four days, come back and everybody's brother, and they had an urgent message and this one needed that and this one needed the other thing and it was really something. So I was out there driving around trying to keep everything going and moving along. And I've got this one difficult Astro, it's been about nine weeks and gradually coming through and getting it done—and finally, finally, finally it's going to be done this Monday. And I've called back three or four times to make sure it was going along.

But I tell you, it really gives us a great deal of **hope**. And this is the whole thing that Peter is talking about. In this world, as evil as it is, and all the problems that assault us, we have our share of them, every one of us do. But it is God the Father Who has called us.

John 6:65 it says the same thing—it reiterates it. “For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father.” That's why *we're selected*. That's why we are *the elect*. That's why we are *the called out ones*; because God the Father has done that for us. Now, you see, that helps keep everything in a greater perspective. And realize that “if God is for you, nothing can be against you.” Even though it seems like everything in the world, from time-to-time, may be against you. All the things we go through: sickness and health and difficulties and work. Just the pressures of this world. I can

understand why we're living in the Laodicea age more than ever before, because it assaults us:

- we're assaulted at work;
- we're assaulted at home;
- we're assaulted on television;
- we're assaulted on radio;
- we're assaulted in the newspaper.

This thing with the New Age set, that is amazing, that is absolutely amazing! If you think that the Noahide Laws and the Jewish Messiah was something, wait till we get this sermon on that. So, that's why I think that it's very important that we really focus in on this special fact: ***that God the Father in His pre-determined fore-knowledge, called you! Called me! Called everyone that God is dealing with whom He has called.*** Now, that is something! That is something! We need to really understand that.

Put in your notes the third verse that goes along with that, John 14:6. Those three all tie together in a package.

Let's see the same thing reiterated when Paul wrote to the Ephesians; Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ."

Sometimes just trying to get through from day-to-day, many of us are like that. I would have to say *all* of us are like that. And we re-coined another name for our Church—we called it 'The No Hassle Church' for a long time and we've added the word, 'The No Hassle, Recycled Church.' We try and help the brethren get recycled back to God. One of the ways to really understand that and do that is to help them realize that ***God the Father is the One Who has called*** them, Who's dealing in their lives—in every one of our lives.

So, when we can take all of our difficulties and problems, all of our pain and agony and all of the emotions we have all involved in just living and surviving today and understand that. One of the greatest things that can happen is to receive the Spirit of God—that is ***the greatest thing*** in this life. The world tries to hold out success and riches and wealth and prestige, but, you know, all you have to do is pull back the veil a little bit and realize most of their lives are absolutely incredibly miserable and empty.

Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ; according as He has **personally chosen us...** ['eklektos' or 'eklektō'—from which we get the English word, *elect* or *select*] ...for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world... [God determined that He was going to call a certain

number of people before They even laid the foundation of the world. Now, I don't know if God knew specifically each one of us, I won't discount that, but I won't say that that is absolutely sure because of just the way that human beings are. But here is what He has chosen us to be:] ...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love..." (vs 3-4).

That is the greatest thing, brethren, we can understand. I think we have so much of the difficulty of blaming and condemning ourselves for everything, which is, in many cases, sometimes not wholly our fault or beyond our control, and I know that has happened.

I know that in the visit back to Atlanta, there are so many things that people are going through ***in their every day life***, that they really need to know and understand that God the Father is the One Who has called you, and so for the very purpose that you, that "...we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love; having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ..." (v 5).

He's not called *the Father* for any other reason than He *is* our Father, and He's dealing directly with us. Boy, that's something! And we can sit here and talk about it, and I kind of, in my own mind, say, 'Fred, do you **really**, do you **really** grasp that? You know, we can say the words, we can read the words, we can shake our heads and say, 'Ah ha'—now, that's not the Pepsi commercial, please. Yes, that is right, that is true, but one of the things we need to do is **really** ask God to help us comprehend that even more and more. Because that'll give us more hope than anything we could, we could ever think of.

"...for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will... [***God's own will***] ...to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of His grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (vs 5-7). That is something! ***The grace of God is upon every one of us continuously***, we live in it, it is the most important thing in our lives.

Verse 8: "Which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; **having made known to us the mystery of His own will...**" (vs 8-9). How many people in the world have any inkling as to why they are here? Have any inkling as to what God is doing? Have any inkling ***whatsoever*** that God is fully in charge and He's going to take care of everything in His own way, in His own time, in His own plan.

Christ came and died to save sinners! We need to really comprehend that from the point of

view: which one of us would like to go out here—the Bay area—and find what we could call the worst sinner in the world and say I give up my life so you can live. Maybe that'll help us get that in perspective—isn't that something? We may drive by and see this person, I don't know. But, our normal, natural reaction is not to say, 'Hey, I'll give my life up for you.' Our normal, natural reaction is to say, 'Yeah, you deserve it. Yeah, you're a miserable, rotten human being.' Well, for every sinner there's hope, too. And since God is the One Who has called us, we didn't come to this knowledge of ourselves, that makes it really tremendous and fantastic—doesn't it? That God is making it known unto us the mystery of His will:

“...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself” (v 9). And yet, as amazing as it is, there's some people ready, willing to give up the Holy Days and throw away everything that they know to go back and have a religion rather than serve God as a way of life. It is amazing! Let's not lose sight of what God is doing here.

I just want you, this week, to *focus in* and *think on*—and especially in your prayers and in your study—***what God the Father has done to make this possible for each one of us!*** This is something that I hope can really get across to some of the ministers, especially those who have been in Worldwide, that that being the case, we all really need to take a big turnaround—don't we? And realize that we're to preach the Word of God and help and serve, and that there is no big potentate, mucky-muckism that we ought to have over the brethren anywhere.

Just going out and being exposed to some of these people directly in talking to them, boy, I tell you, they need a place, brethren—and most of them need to have this place at home. Most of them have been whipsawed back and forth so much that they don't even want to go out and go to church anyplace. That they need to get home, they need to get their Bible, they need to get on their knees and they need to pray and study—and if there's anything we can help them with, by sending them some of these things, by encouraging some of them you don't see.

We have stories of people who have literally had emotional break-downs and have lost their minds because of what ministers have done to people, because they have not understood what God is doing with each one of us. They've taken to themselves that authority and power of God, which is not from God anyway.

They've given themselves over to their own vanity and selfishness to rule with a rod of iron over the people of God. That's why Peter starts out here and shows that it's by the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, that it's God the Father Who's involved in our lives. Then we all back off and we

worship God and Jesus Christ, and we realize how fantastic that is, and together we need to ask God, Help us, God:

- over our human nature
- and over our sins and faults
- and our problems and our difficulties
- help us draw close to You

—and maybe we can help some of those brethren out there.

I hope at this coming Feast of Tabernacles, that we'll have a lot of these people who now get the sermons on CDs or DVDs where they have a little group to get together, and that they'll be there and that we that we can make this Feast for them—and I ask your prayers for it—be very uplifting and very inspiring and very encouraging to them, that they will have then the spiritual fortitude and strength to go on.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References

- 1) Luke 4:38-39
- 2) 1-Corinthians 9:3-6
- 3) Luke 5:10, 5-11
- 4) Matthew 16:15-17
- 5) Mark 1:36-42
- 6) Luke 9:28-36
- 7) Mark 14:29-38
- 8) Luke 22:8, 31-33
- 9) Matthew 16:17-18
- 10) John 1:43
- 11) 1-Peter 2:6-8
- 12) 1-Corinthians 10:4
- 13) Psalm 61:1-4
- 14) Psalm 62:2, 6
- 15) Psalm 78:35
- 16) Psalm 89:26-27
- 17) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 18) Luke 20:9-19
- 19) Acts 1:15
- 20) Acts 2:37-38
- 21) Acts 3:1
- 22) Acts 5:3, 8, 12-15
- 23) Galatians 2:4-12
- 24) 1 Peter 5:13
- 25) 1 Peter 1:1-2
- 26) John 6:44, 65

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 6
- John 1:44; 21:15-19
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- Acts 10, 11, 15
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