

The Book of 1 Peter

How to Live in This World as a God-Fearing Stranger

1 Peter:17-21

Macro Review: Why Was 1 Peter Written?

“The purpose of the letter is to encourage believers to stand fast while they endure suffering and distress in the present evil age. They are encouraged to persevere, knowing that a greater reward will be theirs on the day of salvation. Such perseverance is exhibited by living a godly life, living as good citizens, model slaves, gentle wives, and understanding husbands. When believers live in such a way, they indicate that they are placing their hope in God rather than in the joys and comforts of this world. Another way of describing 1 Peter is to say that those who hope and trust in God and in his future reward will have the strength to endure whatever comes their way in the present. (New American Commentary, Vol. 37, Schreiner, p. 45).

Micro Review: What Are the First 21 Verses About?

For the first 12 verses God gives no commands. Peter simply gives wonderful news about what God has done for us and how that relates to our trials. He celebrates what a wonderful position we believers are in this side of the cross.

In verses 13-21 there are three main commands:

1. v. 13 (Prepare your minds for action; be self controlled) Hope only in Christ’s coming and the grace God will show you. **WHY hope?** Because of what Peter said in verses 3-12
 - a. God’s sure salvation kept for you. (v. 3-5)
 - b. Your joy in the trials because of their purpose of growing love for God and ensuring that your faith is genuine and your salvation is sure. (v. 6-9)
 - c. Your privileged position in all of history to have God’s salvation revealed. (10-12).
2. v. 14-16 (Don’t conform to your evil former way of life) Be holy. **WHY be holy?** Because of what Peter said in verses 3-12 and because God said so.
3. Live as strangers in the world in fear of God (v. 17). **WHY live as God fearing strangers?**
 - a. You call on a father who judges each man’s work impartially (v. 18).
 - b. You were not redeemed from the empty way of life with perishable and weak stuff (v. 18).
 - c. What you were redeemed with was precious blood of Christ that is permanent/eternal (v. 19).

What does it mean to live our lives here as strangers here in fear of God?

It means God your Father is also God the judge. As C.S. Lewis puts it, God is a lion. He is a good lion, but make no mistake, He is a LION. Joel 3:12-16, Romans 11:21

How, specifically, can we live as strangers here in fear of God?

In general, this question has already been answered: Prepare your minds for action; be self controlled; Hope only in Christ and what he has in store for you; Be holy. It will be answered in a variety of specifics in the rest of 1 Peter. Here I want to deal with some of the foundations that we often give too little time for:

- 1 Live in light of the cross as a forgiven, loved, accepted child of God. *Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 5:1*
- 2 Remain aware and alert to the fact that you are in a spiritual war. 1 Peter 2:11 , 5:8-11
- 3 Read Scripture diligently and pray that God would allow you to see the glory of Christ and that you would be captivated and transformed by it. *2 Corinthians 4:6; 3:18*
 - a. Fail to plan this and you plan to fail.
 - b. I suggest you have a pen and paper with you.
 - c. Memorize it. It is a worthwhile pain.

- 4 Meditate or set your mind on what you have learned and pray that God would cause you to treasure it and find your hope and joy in it. *1 Corinthians 2:14, Ephesians 1:15-21*
- 5 Regard all sin, even that which you consider normal or small, as an incredibly wicked personal offense against the God that you love. *Hebrews 3:12-14, 1 John 2:15*
- 6 You must follow hard after Christ. *1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Philippians 3:10-14*
 - a. Discipline yourself for godliness and remind yourself that it is worth it. *1 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 12:1-4*
 - b. Give your time talent AND treasure for Kingdom stuff. *Matthew 6:19-24, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5*
- 7 Pray, pray, pray. Pray that God would protect you and would cause you to bring him glory. Pray for others and cry out for God to give new hearts and to give spiritual growth. *James 4:1-10, Philippians 1:20-21*
 - a. Fail to plan this and you plan to fail.
 - b. Pray Scripture.
- 8 Hang out with other “strangers” who live in fear of God. *Hebrews 10:24-25*

In verses 18-21 the main point is...

The costliness of the blood of Christ and the eternality of His sacrifice should cause us to live as strangers in fear of God out of love, gratitude, and the fearful consequences of rejecting it (rejecting it = living as one who does not fear God and is at home in this fallen world). *2 Peter 3:11-13, Hebrews 2:1-3, 10:28-31*