



Empowering People to Change the World

**Peter's Principles for Prevailing over
Problems**

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The Road Declaration

Peter's Principles for Prevailing over Problems (A Study of 1 Peter)

Introduction

Verse 1a “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ”

- Peter is mentioned more than anyone else besides Jesus in the Gospels.

Peter was one of the Bloodstained Allies of Jesus—possibly his closest friend.

- Mentioned nineteen times in the New Testament. The most prominent of the Twelve apostles.

We could say Peter is kind of the *Comeback Kid* among the disciples.

- If anyone understood how to prevail over problems, it would have been Peter.
- Peter was a commercial fisherman when he met Jesus. It would appear that he owned his own operation, maybe with Andrew his brother.
- He must have been a natural leader. He quickly became the spokesman for the Twelve disciples—at least he opened his mouth the most.
 - Yet Peter failed Jesus more than any other of the apostles.
 - Though a natural leader who talked fast and always had another plan.
 - His failures are chronicled: impetuous, prideful, and yet full of inner fear...we might say that Peter was pretty *insecure* as a leader.

There are two Peters in Scripture: the Peter-Filled Peter and the Spirit-Filled Peter; Even Jesus prophesies of two Peters. He says to the man named “Simon” that He is renaming Him “Peter.”

The name Simon means *flat nosed*. A perfect name for him. He was flat nosed from all the fights he had been in!!

Let's first look at Peter's natural character.

"The Simon-Filled Peter"

1. Simon Tends to make Quick Emotional Decisions.

- In Matthew 14 he asked Jesus who is walking on the water, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.' So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!'"
- Peter gets a crash course in faith!
- Peter is the one who just whacks off the ear of the servant in the Garden of Gethsemane. He is impetuous and often out of control.

2. Simon is Opinionated and Opens the Door to Satan.

"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!'

But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men'" (Matthew 16:21-23).

3. Simon is Ambitious for Himself.

"Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?'" (Matthew 19:27).

4. Simon is Boastful and Arrogant.

"Peter answered and said to Him, 'Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.'

Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.'

Peter said to Him, 'Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!'"
(Matthew 26:33-35)

5. Simon is a Coward in Opposition.

- With all the bragging, Peter denies he even knows Jesus to a servant girl.
- Peter was naturally a coward under pressure!

One writer describes Peter:

“Simon was anything but a rock. He wasn’t dependable the way a Christian leader needs to be. Without God’s Spirit, he often spoke or acted in a way that would be inappropriate for a Christian. His actions belied an underlying insecurity in spite of his outward confidence.”

- But Jesus comes to Peter and speaks life into him. In John 21, beside the lake, Jesus calls out the destiny of Peter with the words “Feed My lambs...Tend My sheep...Feed My sheep.”

But Jesus, even the first time He met Simon, didn’t see Simon, *the flat nosed*, He foresaw Peter, the Rock.

- He was renamed Peter or Cephas, both words meaning *stone* or *rock*, because you will have a rock-like character!

The Transformation of Peter.

Four Qualities of the “Spirit-Filled Peter”

1) The Spirit-Filled Peter—From Coward to Courageous.

- In Acts 2, at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell upon the believers, Peter is the first one to stand up and proclaim that Jesus has risen, and everyone must repent of their sins and follow Him!
- The same guy who denies he even knows Jesus forty days before is now preaching that Jesus is alive. Over three thousand people come to Christ and get baptized.
- Look at Acts 4 in front of the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin, the High Priest and his family. Acts 4:5-12; 19-20.

2) The Spirit-Filled Peter—From Bragging to Praying

- From bragging to praying!
- Acts 3:1
- Look at Acts 4:21-30.

3) The Spirit-Filled Peter—From Talker to Leader

- In Acts 5 Peter must confront a couple in the young church—Ananias and Saphira—about lying.

4) The Spirit-Filled Peter—From Ambitious to Humble

- Here in 1 Peter we are going to see the NEW Peter. The old Peter was asking Jesus: “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we get?”
- To the new Spirit-filled Peter in Chapter 5 of our book: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”
- Peter has been transformed through the shame of his denial of Jesus. But through the power and forgiveness he has experienced, he is a new man.

What a transformation. Amazing what the Holy Spirit can do in our lives.

Despite your Past Failures, Mistakes, and Sin Jesus sees Potential in You! He Renames you.

- You are renamed: Priest, King or Queen, Son of God, Daughter of God, Child of God, Elect, Pilgrim.
- He forgives you! Your setbacks are setups for comebacks.
- This letter by Peter is to provide us with hope and faith in times of struggle.

Verse 1

“To the pilgrims/sojourners”—the idea of people being placed among foreigners. Do you ever feel like a foreigner in our own land?

Our values, our vision, our hopes are very different than this world, even among other Americans or those who say they are *Christian* but you don't see any evidence.

- Liz and I were missionaries in Japan and there were days where we felt so misplaced. We didn't worship Buddha. We didn't meditate to the gods of Shintoism. We talked about Jesus, loved Jesus, followed Jesus. We were foreigners, pilgrims, sojourners in Japan.
- Same in many ways in our nation. We are all called to be pilgrim missionaries here.
- The people, the new Christians, have been scattered through a great persecution by the Romans.

Peter is Writing Under Great Persecution

- At this point, Peter is the old fisherman. Peter is writing while under great persecution under Nero, the Emperor of Rome.
- He will be martyred by Nero, choosing to be crucified upside down, because he doesn't feel worthy to be crucified like His Lord.
- When Rome burned, the Romans believed that Nero had done it, because of his lust to build the city in his image.
- All of the great cultural icons of the Romans were burned, especially the household idols, a setup to enthrone himself in the houses of the Romans.
- But Nero needed a scapegoat for the fire, so he blamed the fire on the Christians. Those among the Elite who say Christians are *hateful*, *Christian Nationalists*, and *Nazi's*. This is nothing new!
- Christians were already hated because of their association with the Jews.
- As a result, a vicious persecution began in Rome and spread throughout the Roman Empire, touching places like Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

- Christians are being hunted down and killed.
- Peter said he was in “Babylon” when he penned the letter (5:13), probably an alias for Rome, perhaps even a code word for Rome.

Theme and Title: Peter’s Principles for Prevailing over Problems

- This is a book about problems, persecution, and a host of struggles.
- This book is teaching us how to overcome our problems and live a victorious Christian life from one who had been mightily transformed.
- How to live the victorious Christian life: without losing hope, without becoming bitter, while looking to Jesus and His Second Coming.

Verse 2

- Now watch this:
 - the foreknowledge of God the Father.
 - the sanctification of the Spirit.
 - the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - we have this Trinitarian formula already being worked out. Sounds like he’s been to seminary!
- In such adversity, God is sovereign; He is in control of all that is happening. He is working out His plan.
- Elect...He has foreknowledge of your life...meaning *called out ones* or *hand-picked* by God.

Follow Jesus and Cooperate and Partner with Him in His Plans for you!

- He has been watching over you while you were in your mother’s womb.
- He gave you the talents and gifts you have for a divine purpose and destiny.
- He created you to be sanctified and obedient...set apart for His purposes.

- God is sovereign even over our suffering, using it to show *the genuineness of your faith*.
- Listen, he says here, “Grace to you and peace be multiplied.” That’s exactly what Christ is doing in your suffering. It’s in the midst of your pain that He will pour out more grace and multiply your peace!

Verse 3

We have a Living Hope, “confident optimism”

- “Blessed” where we get the word *eulogy*. Speak well. Speak well of the God who, in His mercy has given you a “living hope.”
- **Hope means *confident optimism***
 - God has given us hope for eternal life,
 - hope for a better future,
 - hope for our family,
 - hope for those things that seem impossible in your life.
- “Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Jesus is alive—your hope is alive. God has given us a “living hope.” A hope that is not dying. It’s alive!
- Listen, I’m not putting my hope in the next president. I’m not putting my hope in the Stock Market.
- Put your hope in the Resurrected Christ—He never fades. He’s alive.
- We have an Inheritance.

Verse 4

We Have an Inheritance kept in Heaven by the Power of God

- Peter is saying to the persecuted believers that you have a living hope because you have an inheritance.
- This hope, this inheritance cannot be taken away by anyone.
- Incorruptible—not subject to passing away.

- undefiled—unpolluted, unstained by the world or evil.
- Does not fade away—not like flowers or a wreath, which are fading away.

Verse 5

- God keeps our inheritance and no one can steal that.
- It is your faith, which is also a gift from God, that keeps our salvation.
- God energizes our faith as we worship, pray, and spend time with Him in His Word.
- “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”
- Faith only grows as it is nurtured: planted in good soil, watered.

Persecution, problems, and pain is part and parcel with this life. Natural abilities and talents will only take you so far. Will you trust Jesus and partner with Him?

- Like Simon to Peter, the Holy Spirit can transform you from when you’ve been a coward to courageous!
- Like Simon to Peter, the Holy Spirit can transform you from bragging to praying!
- Like Simon to Peter, the Holy Spirit can transform you from a big talker to a leader!
- Like Simon to Peter, the Holy Spirit can transform you from ambitious to humble!

Right after the 3rd service, Pam Holloway from Radical Resilience will be sharing in the Chapel.