

FOUNDATION OF HOPE

1 Peter 1:1–2 (CSB)

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ: To those chosen, living as exiles dispersed abroad in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen

² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient and to be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ. May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

INTRODUCTION

You may be wondering if I was told late yesterday afternoon that I am preaching this morning and that all I could deal with were these 2 verses.

Let me assure you, this is not the case.

The fact that the communion message last Sunday came from this same passage from verses 13 to 19 is proof of that.

You may be even more confused now.

He takes 7 verses for a 5-minute devotion, but only 2 verses for a 30-minute sermon?

Well, as you will see, the first 2 verses of 1 Peter 1 are packed with so much theology—and some of it quite controversial depending on your view on certain matters of doctrine—that one could do multiple sermons on just these 2 verses.

If I had to sum up these two verses, it would be:

FOUNDATION OF HOPE

And that is the title of my sermon.

Foundation of Hope.

Contrary to the norm, I am not going to put forward 3 points.

Because the fact is, the words in these 2 verses pack so much punch, we will just work through them, piece by piece.

But what I hope to show you today is this:

No matter your struggles, no matter your situation, the foundation of your hope is the eternal God, Three-in-One.

Let us begin.

PETER, THE MESSENGER

v1 “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ”

Stop there.

The very first word of the letter introduces us to the author and his relationship to God, through the person of Jesus Christ.

For most of us, Peter requires no introduction.

He is perhaps the most prominent, relatable, and thoroughly human figure in the New Testament.

We know him well.

We know his zeal, his boldness, and, if we are honest, we know his glaring failures.

Peter was an ordinary fisherman from Galilee—a blue-collar worker, uneducated by the standards of the religious elite, unlike Paul, who was highly educated.

Yet, he was chosen by Jesus to be His disciple and part of His inner circle with James and John.

Throughout the Gospels, Peter is the disciple who speaks first and thinks later.

He is the one who stepped out of the boat to walk on the water, only to sink in fear moments later.

He is the one who, moments after making the great, divinely revealed confession in Matthew 16:

“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16)

...turned around and rebuked the Lord Jesus, drawing the sharpest correction in Scripture:

“Get behind Me, Satan!” (Matthew 16:23)

He is the disciple who boasted that he **would die for Christ**, only to deny Him three times with oaths and curses on the very same night.

If we were choosing leaders to establish a global, history-shaping work, human wisdom would have passed Peter by.

But our God delights in using the weak and foolish things of this world to shame the wise, showing that the power belongs to Him alone.

We must address the name Christ gave him.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said:

“you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church.”

Some have mistakenly elevated Peter to a position of supreme, infallible authority, viewing him as the bedrock of the church.

But Peter's own writing corrects this.

He knew he was not the rock.

In chapter 2 of this very letter, Peter points away from himself and directs our eyes to Christ, quoting Isaiah:

“For it stands in Scripture: See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and honored cornerstone, and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame.”

For Peter, Christ is the great Rock, the **petra**, the chief cornerstone.

Peter is merely a **petros**—a small stone, a piece of rock, who, along with us, is being built up as a spiritual house upon the only true Foundation, Jesus Christ.

What we see in this letter, and indeed in his second epistle, is a man deeply humbled by the grace of God.

The brash, self-confident fisherman of the Gospels has been melted and refashioned by the Holy Spirit.

He is no longer asserting his own strength.

When he writes to the leaders of the church in chapter 5, he does not pull apostolic rank.

He writes:

“Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ...” (1 Peter 5:1)

In his 2nd letter, he introduces himself not with a title of grandeur, but as:

“Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:1)

By the unmatched grace of God, this ordinary, flawed man, who once denied that he knew his Lord and Saviour, was restored, filled with the Spirit, and used mightily to shepherd the early church and write the very breath of God.

As we study his words, we are not listening to a man who succeeded by his own grit.

We are listening to an example of God's sustaining grace.

Let us look past the messenger and behold the Saviour who transformed him.

THE CHOSEN EXILES

After identifying himself, Peter addresses his readers.

Look at the rest of verse 1:

“To those chosen, living as exiles dispersed abroad in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Peter 1:1)

In the Greek text, both "exiles" and "dispersion" lack the definite article.

Unlike other passages in the New Testament (such as John 7:35 and James 1:1) where "the dispersion" or “*diaspora*” refers strictly to ethnic Jewish exiles, Peter is doing something far deeper here.

By omitting the article, he is defining their spiritual character.

These believers are not called “exiles” because of Roman geopolitics, but because of their heavenly citizenship.

As verses 3 and 4 immediately show, Peter has eternal realities in view:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

But who were these people?

Peter names five Roman provinces:

- Pontus
- Galatia
- Cappadocia
- Asia
- Bithynia

...covering a vast, rugged territory in modern-day Turkey.

This flock was a diverse mixture of Jewish and Gentile believers.

Many of them likely traced their spiritual lineage back to the Day of Pentecost, where visitors from these exact regions heard Peter preach and carried the good news of the gospel back to their homes.

Yet, they were now "scattered" in a much more painful way.

In a pagan Roman culture where

- civic life
- local trade
- family festivals

revolved around idol worship and the imperial cult, these Christians had withdrawn.

They refused to bow.

Because of this, they were enduring intense, localised hostility.

They were suffering

- the "persecution of the tongue"
- social isolation
- verbal slander
- economic boycotts.

They had become strangers in their own hometowns.

So, how does Peter comfort them?

He does so by radically redefining their identity.

He pairs two words that seem to clash: chosen and exiles.

The world looked at them and saw rejected outcasts;

Peter looks at them and says, "You are God's chosen treasures."

Their earthly displacement was actually proof of their heavenly placement.

Peter comforts them by lifting their eyes above their immediate trials to their secure, eternal home.

The message of 1 Peter is that when the world treats you like a stranger, it is only because you are an heir to a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION

But notice the very first word Peter uses to describe these exiles in verse 1.

"To those chosen..."

He calls them "chosen"—*eklektos*.

As a Jewish apostle, this word would have tasted like honey to Peter.

Throughout the Old Testament, the concept of being "chosen" belonged exclusively to ethnic Israel.

Moses declared in Deuteronomy 7:6:

“For you are a holy people belonging to the LORD your God.
The LORD your God has chosen you to be his own possession
out of all the peoples on the face of the earth.”

The Psalmist echoed this in Psalm 135:4:

“For the LORD has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his
treasured possession.”

And celebrated how:

“He brought his people out with rejoicing, his chosen ones with
shouts of joy.” (Psalm 105:43)

For fifteen hundred years, to be "the chosen" meant you were a physical, circumcised descendant of Abraham.

But now, Peter writes to a congregation composed largely of Gentiles, and he calls **them** the chosen of God.

He is declaring that God's redemptive programme has expanded from a chosen nation to a chosen family—the church.

This pattern of sovereign choice runs through the entire Old Testament.

- Following the Fall, God swept away a corrupt world but elected Noah's family to start anew.
- At Babel, as rebellious world-builders scattered, God stepped in and sovereignly selected Abraham.
- For centuries, God protected that nation's messianic bloodline.

Even when the entire hope of redemption hung on a single, fragile thread—the infant king Joash, hidden in the temple while a murderous queen slaughtered the royal seed—God preserved the line of promise, culminating in Christ, the ultimate Seed.

And now, in this New Covenant era, God is gathering His family from every tribe, tongue, and nation—including those very peoples scattered at the Tower of Babel.

Scripture is flooded with this truth of sovereign election:

- In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus speaks repeatedly of "the elect" for whose sake the days of tribulation are cut short (Matthew 24:22).

- In the Upper Room, He declared,

"You did not choose Me but I chose you. I appointed you..." (John 15:16).

- And earlier, He said,

"I know those I have chosen" (John 13:18).

- Christ made it clear that salvation is a work of divine initiation:

"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44).

- And that "the Son also gives life to whom he wants." (John 5:21).

The Apostle Paul takes this thread and weaves it into the very fabric of New Testament theology.

- He writes to the Ephesians that God

"chose us in him, before the foundation of the world..." (Ephesians 1:4).

- To the Thessalonians:

“God has chosen you for salvation...” (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

- To Timothy: God

“has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.” (2 Timothy 1:9).

And in Romans 8:29-30, Paul lays out the unbreakable golden chain of redemption, showing that those whom God foreknew, He:

- Predestined
- Called
- Justified
- Glorified

Our salvation does not rest on our own strength or our fickle, fallen wills.

Ultimately, the New Testament reveals that the elect are the Father’s love-gift to the Son.

The Father gives them, the Son receives them, and the Spirit keeps them.

In the Book of Revelation, John reminds us that our names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life “before the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8).

THE TRIUNE BEDROCK OF HOPE

Peter picks this up in verse 2:

“...chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood” (1 Peter 1:1-2)

Peter’s purpose for writing this letter was to offer hope to people who were oppressed, and he starts out by redefining their identity and grafting them into God’s royal family.

He lays out the foundation of their hope by spelling out their election by the only one God—Three Persons, but one God—and each Person's role in salvation.

1. GOD THE FATHER: Sovereign Foreknowledge

He begins by stating that these exiles were chosen

“according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”

In modern theological debates, "foreknowledge" is often defined merely as "foresight"—the idea that God looked down the corridors of time, saw who would choose to believe, and then elected them based on that anticipated choice.

However, to the original readers, this definition would have been entirely foreign and unscriptural .

There are 3 primary reasons why foreknowledge cannot mean mere foresight:

- **First**, it undermines divine sovereignty.

If God’s choice is based on man's choice, then man is sovereign in salvation.

Yet Christ stated, “You did not choose Me but I chose you” (John 15:16).

- **Second**, it allows for human boasting.

If God chose us because He foresaw our faith, then our salvation is partly due to our own merit.

This contradicts Ephesians 2:8–9, which states

“For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift—not from works, **so that no one can boast.**”

- **Third**, it assumes a fallen human capability that does not exist.

Scripture teaches that fallen man is spiritually dead and incapable of seeking God on his own.

Romans 3:11 (LSB) says, “There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.”

Therefore, the Greek word for foreknowledge, “*prognōsis*,” must be understood biblically.

In 1 Peter 1:20, Peter uses the verb form of this same word to say that Christ

“was foreknown before the foundation of the world.”

This does not mean the Father simply foresaw that Jesus would die.

It means the Father predetermined and ordained that Christ would be the Saviour.

Furthermore, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew verb “to know” (*yada*) refers to an intimate, electing covenant love .

- In Exodus 33:17: “***and I know you by name.***”
- In Jeremiah 1:5 (LSB): “***Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.***”

- In Amos 3:2 (LSB): ***“I have known only you out of all the clans of the earth”***

This does not mean God was unaware of other nations, but that He had set His covenant love on Israel alone.

Conversely, in the New Testament, when Jesus speaks to false disciples in Matthew 7:23, He says:

“I never knew you. Depart from me, you lawbreakers!”

He knew who they were, of course, but He had no saving, covenant relationship with them.

In John 10:14, He says: ***“I know My own and My own know Me.”***

So, when Peter uses the word “foreknowledge,” he was reassuring his readers that God the Father had predetermined to establish an intimate, saving, covenant relationship with them from eternity past.

2. GOD THE SPIRIT: Sovereign Sanctification

Next, Peter writes that this election is made effective “by the sanctifying work of the Spirit.”

The Greek word for “sanctifying” is ***hagiasmos***, which means consecration or setting apart for holy use.

The Holy Spirit is the Person of the Trinity who applies the Father’s plan to the sinner in time.

He does this first through regeneration—the washing and renewing of the dead heart:

Titus 3:5

“he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the **washing of regeneration** and **renewal** by the **Holy Spirit**.”

Once regenerated, the believer is permanently indwelt and:

“sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 1:13)

In the ancient world, a seal indicated ownership, security, and authenticity.

Peter’s readers would have understood this.

By stating that they were sanctified by the Spirit Who served as their divine guarantee—the down-payment that secured their final inheritance—Peter gave them great peace and joy.

3. GOD THE SON: Obedience and Blood Sprinkling

Finally, the divine plan of salvation was accomplished by the work of the Second Person of the Triune God, Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross and resurrection from the grave.

Peter points to this work by reminding them what they no doubt heard at Pentecost:

“to be obedient and to be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:2)

The phrase “sprinkled with His blood” contains a direct historical allusion to Exodus 24:7–8.

At Mount Sinai, after the giving of the Law, Moses read the Book of the Covenant to the people of Israel.

They responded:

“We will do and obey all that the LORD has commanded.”

Then:

“Moses took the blood, splattered it on the people, and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you concerning all these words.” (Exodus 24:8)

For Peter’s readers, even though they were mostly Gentiles, this Old Testament imagery would have been clear and deeply meaningful.

The sprinkling of blood signified two realities:

1. Covenant Obedience

The commitment of the people to obey God's Word.

2. Covenant Security

The binding of the people to God under the protection of sacrificial blood.

With this Peter has laid another stone in the foundation of their hope by stating that they are secured in their salvation achieved through the blood of Christ.

And that sprinkling of blood seals them for all eternity through the Holy Spirit, but it also calls them to obedience.

They were not saved **by** their obedience, but they were absolutely saved **unto** obedience .

The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit leads to obedience, and obedience matures into spiritual fruit that is visible to all.

In the remainder of the letter, Peter goes on to explain in more practical terms what this obedience looks like:

- Laying down the lusts that marked their former life (1:14; 2:11)
- Living in brotherly love towards each other (1:22; 3:8)
- Subjection to authority in society and the workplace (2:13, 18)

- How husbands and wives ought to treat each other (3:1, 7)
- How church leaders should care for and minister to their flock (5:2)

But in the opening of his letter, Peter establishes the foundation that all of this is built upon.

He reminds them that the Holy God—the Three-in-One: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—has intimate knowledge of and interest in each and every one of them, individually.

As he later says in 1 Peter 2:9:

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

PETER'S CLOSING BENEDICTION

Peter ends his greeting with a beautiful prayer of blessing:

“May grace and peace be multiplied to you” (1 Peter 1:2)

When we look at the original language, there are three practical truths packed into this simple phrase that would have deeply comforted his readers:

- **First**, it is a prayer, not a passive wish.

The verb Peter uses is a rare form of Greek that expresses a deep, holy desire.

He is actively praying a blessing over them, asking that they would experience these realities in abundance.

- **Second**, it is God who does the multiplying.

In the original text, the verb is passive— often referred to as the "divine passive."

Peter is reminding these struggling believers that they do not have to manufacture grace and peace in their own strength.

They cannot grit their teeth and produce peace.

It is God Himself who must sovereignly pour it out and multiply it in their life.

- **Third**, they are an inseparable package deal.

Peter uses a singular verb for both grace and peace, binding them together.

You cannot have the peace of God until you have first received the grace of God.

Grace is the root; peace is the fruit.

Grace is the cause; peace is the effect.

Peter's prayer for these exiles is this:

May God Himself take His saving grace and His unshakeable peace, and multiply them abundantly in your hearts, especially when the world around you is in chaos.

APPLICATION

How does this text apply to us today?

In one word: DIRECTLY.

Even though Peter's letter was circulated to a large geographical region;

through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,

he chose language that makes the message applicable to exiles across all the world and over all of time.

All believers in Christ Jesus are exiles in and strangers to this world, wherever and whenever they live.

Our home, our true home, is not this world, and our time on earth is short and fleeting.

And just like those exiles in Asia-Minor, we also face trials and struggles in our lives.

And sometimes, we need to be reminded of these same truths.

So, let me remind you this morning:

YOU were chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient and to be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ.

If you are facing the 'persecution of the tongue':

- slandered at work
- isolated by your family
- mocked for your faith

remember that your security is not defined by this world's approval.

You were foreknown and loved by God the Father before the foundation of the world.

Let the world reject you; your Father has claimed you.

We are not saved to blend into the pagan culture around us.

The Holy Spirit has set you apart.

When temptation comes, remember that you are a consecrated vessel, sealed for the day of redemption.

You have been sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ.

That blood does not only cover your past; it claims your future.

You are saved unto obedience.

How will your life this week show that you are under the covenant of Christ's blood?

My sincerest and deepest prayer for you, my brother and sister in Christ, this morning is this:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

HOWEVER, if your heart is unsettled and you don't have peace because you don't know if the Father has chosen you, I have glorious news for you.

You can know.

1 John 5:13

¹³ I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that **you may know** that you have eternal life.

Do you want to know?

Do you want to have peace?

I will be waiting here in front after the service, and we can talk some more and pray together.

BENEDICTION

1 Peter 5:10–11 (LSB):

“And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, strengthen, confirm, and ground you. To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.”