



9/24/25

Today is the start of our women's study, In His Steps ~ A Walk of Worship. YAYAYAYAY! If you haven't registered but still want to join us... we'd still love to have you!!!

*Blessings,
Jonna*

1 Peter 1:1-12

Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee who was partly responsible for the reason for this letter written by Peter. Before Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, he was persecuting believers... so that they had to leave their homes to survive. As I'll see in the first few verses of this letter, this was part of God's plan. What? Sent from their homes and persecuted for their faith??? Yes... when God allows us to suffer, it's to fulfill a bigger, deeply meaningful, eternal plan.

Vs. 1-2 ~ 1 Peter was written by Peter to believers who were exiled away from their homes because of their faith. They were scattered, dispersed from their homes to all kinds of places in northern Turkey.

Did God KNOW this dispersion was going to happen? Yes. Peter said this was "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Why would God know this and allow it? Before Jesus left the disciples and ascended to heaven, He said that by the power of the Holy Spirit, we were to be spreading the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The Dispersion sent believers out, but it didn't make them silent. It made them bold to share the gospel, and the gospel spread. My temporary comfort is way less important than my eternal life... And God wants heaven to be crowded.

This spreading of the gospel can only happen as we're sanctified by the Spirit. Otherwise, instead of spreading the gospel as we're scattered, we would be licking wounds and accusing God of abandoning us. By the Spirit, we are strengthened and transformed. We may be dispersed from our comfort, but we are never dispersed from our God.

The Holy Spirit sanctifies us so that we can be obedient to Jesus... and have His blood be the sprinkling that makes us clean, just as the priests would sprinkle Jewish people with the blood of a lamb to make them clean before God. What a miracle! That blood could make me white as snow.

Vs. 3-5 ~ As Peter wrote to these "elect exiles" he praised God. It's amazing that God can do such a huge work in us that we're able to genuinely praise Him even when we're separated from the comfortable.

Peter said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!" This is a big deal for me. Peter blessed the FATHER. I've heard so many people say they can't understand the love of the Father because their own father didn't love them well... but I see here that our Father in heaven is not defined by our father on earth. Our father on earth is meant to model himself after our Father in heaven. But even if they don't do that well... the Father is still perfect and holy and love.

Our Father is also merciful! HE is the reason I have been reborn from the walking dead, destined for hell... but raised to new life. The Father sent His Son to give me a LIVING HOPE through His resurrection from the dead. Because Jesus lives, I miraculously live. Not only does His blood clean me, His blood gives me new life.

With Jesus, everything changed. I was given new life with a living hope that cannot die. I was given a new inheritance that cannot perish, cannot be tainted or defiled, and cannot fade away. This inheritance is being guarded and protected in heaven for me. I WILL enjoy all the benefits of my inheritance when Jesus takes me home. But even now, while I live on this earth as an exile... because my true citizenship is in heaven... God is guarding me personally through my faith in Him. When the time comes, I will experience the fullness of my salvation which will be revealed when the time comes. I can trust Him. I can stake my faith in Him.

Vs. 6-7 ~ I rejoice in knowing that God is going to take me home to be with Him forever. But for now, I will experience trials that will even grieve me. But God never allows a trial in my life that has no purpose. He is testing the genuineness of my faith... only when necessary. My faith does not grow without testing, and my faith is what God uses to sustain me while I live in this broken world.

My faith is more precious than any gold this world has to offer. Gold perishes. My faith will not... and testing will only make my faith stronger and more valuable as I wait for God... as the Spirit sanctifies me to make me more like Jesus.

This is what I get to experience as a result of my faith withstanding the fire when God takes me home... praise, glory, and honor... the Lord saying to me as I enter into His everlasting arms, "Well done, my good and FAITHFUL servant... My child." O Lord, please help me always to remember that my "light and momentary affliction is preparing for me an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Vs. 8-9 ~ This is really important... the scattered believers had not seen Jesus, just as I have not seen Jesus. But they loved Him. They do see Him now, because they're with Him, but I still don't. I can't see Him. It's important that I understand that the invisible is far more real and lasting than the visible.

Even though I don't see Jesus right now, I do love Him, and I do believe in Him. Peter said, "and you rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your FAITH, the salvation of your souls." When does my love for God and my faith in Him falter? When I put my hope in the temporary... when I base my understanding of God on the trials I see rather than the hope of eternity that I don't see with my physical eyes. But I have His word and the Holy Spirit to anchor my faith in what I don't see... if I will walk by faith and not by sight.

Vs. 10-12 ~ Though I don't walk by sight, my faith is not blind. Throughout centuries, the Holy Spirit revealed God's grace to prophets who searched and inquired carefully. This was such a big deal. They KNEW the Spirit was revealing truth that was more valuable and more important than any other message that exists. The prophecies predicted that Jesus would suffer... "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). And the prophecies predicted His glory that would come... "Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

The prophets understood that they weren't serving themselves as they wrote down the prophecies. They knew they were pointing to something they would never personally experience on earth. But their message was still heard. And now, even today, the message is being preached by bold believers in Christ who speak the truth by the power of the Holy Spirit. Even the angels don't understand the depth of God's grace poured out on weak, ungodly sinners so that we could become His saints.

In this passage I see evidence of Father, Son, and Spirit at work in my life... I see that no trial I go through is ever allowed by God to crush me, but to strengthen me so that I will not shrink back in shame at His coming (1 John 2:28), but I will run into His arms with inexpressible joy for an imperishable, undefiled, and unfading eternity with Him. O Lord, please help me to filter every trial I experience through the truth of who You are, and not filter my understanding of You through my trials. I love You because You first loved me. Amen.