Peter: Living Like the People of God

LIVING AS EXILES

Thursday, November 5

Reading: 1 Peter 1-2

> ***1 Peter 2:21*** *To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.* ***22*** *"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth."* ***23*** *When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.* ***24*** *"He Himself bore our sins" in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by His wounds you have been healed."* ***25*** *For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

The Bible does not tell us anything about Peter's movements after the events of Acts 15 and Galatians 2. His first letter suggests he ministered in Asia Minor during some of this time (1:1). At the end of the letter, he sends greetings from "she who is in Babylon." Most Bible scholars believe this is a veiled reference to Rome and church tradition places Peter in Rome at the end of his life.

Peter begins this letter by talking about the great salvation they enjoyed (1:3-12) and how they should live holy lives because of it (1:13-21). He then reminds them of the importance of the Word of God (1:22 - 2:3).

Next, the apostle points them to Jesus. Remembering the nickname Jesus' had given him (Peter = stone/rock), Peter reminds believers that they are all "living stones" being built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. As such, they are to live as the people of God, chosen to "declare the praises of Him who called [them] out of darkness into His wonderful light" (2:4-9).

Peter now instructs them on how to live Christian lives in a pagan society. Their good deeds should put to shame those who accuse them. They are to submit to the government and those in authority over them (2:11-20). He supports this by giving us the ultimate example - Jesus Christ Himself. These verses are Peter's sermon on Isaiah 53 (2:21-25; compare to Isa 53:4-6, 9, 11).

LESSON ONE: An exile is someone who is living in a place that is not home. As Christians we are exiles, for our home is in heaven. Peter describes how we are to live in the pagan society in which we find ourselves.
Does your life proclaim that you are a child of God or do you "fit in" with the world around you?
What does Peter say in these chapters that you need to apply to your life?

LESSON TWO: The Roman government of Peter's day was very corrupt and abusive. Yet Peter says to submit for the Lord's sake. What does submission mean for us today?
How can Christians submit to those in authority even when we don't agree with them?
How does Christ's example when treated unjustly show us the proper attitude?

LESSON THREE: Look at the 5 titles Peter gives believers in 2:9 (chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, God's special possession, people of God).
What traits and attitudes are involved with each title?
How can you apply these to your life?