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The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and other metaphysical Christians that was published between 1895 and 1965.

Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. These study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

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The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible.

Fillmore Study Bible

Peter's First Letter

Metaphysically Interpreted

Fillmore Bible Society

Fillmore Study Bible

Peter's First Letter

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Introduction to the Fillmore Study Bible

The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and his students. Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. Study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

Metaphysical Christianity is an authentic and distinct expression of the historic Christian faith that acknowledges and embraces the influence of Platonic and Stoic Greek philosophy in the early development of Christian theology. Much of this influence has been suppressed in orthodox Bible commentaries because metaphysical interpretation relies on an inner knowingness as authority for spiritual matters. The annotations included here embrace inner knowingness as authority.

This study bible uses the *World English Bible* translation, which is a contemporary-language update of the bible used by Charles Fillmore, the American Standard Version. The language of the WEB is not American nor British, but *contemporary*, *world* English, making the text pleasant to read for the broadest possible audience of global English speakers. The WEB differs from several contemporary-language translations by not adopting gender neutral language but it has provided footnotes when gender neutral language would be appropriate.

We believe that our present day culture of information, science and technology is ready to restore to it's spiritual teachings the perspectives of original thinkers who gave us not only mathematics, ethics, democracy and medicine, but also deep insights into the inner world of soul and Divine mind—the Greek metaphysicians. We also believe that contemporary Christianity needs a contemporary, global interpretation applied to a contemporary, global biblical text. The Fillmore Study Bible is our offering for addressing these spiritual needs.

The Fillmore Bible Society

The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible. They edit and submit these insights as short annotations which are then applied to the text of the text of the World English Bible, a contemporary-language update of the American Standard Version of the Bible, both online and in print.

This collaboration project is managed by TruthUnity Ministries, which is the publisher of The Fillmore Study Bible. In time the Fillmore Bible Society will become free-standing with its own board, Editorial staff and peer-review committee.

Members of the Fillmore Bible Society include:



Rev. Dan Beckett.
Annotations for The Good
News According to Mark,
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Thomas Scheinler.
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Mary Salama. Annotations
for Matthew, Corinthians 2,
Thessalonians 1 & 2,
Timothy 1 & 2, Titus, Peter
1 & 2, Jude.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[12] v4:18. Proverbs 11:31

First Peter 5

Tending the Flock of God

^{5:1} I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and who will also share in the glory that will be revealed. ^{5:2} Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, not for dishonest gain, but willingly; ^{5:3} neither as lording it over those entrusted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. ^{5:4} When the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that doesn't fade away.

^{5:5} Likewise, you younger ones, be subject to the elder. Yes, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to subject yourselves to one another; for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." [13] ^{5:6} Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; ^{5:7} casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you.

^{5:8} Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful. Your adversary the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ^{5:9} Withstand him steadfast in your faith, knowing that your brothers who are in the world are undergoing the same sufferings. ^{5:10} But may the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. ^{5:11} To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

1. See	5.
2.	6.
3.	7.
4.	

Final Greetings and Benediction

^{5:12} Through Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. ^{5:13} She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you; and so does Mark, my son. ^{5:14} Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1. See	5.
2.	6.
3.	7.
4.	

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama.

World English Bible Footnotes:

First Peter 4

Good Stewards of God's Grace

^{4:1} Forasmuch then as Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin; ^{4:2} that you no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ^{4:3} For we have spent enough of our past time doing the desire of the Gentiles, and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries. ^{4:4} They think it is strange that you don't run with them into the same excess of riot, blaspheming: ^{4:5} who will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ^{4:6} For to this end the Good News was preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed as men in the flesh, but live as to God in the spirit.

^{4:7} But the end of all things is near. Therefore be of sound mind, self-controlled, and sober in prayer. ^{4:8} And above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins. ^{4:9} Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ^{4:10} As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms. ^{4:11} If anyone speaks, let it be as it were the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be as of the strength which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

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| 1. See | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
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| 4. | |

Suffering as a Christian

^{4:12} Beloved, don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you, to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. ^{4:13} But because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. ^{4:14} If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed; because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. ^{4:15} For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or a meddler in other men's matters. ^{4:16} But if one of you suffers for being a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this matter. ^{4:17} For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen to those who don't obey the Good News of God? ^{4:18} "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?" [12] ^{4:19} Therefore let them also who suffer according to the will of God in doing good entrust their souls to him, as to a faithful Creator.

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| 1. See | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | |

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama.

Peter's First Letter

Online Version: <https://www.truthunity.net/web/peter-1>

Introduction to First Peter

From Simon to Peter. Metaphysically, in consciousness, Peter is our spiritual faculty of faith. In our journey of spiritual transformation, our faith faculty's original nature (name) is that of hearing and receptivity (Simon); we have an ability to discern Truth. But as we follow and are disciplined in the Word of Truth and the Spirit (Jesus), our hearing and receptivity are given a new nature (name), Cephas (Peter), which is Greek for the word rock, and so "our Peter" represents a faith in God that is strong, unwavering, and enduring. This faith is a necessary foundation for the building up of spiritual consciousness, the church of Christ in the individual. Peter (faith) was one of the first disciples that Jesus called. Faith is one of the first spiritual faculties to be called into expression by everyone who would follow Jesus in the overcoming life. (MBD/Peter)

The significance of our faith (Peter). The central theme of the message and lessons of both First & Second Peter is faith; as if Peter is writing about the importance of Peter! A metaphysical view of these Letters is a revelation of how faith works in and through our soul and opens the way for the Christ consciousness to be established therein. Faith is the key that opens the door of the kingdom of the heavens within us.

Summary overview of 1st Peter. Our faith (Peter) writes to remind us of three key themes:

1. Suffering will happen, therefore, practice separation (denials) from the continuous stream of thoughts, appearances, and conditions manifesting outside and within us (in this life we are strangers and aliens in a foreign land);
2. Your true identity ... you are a child of God and your true home is in the Presence of God (affirmations);
3. A life of holiness & submission ... remain committed to a life of inner and outer steadfastness, holiness, submissive willingness, and perseverance, that you may be able to cultivate a state of consciousness receptive to the Truth and Spirit, thus ensuring your spiritual progress (meditation/prayer, waiting for and obeying your Inner Guidance).

Our faith would remind us to desire and effort to cultivate holiness and faith in God's Word and Spirit, Power and Presence, for this is the way by which we are able to face any adversity (adversarial thoughts or conditions) along our journey.

First Peter 1

Let Your Faith Arise

^{1:1} Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ^{1:2} according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood: ¹ Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

1. *Be sprinkled with His blood.* The life contained in God's Word. Therefore, it is spiritual energy that purifies and redeems man by pouring into his life currents a new and purer

stream. This divine energy cleanses the consciousness of dead works to enable man to serve the living God (RW/blood of Christ)

A Living Hope

^{1:3} Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy became our father again to a living hope ¹ through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ^{1:4} to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that doesn't fade away, reserved in Heaven for you, ^{1:5} who by the power of God are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ^{1:6} Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been put to grief in various trials, ^{1:7} that the proof of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ-- ^{1:8} whom not having known you love; in whom, though now you don't see him, yet believing, you rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory-- ^{1:9} receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

^{1:10} Concerning this salvation, the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ^{1:11} searching for who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to, ² when he predicted the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them. ^{1:12} To them it was revealed, that not to themselves, but to you, they ministered these things, which now have been announced to you through those who preached the Good News to you by the Holy Spirit sent out from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.

1. *A living hope.* Hope is the expectation of good in the future. It is a quality (good as far as it goes) of sense mind because it is subject to time. Faith is the certain knowledge that our good is ours right now. It is of God; it goes beyond time and space (RW/hope). Both faith and hope spring up spontaneously in our heart on contemplation of Christ Jesus. [In the Hebrew, "hope" has several meanings, including "wait expectantly; be patient; sink down; twist together; to loose; a cord or rope." Thus we can say that to have "a living hope" is to maintain a state of consciousness that expects the good, is patient, is willing to loosen from self-reasonings, sink down, and "stay roped" to the Truth.]

2. *Who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to.* [Metaphysically, salvation is always imminent.] From the spiritual viewpoint there is no such thing as time in the way that man has come to regard it. With God a thousand years are as one day and one day is as a thousand years. ... People have gone insane ... trying to calculate by literal interpretation of Scripture the date on which the world would come to an end, not discerning the spiritual meaning of these writings. All this comes from believing man's idea of time to be a reality. Eternity is not an endless number of years, and things that are spiritual and eternal cannot be measured by days and months and years. (MBD/time).

Holiness and Purity Metaphysically Understood

^{1:13} Therefore, prepare your minds for action, [1] be sober and set your hope fully

and his lips from speaking deceit.

^{3:11} Let him turn away from evil, and do good.
Let him seek peace, and pursue it.

^{3:12} For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears open to their prayer;
but the face of the Lord ³ is against those who do evil." [10]

^{3:13} Now who is he who will harm you, if you become imitators of that which is good? ^{3:14} But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "Don't fear what they fear, neither be troubled." [11] ^{3:15} But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear: ^{3:16} having a good conscience; ⁴ that, while you are spoken against as evildoers, they may be disappointed who curse your good manner of life in Christ. ^{3:17} For it is better, if it is God's will, that you suffer for doing well ⁵ than for doing evil. ^{3:18} Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; ^{3:19} in which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison, ^{3:20} who before were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ship was being built. In it, few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ^{3:21} This is a symbol of baptism, which now saves you--not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ^{3:22} who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.

1. not rendering evil for evil. *Compared to our higher, spiritual-self, our personal-self reacts--both to others as well as to our own selves--directly, returning good for good, evil for evil. Only as our understanding of Principle, our love of Divine rightness, and our desire to spiritually transform grow and increase, will we be able to respond to negativity (our own and others') with Truth and love. Blessing evil is more successful than fighting it. Jesus proved this to be true by befriending publicans and sinners and converting them to right living.*

2. *that you may inherit a blessing.* Unless we acknowledge blessings we remain unconscious of them, and so we miss the joy they are capable of affording us. In accordance with the law that we reap as we have sown, we "inherit" the blessing that we bestow. By blessing our circumstances regardless what they may be, and by blessing others regardless of their attitude, we set in motion the causes that bring blessings into our own life. Doing good brings good to us in the form of a mind that is at ease, a good conscience, and an untroubled

outlook on life.

3. *the eyes, ears, face of the Lord.* The "Lord" is the omnipotent I AM. The "eyes of the Lord" and "His ears" are the perceptive powers of the I AM, which know and perceive our right motives, thoughts, and acts. The "face of the Lord" is the awareness of the I AM principle, which embraces the Divine both within us and within our environments.

4. *having a good conscience.* A good (guilt-free) conscience is a great blessing because it creates constructive effects in our life, instead of accumulating negations to be overcome.

5. *It is better . . . that you suffer for doing well.* The joy and good conscience that come from well-doing are a reward in and of themselves, and that even though we may experience suffering, this suffering cannot reduce or destroy these inner rewards. On the other hand, evil (acting against our own good conscience) inflicts its own penalty, so that when we suffer for evil-doing, we are in fact doubly punished.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama and Mark Hicks.


World English Bible Footnotes:

[10] v3:12. Psalm 34:12-16

[11] v3:14. Isaiah 8:12

God is the One, True Shepherd of our souls. We find our way back to the kingdom and to our Shepherd by keeping our minds open and

obedient to this pure Spirit life, and by keeping our consciousness free from all guilt and guile.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama and Mark Hicks.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[4] v2:6. Isaiah 28:16

[5] v2:7. Psalm 118:22

[6] v2:8. Isaiah 8:14

[7] v2:21. TR reads "us" instead of "you"

[8] v2:22. Isaiah 53:9

[9] v2:25. "Overseer" is from the Greek episkopon, which can mean overseer, curator, guardian, or superintendent.

First Peter 3

Wives and Husbands, Metaphysically Understood¹

^{3:1} In like manner, wives, ² be in subjection to your own husbands; so that, even if any don't obey the Word, they may be won by the behavior of their wives without a word; ^{3:2} seeing your pure behavior in fear. ^{3:3} Let your beauty be not just the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on fine clothing; ^{3:4} but in the hidden person of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God very precious. ^{3:5} For this is how the holy women before, who hoped in God also adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: ^{3:6} as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose children you now are, if you do well, and are not put in fear by any terror.

^{3:7} You husbands, in like manner, live with your wives according to knowledge, ³ giving honor to the woman, as to the weaker vessel, as being also joint heirs of the grace of life; that your prayers may not be hindered.

1. A continuation of the Household code explained in the previous chapter.

2. *wives*. Taking a wife represents a unification of the I AM with the affections (RW/wife).

3. *husbands* . . . *live with your wives according to knowledge*. Spiritually, marriage represents the union of two dominant states of con-

sciousness. When we open the door of the mind by consciously affirming the presence and power of the divine I AM in our midst, there is a marriage or union of the higher forces in being with the lower and we find that we are quickened in every part; the life of the I AM has been poured out for us (RW/marriage).

Suffering for Doing Right

^{3:8} Finally, be all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous, ^{3:9} not rendering evil for evil, ¹ or reviling for reviling; but instead blessing; knowing that to this were you called, that you may inherit a blessing. ² ^{3:10} For,

"He who would love life,
and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil,

on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ-- ^{1:14} as children of obedience, not conforming yourselves according to your former lusts as in your ignorance, ^{1:15} but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; ¹ ^{1:16} because it is written, "You shall be holy; for I am holy." [2]

^{1:17} If you call on him as Father, ² who without respect of persons judges according to each man's work, pass the time of your living as foreigners here in reverent fear: ³ ^{1:18} knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from the useless way of life handed down from your fathers, ^{1:19} but with precious blood, as of a faultless and pure lamb, the blood of Christ; ^{1:20} who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of times for your sake, ^{1:21} who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God.

^{1:22} Seeing you have purified your souls ⁴ in your obedience to the truth through the Spirit in sincere brotherly affection, love one another from the heart fervently: ⁵ ^{1:23} having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, ⁶ through the word of God, which lives and remains forever. ^{1:24} For,

"All flesh is like grass,
and all of man's glory like the flower in the grass.
The grass withers, and its flower falls;
but the Lord's word endures forever." [3]

1:25

This is the word of Good News which was preached to you.

1. *Just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior*. We must develop single-mindedness, must think creatively or constructively (gird up the loins of his mind), must be earnest in his work (be sober) and must keep his thoughts on what he wishes to accomplish. [We know we can] become one with the Divine, as Jesus was because the Christ is revealed to us as an indwelling presence, in whom there is a union of love, wisdom, power, faith, and prescience that can cause the divine to be manifested in us, as we faithfully express it.

2. *If you call on him as Father*. While it is true that God, Divine mind, the principle of life, law, is no respecter of persons, we turn to Him as to a father, because through His Son Jesus Christ we are assured that in His love and wisdom He looks beyond our imperfections and sees us as His sons.

3. *Living as foreigners here in reverent fear*. What fear, if any, is legitimate for us to entertain? We should never surrender to fear. However, in taking thought for our progress in understanding we may consider the fear of falling short in our realization

legitimate, since it spurs us on to renewed efforts to realize the Christ.

4. *Seeing you have purified your souls*. The deep purity and mighty strength of the Christ Mind are made manifest in us as we develop spiritually. Instead of consciously and unconsciously tempting one another in sense ways, these qualities in each will incite in others holy aspirations to fulfill the law of righteousness (RW/purity of the Christ Mind).

5. *Love one another from the heart fervently*. The greatest power that man wields is the power of love, a faculty of both mind and heart. Until he learns the lesson of disinterested service to his fellow men (unfeigned love of the brethren), he cannot express the Christ love in its strength and purity.

6. *Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible*. The corruptible body is that which is subject to decay. When it is transformed into the spiritual body, it becomes incorruptible and is forever enduring (RW/corruptible). See "This corruptible must put on incorruption" (I Cor. 15:53).

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations compiled by Mary Salama.

World English Bible Footnotes:

[1] v1:13. literally, "gird up the waist of your mind"

[2] v1:16. Leviticus 11:44-45

[3] v1:25. Isaiah 40:6-8

First Peter 2

You are a Living Stone!

^{2:1} Putting away therefore all wickedness, all deceit, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking, ^{2:2} as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, ¹ that you may grow thereby, ^{2:3} if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious: ² ^{2:4} coming to him, a living stone, ³ rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious. ^{2:5} You also, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, ⁴ to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ^{2:6} Because it is contained in Scripture,

"Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen, and precious:
He who believes in him will not be disappointed." [4]

^{2:7} For you who believe therefore is the honor, but for those who are disobedient,

"The stone which the builders rejected,
has become the chief cornerstone," [5]

^{2:8} and,

"a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." [6]

For they stumble at the word, being disobedient, to which also they were appointed. ^{2:9} But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: ^{2:10} who in time past were no people, but now are God's people, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

1. *as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word.* When the true light from Heaven shines into the consciousness, the soul instinctively turns away from all thought of evil, and, as naturally as a newborn babe, demands its milk.

2. *if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* One of the first signs that the soul has tasted of the true fruits of Spirit is the tendency to affirm the enduring goodness of Spirit. Such affirmations broaden, deepen, and strengthen our nature so that shortcomings in others are readily overlooked; forgiveness, grace, and mercy are exercised towards the undeserving; generosity flows forth [effortlessly]; we bless and become a blessing to all, and we even seek the highest possible good of the offender.

3. *coming to Him, a living stone.* This stone refers to the indwelling Christ, which is the keystone of our character (MBD/stone), and it is upon this pure understanding (white stone) that we are to build up and develop our true Christ self (RW/stone).

4. *built up as a spiritual house.* Each member of the church is a "living stone" in the spiritual house of God. According to the measure that we "live the life," we are elect and precious in the sight of God. To the extent that we make spiritual sacrifices for humanity's sake [and for the sake of our own spiritual progress], so also in that same degree we open the way to receive the rich gifts of the [Presence and Power of God].

Practicing Truth is True Freedom

^{2:11} Beloved, I beg you as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, ¹

which war against the soul; ^{2:12} having good behavior among the nations, so in that of which they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they see, glorify God in the day of visitation. ^{2:13} Therefore subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: ² whether to the king, as supreme; ^{2:14} or to governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to those who do well. ^{2:15} For this is the will of God, that by well-doing you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: ³ ^{2:16} as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God. ⁴ ^{2:17} Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

1. *as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts.* Our Spirit-led will (Paul) makes this request of us, for it is through our clean living that we keep our own soul in peace, as well as protect others, who may judge our faith by our outer expressions and may be influenced by those expressions, for either good or evil.

2. *subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.* Our ultimate allegiance is to Truth, and our sense of responsibility to it binds us to observe the rules of good citizenship. Each individual realizes within himself freedom to obey of his own volition the commands of his worldly superiors freedom to honor others, to love those of like mind with himself; to "fear God" (or understand the inevitability of divine law), and to "honor the king" (or render due respect to those in authority over him). It is right for the individual not to waste his energies in futile opposition. He

should put them forth where their weight will be felt. When an order is established, the individual only upsets himself by struggling alone to overturn it. He who stands alone should keep himself at peace with others.

3. *by well-doing you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* Each of us may silence their own ignorance by well-doing and gaining wisdom in making a study of their own form of expression; this is the better use of our energies.

4. *as bondservants of God.* "Bondservants of God" are they whose conscience holds them to the right course of conduct; these are the freest of all people since the bonds are within their own consciences. Our ultimate allegiance is to Truth, and our sense of responsibility to it binds us to observe the rules of good citizenship.

A Household Code for Attaining Glory and Patience ¹

^{2:18} Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the wicked. ^{2:19} For it is commendable if someone endures pain, suffering unjustly, because of conscience toward God. ^{2:20} For what glory is it if, when you sin, you patiently endure beating? But if, when you do well, you patiently endure suffering, ² this is commendable with God. ^{2:21} For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you [7] an example, that you should follow his steps, ³ ^{2:22} who did not sin, "neither was deceit found in his mouth." [8] ^{2:23} Who, when he was cursed, didn't curse back. When he suffered, didn't threaten, but committed himself to him who judges righteously; ^{2:24} who his own self bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed. ^{2:25} For you were going astray like sheep; but now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer [9] of your souls. ⁴

1. *Household Code.* A social media meme which encouraged Stoicism for keeping a peaceful order in Roman and Greek households. Later inserted in Christian scripture to defend the Jesus movement from pagan criticism of disorderly egalitarianism. See metaphysical interpretations at Ephesians 5:22-6:9, Colossians 3:18-4:1, Titus 2:1-10 and 1 Peter 2:18-3:1-8.

2. *glory is . . . patiently endure suffering.* This is the same as Jesus' teaching of the "second mile," namely, that we should be willing to do more than could humanly be asked or expected of us in order to prove

our claim to the divine nature. Patience that has its roots in principle does not break, when one bears undeserved suffering.

3. *For to this you were called . . . follow His steps.* When we choose to follow our inner Christ, like Jesus, we must expect that the path of proving our allegiance to Principle will take us through tests of various kinds; Spiritual strength and transmutation are not demonstrated otherwise.

4. *now have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your soul.* The Holy Spirit of