**1 Peter Commentary**

**1 Peter Chapter 1**

1Pe 1:1

**“Peter.”** In this Epistle, Peter uses the name Jesus gave him (John 1:42). Both “Peter” and his Aramaic name “Cephas” mean “rock,” a designation that describes his character. However, it describes Peter in a way that shows his fully developed character as a mature Christian. Jesus gave him the name, but he had to grow into it. The Bible calls Peter by a few different names: “Simon, son of Jonah” (Matt. 16:17), “Simon son of John (John 1:42; 21:15-17), and “Cephas,” used a lot by Paul (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal. 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14. But Paul also called him “Peter,” Gal. 2:7, 8).

**“resident aliens.”** The Greek word translated “resident aliens” is *parepidēmos* (#3927 παρεπίδημος), and it refers to someone who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives. In the New Testament metaphorical usage, it is used of someone whose citizenship is in heaven but who resides on earth.[[1]](#footnote-32438) It is used “of Christians, who are not at home in this world.[[2]](#footnote-10784)” The English phrase “resident alien” has come to be a technical term for citizens of one country who live in another country, for example, an American citizen who lives in France but is not a citizen there. Christians live on earth in this present evil age, but our actual citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20).

**“Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.”** These are all Roman provinces in what today is Turkey. It has been suggested that the person who brought the letter from Peter to those areas landed in Pontus, on the coast of the Black Sea in the north of what is now Turkey, then traveled to the mentioned provinces in order. That is possible, but it would be a circuitous and illogical route if all one wanted to do was carry the letter. It would involve going southwest, then east, then west, then north. A more logical order for travel would be Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia, then Bithynia. So the reason for the order can be surmised, but not known for certain. On the other hand, it does seem that Peter addressed the letter to these areas for its initial reading and the messenger took it to those areas first. Eventually, of course, it was copied and sent out to the entire Christian world.

1Pe 1:2

**“holiness produced by the spirit.”** For this translation, see commentary on 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

**“for obedience.”** The word “for” is a translation of the Greek preposition *eis* (#1519 εἰς), which here has the meaning of “intention and result.”[[3]](#footnote-29296) The idea is that believers are made holy by the gift of holy spirit created inside them at their New Birth, and it was God’s intention that they would then live in obedience to Him.

[For more on believers being “holy” because of the holy spirit they received when they were born again and not because they live “holy” lives, see commentary on Phil. 1:1.]

**“sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ.”** This sprinkling of the blood of Christ is not referring to the New Birth, or the cleansing of sin when one gets saved. Rather, this is speaking of a continual cleansing of sin throughout a believer’s life. The Greek of 1 Peter 1:2 literally reads, “In sanctification of spirit resulting in [*eis* #1519 εἰς] obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” The obedience and sprinkling of the blood is the result of sanctification. If sanctification means the act of being made holy by God, this verse would be very confusing; we usually think of this sanctified state as the result of being washed by the blood of Christ, forgiven of our sins, and not the other way around (1 Cor. 6:11). Sanctification is not used only in this sense in Scripture, however. It can also refer to the progressive holiness in the believer’s life as he sets himself apart from the world (1 Thess. 4:3-7; 1 Tim. 2:15). This is its sense in this passage; this sanctification results in obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

That the sprinkling of Christ’s blood on believers is not merely a one-time salvation event can be seen in 1 John 1:6-9 (NIV): “6If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

In the context of 1 John, to walk in the light is to acknowledge (confess) that one has sin; when we do this Christ’s blood purifies us from all sin. Believers regularly sin, but when we do the blood of Jesus cleanses us.

The connection of obedience and sprinkling of blood here in 1 Peter is an allusion to the Old Testament record of Moses sprinkling the Israelites who claimed they would obey all the words of the covenant (Exod. 24:7-8). The sprinkling of blood in the Old Covenant was not a one-time event either, but had two stages. First, there was the Day of Atonement, the yearly festival when the high priest would sacrifice for his own sin, then sacrifice and sprinkle blood for the guilt of the people (Lev. 16). This was done to cover all the sins of the people that year. Secondly, there were all the other offerings that could be done throughout the year—burnt offerings, guilt offerings—when one has sinned and felt separated from God. The blood of Christ in the New Covenant parallels this twofold purpose of sprinkling in the Old Covenant—there is the one-time sprinkling that covers the guilt of our sin and there is the continual sprinkling of forgiveness for sins throughout life. The difference between the Old and New Covenants is that, instead of a yearly offering, Christ offered himself once and for all to redeem the people, and instead of cleansing our conscience with the blood of bulls and goats, we can appeal to the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:25-26; 10:1-14). 1 Peter 1:18-19, which speaks of Christ’s blood “redeeming” us, is referring to a Day-of-Atonement-like function of Christ’s sacrifice, while 1 John 1:7-9 speaks to the continual sprinkling that has made the various sin offerings obsolete.

1Pe 1:3

**“Blessed be.”** The three verses of 1 Peter 1:3-5 are only one sentence in the Greek text, and the whole sentence must be read to get the full impact of it. Some versions break the sentence up and make two sentences from it, but that actually weakens the sense.

**“who.”** The Greek has the article *ho* (#3588 ὁ) before the active participle translated “given us new birth;” this is done for emphasis on “the one” who is doing the action. An expanded translation would read, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the one** who… has given us new birth” (emphasis added).

**“mercy.”** We do not deserve everlasting life, but God gives it in His mercy (cf. Eph. 2:4).

**“new birth.”** The New Birth spoken of here in 1 Peter 1:3 is one of the most wonderful things that God has ever made available to people. People who are born again have the gift of holy spirit and have access to the power of God and communication with God and Christ. The English phrase “has given…new birth” is a translation of the Greek verb *anagennaō* (#313 ἀναγεννάω), which occurs in 1 Peter 1:3 and 1:23. Here in verse 3, *anagennaō* is an aorist participle, referring to a one-time action in the past. The New Birth is not a process, it is an event. When a person confesses the risen Christ as Lord (Rom. 10:9) they are immediately born again and marked with God’s seal—the holy spirit.

The term “new birth” or “born again,” is a translation of the Greek word *anagennaō* (#313 ἀναγεννάω; from the Greek prefix *ana*, “again” or “up,” and *gennaō*, “to give birth”), and it is used to describe a person who trusts in Jesus and has made him their Lord and Savior being figuratively “born” a second time. The metaphor of being “born again” describes the beginning of a new life that is different from the old one, that is, the one that was separate from God and dominated by sin and unrighteousness. When a person is “born again” they receive God’s gift of holy spirit. This gift of holy spirit is the nature of God (2 Pet. 1:4), for He is “holy” and He is “spirit.” A person who is “born again” is “born of God” (1 John 5:4), and is a child of God (1 John 3:2).

Another way the Scriptures refer to Christian salvation is that it is a “new origin.” A believer's first origin was in the flesh, or according to the flesh. When we get born again, however, we have a new origin, a spiritual one. This is conveyed in the Scriptures with the word *palingenesia* (#3824 παλιγγενεσία; from *palin*, “again” and *genesis*, “genesis” or “origin”), which means to have an origin again, a new origin or new “genesis” (cf. Titus 3:5).

Another term that describes an aspect of our salvation is the term “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). We are new creations because in the New Birth, the gift of holy spirit was placed inside us, making us “new creations.”

Another term that describes an aspect of our salvation is “baptized in holy spirit” (Acts 1:5). This term emphasizes the spiritual power that the presence of the gift of holy spirit that is born inside us brings.

Another term that describes an aspect of our salvation is “holy one.” Every Christian is a “holy one” because of the divine nature of God, the gift of holy spirit, which is born in him. In many English versions, the Greek word for “holy one” is often translated as “saint.” The reason Christians are “holy” is because of the holy spiritual nature that they have received from God (see commentary on Phil. 1:1). At that point, Christians are told to “be holy” in their lives, because it is important that we live outwardly in harmony with our holy inner spiritual nature—but of course we can only do that to a certain extent since no one is without sin (Ecc. 7:20; Rom. 3:23).

Another term that refers to our salvation is the term “Christian.” The name “Christian” was first coined when Paul and Barnabas were ministering in Antioch of Syria (Acts 11:26), and it occurs three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). Its basic meaning is “follower of Christ.”[[4]](#footnote-17375) The Latin and Greek evidence about the term “Christian” is so strong that scholars generally agree as to its meaning. Most scholars recognize that “Christian” was not a name the believers coined about themselves, but rather it was a name given to the followers of Christ by others as a way to easily refer to them. Sadly, today, the term “Christian” is not used properly. Instead of being used to refer to people who are actually born again of the spirit of God, it is used of people who are “cultural Christians” and who call themselves by that term, but are not actually saved and don’t follow Christ. In fact, people who have been raised in a family that goes to church or have been baptized when they were a baby often think of themselves as “Christians,” even though they have never had faith in Christ. Modern dictionaries give a number of meanings for the word “Christian,” including a member of a Christian Church, a person who follows the example of Christ, or even a good and decent human being. From God’s perspective, however, a true Christian is a person who makes Jesus their Lord, which means that they have decided to submit to God in obedience and to follow the teachings of Jesus and his apostles. No one is a genuine Christian because of the church they attend, or because they were baptized in water, or because they do good deeds. Unbelievers can do all those things (and sometimes better than those who call themselves Christians). A Christian is someone who is saved and thus has been baptized in holy spirit and therefore is in a spiritual union and relationship with Christ, and thus, ultimately, with God our heavenly Father. The loss of the true meaning of “Christian” has caused a lot of confusion in the Church today.

A person receives the New Birth (“born again”) when they obey Romans 10:9 and confess Jesus as Lord and believe God raised him from the dead. At the instant they confess and believe, the person goes through a number of dramatic spiritual changes.

* The person immediately is born again through God’s gift of holy spirit in them (John 14:17; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:14).
* The person immediately becomes a child of God (1 John 3:1-2).
* The gift of holy spirit is created in the individual (Col. 3:10) such that the person now has body, soul, and spirit, so the person becomes a “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17).
* The person immediately becomes a “new self,” created in the likeness of God (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
* The person immediately receives a new divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4).
* The person instantly changes from being dead in trespasses and sins to being alive with Christ (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13).
* The person immediately becomes a member of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:22-23).
* The person is immediately identified with Christ so completely that the Bible says that each Christian was circumcised with Christ, baptized with Christ, crucified with him, died with him, was buried with him, was raised from the dead with him, and is seated in heaven with him (Rom. 6:1-10; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 2:10-13; 3:1).
* From God’s perspective, the new believer is already seated in heaven and glorified (Eph. 2:6; Rom. 8:29-30).
* The person immediately changes their citizenship from being a citizen of earth to being a citizen of heaven (Eph. 2:19; Phil. 3:20).
* The person immediately becomes part of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6).

Among the important truths about the New Birth that we should know is that although the birth is very real, it is a spiritual event, not a physical one. While this may seem obvious, it is vital to understand. What God gives to us and the changes we go through at the time we are born again cannot be seen in the five-senses world, so some Christians deny that there is a New Birth. Nevertheless, the holy spirit that is born inside Christians is very real and can be manifested outwardly in the life of a Christian by things like speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, and prophecy and was manifested in very real ways at Pentecost (“flaming tongues of fire,” Acts 2:3), and throughout the book of Acts (Acts 5:15-16; 8:18; 10:46).

God knows what “birth” is—He invented it—and He uses four different Greek words for “birth” to describe it. One of them is *gennaō* (#1080 γεννάω), which is a very common word for “birth,” occurring almost 100 times in the New Testament (cf. 1 John 5:1). The next three Greek words for birth, however, only refer to birth in the letters to the Christian Church and nowhere else. That makes perfect sense when we understand that the New Birth started on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and is for the Administration of Grace. The three Greek words are *anagennaō, palingenesia, and apokueō. Anagennaō* (#313 ἀναγεννάω) occurs in 1 Peter 1:3 and 1:23, and it is from the Greek prefix *ana*, “again,” and *gennaō*, “to give birth,” and it means “born again.” The second Greek word is *palingenesia* (#3824 παλιγγενεσία), which is from *palin*, “again,” and *genesis*, which is “genesis” or “origin.” It occurs in Titus 3:5 and means “to have a new genesis or new origin.” The New Birth involves not only being “born again,” it is a new origin, a new beginning. The third word occurs in James 1:18, and it is *apokueō* (#6126 ἀποκυέω), from the Greek prefix *apo*, “away from,” and *kueō*, “to be pregnant,” and it means “to give birth to.”

When a human gives birth there is a baby, and the baby has the nature of the parent. So too, when God, the Holy Spirit (which is a name for God), puts the gift of holy spirit in us, we get a new divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) and thus, it is as if we are “born again.” The new divine nature Christians receive is why the New Birth transforms us from a “sinner” to a “holy one.” That fact can be hard to see in most English versions because the Greek word for “holy,” *hagios* (#40 ἅγιος), is usually translated “saint” (cf. Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2, etc., in KJV). However, *hagios* is used of God, of God’s gift of holy spirit, and of God’s children by birth. God, the Holy [*hagios*] Spirit, put His gift, holy [*hagios*] spirit, into the Christian who is then a “holy [*hagios*] one,” a “saint.” Thus, the father-seed-child relationship can usually be much more clearly seen in Greek than in English, and it shows that the Christian has the holy nature of the Father. Many verses testify that the believer has God’s gift of holy spirit in them (John 14:17; Acts 2:17; 10:44; Rom. 8:9, 11,15; 1 Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 7:40; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Gal. 3:2; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 John 3:24; 4:13). In fact, because the holy spirit is created in us and remains there, it is called “our spirit” (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 14:14).

More evidence that Christians are “born of God” is that God is called our “Father” and we are referred to as His “children” (or “sons”). While it is true that sometimes the word “son” or “child” is used for a relationship that is not birth, such as when a disciple is called a “son” because of his special relationship with his teacher, that does not mean there are no literal “sons.”

There are some defining characteristics of birth that apply to our first birth as well as our New Birth. For one thing, God is our Father (our spiritual birth does not require a mother). Furthermore, we are part of a family. God has created different families with different characteristics, and we humans who are God’s children are part of His family on earth (Eph. 3:15). This is why Christians are a family of “brothers” (translated “brothers and sisters” in some English versions to be more clearly inclusive of women; cf. Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 1:11; Gal. 1:11; Phil. 3:1). It is also why we are commanded to have “family affection” for other Christians (Rom. 12:10), why the love between Christians is to be “brotherly love” (Rom. 12:10; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 1:22), why we are supposed to be especially good to the “household of the Faith” (Gal. 6:10), and why we are commanded to love and support “one another,” which specifically refers to fellow Christians, not the world at large (cf. Gal. 5:13 and commentary on Gal. 5:13).

Another defining characteristic of birth is that it is permanent. No one can change the fact that they were born, and no one can change their parent. The child has the DNA of the parent, and that is true with our spiritual birth as well as our physical one. The DNA connection between a child and a parent is in every cell of the child’s body, and the “DNA” of God, His holy spirit, totally infuses our flesh body and it cannot be changed. The holy spirit in us gives us many advantages in life that a person without holy spirit does not have.

It is important to note that the gift of holy spirit that is part of the Christian is different from the holy spirit that God put upon people before the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Before the Day of Pentecost, the gift of holy spirit was “upon” people and could be removed if they sinned—King Saul and Samson are two examples of that. Furthermore, the holy spirit God gave in before Pentecost did not give a person a new nature. God started something new on Pentecost—the New Birth—and He made it so that it could not be undone. Christians have holy spirit “born” in them, and therefore, Christians should walk confidently in the power of that spirit.

[For more information on Christian salvation, see Appendix 10: “God’s Promise of Salvation.” For more on the holy spirit, see Appendix 7: “What is the Holy Spirit?” For more on the New Birth being a new origin, see commentary on Titus 3:5. For more on our new, divine nature, see commentary on 2 Pet. 1:4. For more on the manifestations of holy spirit such as speaking in tongues, see commentary on 1 Cor. 12:7, 8, 9, 10. For more on the Administration of Grace in which we live, see commentary on Eph. 3:2. For more on annihilation in the Lake of Fire, see Appendix 4: “Annihilation in the Lake of Fire.”]

**“to a living hope.”** For the New Birth to be seen for all that it is, we must see it in relation to the Hope. The New Birth gives us many blessings now, but they are ultimately worthless if all we have is this life without an everlasting future. We are still in our flesh bodies and have many problems. Yet, we have new birth into a living hope—we shall one day have new bodies and live forever with Jesus. The phrase “living hope” refers to the fact that the hope is “living, alive” in that it will come to fulfillment. It is not a “dead” hope that is just a dream, a fiction. Our hope is real and will one day happen just as the Word says it will. R. C. H. Lenski writes that “living hope” is “the opposite of an empty, false, deceptive hope. This hope is not ‘lively’ (A.V. [KJV]), or ‘living’ because it is bright, strong, active in us but because God guarantees and produces its fulfillment.[[5]](#footnote-31493)” Although some commentators say that it is called a “living” hope here because it brings life to the believer, that is not its sense here. It is not a “life-giving” hope, it is a “living hope,” a hope that will come to pass. It is as if the hope were alive, excitedly waiting to be fulfilled in the believer (cf. a somewhat similar idea, the personification in Rom. 8:19).

The word “to” in the phrase “to a living hope” is a translation of the Greek preposition *eis* (#1519 εἰς), here indicating movement toward a place or goal. The believer is born again “to a living hope.” The living hope, everlasting life with Christ and all that entails, is where the believer is going; we are born again “to a living hope.” It is also possible that the *eis* has overtones of an “*eis* of result,” in which case the phrase would be that God “has given us new birth resulting in a living hope,” which is certainly the case. The Greek word *eis* (“to”) also starts the first phrase of 1 Peter 1:4, “to an inheritance *that is* incorruptible and undefiled and unfading.” The two uses of *eis* are appositional; they both refer back to the phrase “has given us new birth.” Thus, the Bible tells us that the New Birth is “to a living hope” and “to an inheritance that is incorruptible.”

**“by means of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”** The resurrection of Christ gave us a “living hope,” a fully assured and proven future. Although the death of Christ paid for our sins, after Jesus died on the cross, he was dead, not alive. Our hope of being raised from the dead like Christ was only a promise and a good idea until Christ was actually raised. Once Christ was raised, the hope of the resurrection of all believers became very real, it “came to life.”

**“from among the dead.”**[[6]](#footnote-31055) See commentary on Romans 4:24.

1Pe 1:4

**“to an inheritance *that is* imperishable and undefiled and unfading.”** The believer is born again “to an inheritance *that is* imperishable and undefiled and unfading.” The New Birth guarantees an inheritance in the future, that is, being with Christ forever. The Greek word “imperishable” can also be translated as “incorruptible,” but here “imperishable” makes more sense. For many and varied reasons, very many people who expect to receive an inheritance never get it, their inheritance “perishes,” it vanishes away. But the believer’s future everlasting life is guaranteed by God and will not “perish.” The idea behind “undefiled” is that many inheritances get “defiled” in some way so that what is promised is not given as promised. The Christian’s inheritance is also “unfading,” it is not like a flower that fades with time, if anything, the older one gets, or the worse one’s circumstances on earth become, the brighter the hope shines and draws one’s attention to it.

The word “to” is a translation of the Greek preposition *eis* (#1519 εἰς), the believer is born again “to an inheritance” (for more on eis, see commentary on 1 Pet. 1:3, “to a living hope”).

[For more on the New Birth, see commentary on 1 Pet. 1:3.]

**“in heaven.”** It is important to realize that the inheritance is only said to be stored up in heaven because we have no way to access it now. It is in God’s keeping. This verse is not saying that when we die, we will be in heaven, but just that the treasure is in the hands of God now (see commentary on Matt. 5:12). Our inheritance will be realized when Christ comes back to earth and sets up his kingdom (see commentary on Matt. 5:5, “the meek will inherit the earth”). When Jesus sets up his kingdom on earth, people will be rewarded or punished according as they deserve (see commentary on 2 Cor. 5:10).

1Pe 1:5

**“through trust.”** It is our continued trust in Christ that guards us and leads to salvation. This is stated in different ways in different places. In Romans 4, we learn that trust is credited as righteousness (Rom. 4:5, 23-24), and righteousness comes by trust so that it is based on grace and not on law or works (Rom. 4:16). Those who “rely on trust” are the children of Abraham (Gal. 3:7) and those who “rely on trust” are blessed along with Abraham (Gal. 3:9), and the phrase “rely on trust” implies continued trust. That makes sense because the goal, or outcome, of our trust is salvation (1 Pet. 1:9).

1 Peter 1:5 is an important verse in the debate about whether salvation is permanent or not. The verse says that believers are guarded for salvation “through their trust.” The guarding is “through trust” (or, “by trust”), not through their New Birth or the presence of holy spirit. That “trust” is what guards Christians for salvation certainly fits with the rest of the Bible, because it is because of their trust in God that people have been saved since Genesis. There are many verses on this. For example, Abraham was declared righteous because of his trust in God (Gen. 15:5). Today, Christians get saved by trusting in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10) and then are declared righteous by trust (Rom. 3:26-30). Galatians 3:7 and 9 say it is those who rely on trust who are blessed and the children of Abraham. 2 Timothy 3:15 says the Scriptures “are able to give you wisdom leading to salvation through trust in Christ Jesus.”

Thus, the Old Testament taught the value of continuing to trust God throughout life (cf. Hab. 2:4; Ezek. 18:21-32; 33:12-20). The New Testament also teaches that trust leads to and guards our salvation (cf. 2 Tim. 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:5).

**“are being guarded.”** The Greek verb translated as “being guarded” is *phroureō* (#5432 φρουρέω), and it generally refers to a military guard. The believer is strongly guarded by the power of God, but that guarding is “through *their* trust” in God. Believers were born again by believing (trusting) that Jesus was Lord and that God raised him from the dead (Rom. 10:9). Then, through their lives they continue to be guarded for salvation by their trust in God and the Lord Jesus.

**“for a salvation *that is* ready to be revealed at the end time *of the age*.”** The believer is guarded by their trust “for a salvation that is ready to be revealed at the end time *of the age*.” This statement is very helpful in letting us see that believers are not actually saved yet—what we have right now is a promise of salvation, a hope of salvation (1 Thess. 5:8). When our salvation is fully realized we will have new everlasting bodies like Christ’s glorious body (Phil 3:21; 1 John 3:2). As 1 Peter 1:5 says, it is through their trust that the believer continues to be guarded by the power of God for salvation.

Believers are guarded by trust in God and in His power, including the power to bring the Hope to pass as promised, and we continue to be guarded by the power of God due to our trust until the promised salvation—the fullness of salvation—occurs.

[For more on the fullness of our salvation coming in the future, see commentary on Eph. 2:8, “have been saved.”]

1Pe 1:6

**“You rejoice in this.”** Although the “this” is singular, here it is a collective singular and refers to the things mentioned in the previous verses that were a cause of rejoicing: new birth to a living hope; an inheritance that will not perish, be defiled, or fade; and salvation that is guarded now but ready to be revealed.

**“you must suffer”** The manuscript tradition of the Greek text associated with this phrase has a variation, which is part of the reason this is translated in different ways in the English versions, and beyond that, there is some disagreement about how to best bring the Greek into English. J. Ramsey Michaels writes that the Greek phrase *ei deon,* whether the word *estin* appears in the text or not, “should be read as a first class conditional clause, referring in this instance to what is actually the case: i.e., not ‘if need be’ but ‘since it is necessary’ or ‘by necessity.’ The suffering is no mere contingency but has (as the aorist λυπηθέντες [*lupēthentes*] indicates) already begun.”[[7]](#footnote-15657) The scope of Scripture supports Michaels’ conclusion and personal translation, for there are many verses of Scripture that say believers will suffer in this life before entering the next. Michaels’ translation is, “Then you [will] rejoice—though now for a little while you must suffer affliction in various ordeals.”

1Pe 1:9

**“souls.”** Here it refers to saving one’s life. See commentary on Romans 11:3.

1Pe 1:10

**“this salvation.”** This is not referring to our New Birth salvation, given at the time of believing the gospel, but the “salvation ready to be revealed in *the* last time” (1 Pet. 1:5), “at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:7).

**“searched diligently for.”** The Greek word is ἐκζητέω and it means “to expend or exert effort to find out or learn something.[[8]](#footnote-12513)” *Ekzēteō* indicates the act of seeking something out with a desire to want to know in order to apprehend it.

**“who prophesied of the grace.”** The grace they mention will be part of the Millennial Kingdom, and it has now come to Christians unexpectedly as part of the Sacred Secret, the “Grace Administration.”

1Pe 1:11

**“inquiring about what time or what sort of circumstance.”** The Greek word ἐραυνάω (“searching for”) connotes “a careful or thorough effort to learn something.”[[9]](#footnote-14026) It implies the type of active effort used to investigate into or inquire about something. The Millennial Kingdom is not well defined in the Old Testament, so the prophets searched for how long it was and what manner of period it was. By the grace of God, many blessings of the Millennial Kingdom, such as the holy spirit, have been given to Christians now.

**“the spirit of Christ.”** This verse uses the phrase “spirit of Christ” because God revealed information about the Christ to believers via the gift of holy spirit. Unfortunately, some people have misunderstood the phrase and think it means Christ himself was present in the Old Testament, but he was not. In the first place, the phrase “spirit of Christ” never appears in the Old Testament. The “spirit of the Lord” or “the spirit of God” appears over and over, but never the “spirit of Christ.” If Jesus were alive during the Old Testament, we would expect to see that designation, but we do not.

The gift of holy spirit that God gave in the Old Testament and Gospels was always the same spirit, but it was referred to by different names depending on the context. We are used to this when it comes to God. There is only one God, but He has many different names and titles. Similarly, there is only one gift of holy spirit, but it is referred to by different names in different contexts. When it is associated with wisdom, it is called the “spirit of wisdom” (Exod. 28:3; Deut. 34:9; Eph. 1:17). When it is associated with grace, it is called the “spirit of grace” (Zech. 12:10; Heb. 10:29). When it is related to glory, it is called the “spirit of glory” (1 Pet. 4:14). It is called the “spirit of adoption” when it is associated with our everlasting life (Rom. 8:15, which is translated as “spirit of sonship” in some versions). It is called “the spirit of truth” when it is associated with the truth we learn by revelation (John 14:17; 16:13). When it came with the same power as it brought to Elijah, it was called “the spirit of Elijah” (2 Kings 2:15). These are not different spirits. All the names refer to the one gift of holy spirit that God gives.

When Peter mentions that “the spirit of Christ” was upon prophets as they “predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow,” it is easy to see that the spirit is called the “spirit of Christ” because it is associated with Christ, foretold of Christ, and was the same holy spirit as Jesus himself received at his baptism, not because Christ was actually alive during the Old Testament. Thus, the genitive phrase, “the spirit of Christ” is a genitive of relation; the spirit that is related to Christ.[[10]](#footnote-16114)

**“the sufferings appointed for Christ.”** The Greek text is not “the sufferings of Christ,” but the “sufferings ‘to’ (*eis*) Christ” that is, the sufferings that he was appointed to suffer to save humankind from sin.

**“the glories.”** The multitude of glories; the plural emphasizes the extent of all the glory that has and will come to Christ, including the resurrection and ascension of Christ, his being given a name above every name, the resurrection of believers that he made possible, and many more glories to come as he conquers the earth, sets up his kingdom and reigns from Jerusalem, and eventually reigns with God on a throne in the New Jerusalem. Also, the plural “glories” parallels the plural “sufferings” that Christ experienced.

1Pe 1:12

**“by the holy spirit.”** The REV has “by *the* spirit,” adding the word “the” even though the Greek text does not have it. The Greek reads *en pneuma* (“in spirit”), but the definite article is not needed in prepositional phrases to make the noun definite. Daniel Wallace writes: “There is no need for the article to be used to make the object of a preposition definite. ...This is recognized by most grammarians.”[[11]](#footnote-30818) People proclaim the Good News by the holy spirit, that is, by the power of holy spirit.

[For more information, see commentary on Matt. 22:43. For more information on the uses of “holy spirit,” see Word Study: “Pneuma.”]

**“look.”** The Greek word is *parakuptō* (#3879 παρακύπτω), and it means to stoop down or toward something in order to look at it, or to look at something with the head bowed forward or with the body bent over. It is also used metaphorically for looking at or into something carefully or intently. There is a metaphorical use of the verb in which it is used for a rapid or cursory glance, and some commentators have taken that to be the sense in this verse. Is this verse saying that angels want to be able to look intently into how God planned it so that people before us actually served us via their obedience and faith, or is it saying, like the NET translation, that since angels cannot really see how God planned it all, these are “things angels long to catch a glimpse of?” Since it is difficult to make a choice, it seemed better to go with the middle ground meaning of *parakuptō*, to look, which can mean to look intently or to glance at (see commentary on John 20:5).

1Pe 1:13

**“having prepared your mind for action.”** The Greek text literally reads, “gird up the loins of your mind,” or “tie up the waist of your mind.” It is difficult to translate this idiom. It comes from the biblical culture in which standard outer garb for men was a long, ankle-length robe. The robe provided warmth, shelter from the elements, and could be (and often was) a blanket at night (cf. Exod. 22:27). Merchants would pull up the robe at the waist, tuck it in, and create a kind of pocket they could keep things in. The long robe would get in the way when a person needed to move fast or work hard, so he would gather it up and tie it at the waist so it would be short and out of the way. That is why so many versions have a translation such as, “prepare your mind for action,” or “prepare your mind for work.” The problem with translating the idiom in an easy to understand way is that the point can be deeper than just, “prepare for action.” It is looking at the things that are hindering you and figuring out how to deal with them so you can be effective for the Lord.

1Pe 1:14

**“obedient children.”** The Greek is literally, “children of obedience.”

**“be conformed.”** The word translated “be conformed” comes from the Greek *suschēmatizō* (#4964 συσχηματίζω) in the middle voice. Usually, we think of the middle voice as the subject performing the action upon itself; e.g., “he hanged himself” (Matt. 27:5). However, this is the *permissive middle* where the subject allows or permits something to be done *to* itself, or *for* itself.[[12]](#footnote-16889) The sense would then be, “do not allow yourselves to be conformed to your former lusts.”

1Pe 1:15

**“but.”** The strong “but” in the Greek language, *alla* (#235 αλλά), which could even be translated “on the contrary,” contrasts the ungodly behavior at the end of 1 Peter 1:14 with the holy behavior Christians are to exhibit.

**“must also be holy.”** The verb in the phrase “be” or “become” is in the imperative mood, and carries the sense of “must” (cf. NLT).

1Pe 1:16

**“Be holy, for I am holy**.” The command to be holy occurs several times in the Old Testament (cf. Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7). It is also referenced in the New Testament several times (1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; cf. 1 Thess. 4:7)

The basic meaning of the word “holy” is “to be set apart,” but not just set apart like a recluse or hermit. To be “holy” was to be set apart because of moral integrity and righteous behavior. Gordon Wenham rightly states, “Holiness is expressed in moral integrity.”[[13]](#footnote-15800)We see that in the contexts of the places where God commands people to be holy. For example, Leviticus 11:44-45 says to be holy, and in Leviticus 11 we can see that being holy also involved keeping oneself ritually pure before God and eating foods that God commanded to eat (Jesus Christ later changed the food laws (Mark 7:19)). Similarly, Leviticus 19:2 says to be holy, and Leviticus 19 has commands that express moral integrity, such as not having other gods besides Yahweh, respecting one’s mother and father, and being concerned for the welfare of the poor. Leviticus 20:7 also says to be holy, and in Leviticus 20, we can see that holiness involves keeping oneself and the society free from idolatrous behavior and sexual immorality. So holiness was not just “being religious,” it was learning to think and act in a godly way, a way that set the holy person apart from the people of the world.

Holiness, especially as it is expressed in the Old Testament, was connected with being ritually “clean” in the sight of God, which meant staying away from unclean foods and other unclean things and, as much as possible, avoiding actions that made a person unclean. So being holy—set apart—for God meant taking care of oneself physically as well as mentally and morally. There is a connection between having personal moral integrity and righteousness and taking care of oneself physically. How a person looks and acts externally is usually a result of how they are internally. How a person feels about themselves, their God, and their responsibility to be good in and for the society they live in is almost always reflected externally, for example, in how they act, talk, and dress.

1Pe 1:17

**“since.”** The Greek reads “if.” This is a first-class conditional sentence in Greek, which assumes the “if” clause to be true for the sake of argument. Thus, some English versions and the REV use the translation “since.” Peter is not questioning whether or not the believers call upon God; he assumes they pray to God and call upon Him (cf. NIV).

1Pe 1:19

**“without blemish.”** See commentary on Ephesians 1:4.

**“without blemish or spot.”** Both terms in Greek start with the letter alpha (“a”) and the doublet catches the attention. Also, Mark Dubis points out that the two could be collapsed in meaning to “completely unblemished.”[[14]](#footnote-14736) Just as a lamb had to be without blemish, that Jesus was without blemish or spot points to his complete sinlessness.

1Pe 1:21

**“from among the dead.”**[[15]](#footnote-15262) See commentary on Romans 4:24.

1Pe 1:22

**“soul.”** The Greek word often translated “soul” is *psuchē* (#5590 ψυχή, pronounced psoo-'kay), and it has a large number of meanings, including the physical life of a person or animal; an individual person; or attitudes, emotions, feelings, and thoughts. Here it is used more broadly of the individual himself while including his thoughts and emotions. Thus, while the verse could read something such as, “having purified yourselves” (HCSB; cf. NAB, NIV), the use of the word “soul” points us to the fact that the godly person has worked hard to purify his mental and emotional life. Romans 2:9 contains a similar use of *psuchē*.

[For more complete information on *psuchē*, see Word Study: “Psuchē.”]

This verse makes it clear that we purify our mental and emotional life by obeying the “truth,” which includes the written Word of God as well as any direct revelation we have received, and also includes things that we discover from science (genuine science!) that are true about God’s creation. Many mentally and emotionally unstable, insecure, or uncertain people have been greatly helped by adjusting their lifestyle and acting on the truth that they know.

**“affection for *God’s* family.”** The Greek is *philadelphia* (#5360 φιλαδελφία), a compound Greek word made up of *philos* (a strong liking, a friendship; see commentary on John 21:15) and *adelphos* (#80 ἀδελφός), which means “brother.” It is the strong bond of friendship that exists between brothers. We are to have that strong affection for fellow members of the family of God.

**“love one another.”** The command to “love one another” was the new commandment that Jesus gave his disciples in John 13:34, and it is so central to Christian life that it occurs 13 times in the New Testament—and besides those, there are also similar commands to love our fellow believers (cf. 1 John 2:10; 3:10, 14; 4:20-21). It is vital to understand the impact of this command, that it is not a general call to love everyone, although we are supposed to love everyone. It is a specific command to especially love fellow Christians, and thus is similar to Galatians 6:10, be especially good to the household of faith; that is, fellow Christians.

[For more on “love one another,” see commentary on John 13:34. For more on other ways we are to love one another, see commentary on Gal. 5:13, “one another.”]

1Pe 1:23

**“born again—not from perishable seed but from imperishable.”** The Greek word translated “imperishable” is *aphthartos* (#862 ἄφθαρτος), and it refers to “imperviousness to corruption and death; imperishable, incorruptible*,* immortal.”[[16]](#footnote-20933) The Greek word translated “seed” is *spora* (#4701 σπορά), and it means “the sowing of seed,” and thus by extension, “seed.”[[17]](#footnote-21848)

The uses of the word “seed” in the Bible are not really helpful in determining what the “seed” is here in 1 Peter because “seed” is used in a number of different ways: the seed of plants (Gen. 1:11; Matt. 13:31); human babies; progeny (Gen. 15:3; Matt. 22:24); the word of God (Luke 8:11); the children of God (Rom. 9:8); Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:16, 19), and the “seed” that remains in believers (1 John 3:9).

Peter’s reason for why believers are to love each other is founded upon the fact that believers are “born again.” And this second birth is qualified as being different from each person’s first birth (i.e., being born as a human). This second birth, Peter says, is “not from perishable seed but from imperishable.” The omission of “seed” after “imperishable” in the Greek text is an intentional ellipsis that puts emphasis on the distinction in characterization of the “seed.”

The Greek word *spora* (“seed”) refers to “the act of sowing,” and Peter’s use of it primarily draws upon the imagery of agricultural sowing (e.g., planting). However, the imagery was also used figuratively to refer to procreation, and then by metonymy for that which is sown, i.e., “seed.”[[18]](#footnote-22965) Louw and Nida define σπορά as “the instrumental means of birth—‘parentage.’” Thus, the meaning of *spora* can be viewed as referring to the source that produces the birth.[[19]](#footnote-13996)

The contrast Peter establishes is that unlike natural birth which comes “from [sowing] perishable seed” (*ek sporas phthartēs*), meaning seed that is subject to decay and death, being “born again” comes from “[sowing] imperishable [seed]” (*aphthartou*), meaning seed that is not subject to decay or death. The distinction between these two types of “sowing” is a qualitative difference: one is based on a transient existence and is thus susceptible to degeneration and destruction (i.e., “perishable”), the other is based on an everlasting and enduring existence and is thus impervious to deterioration and death (i.e., “imperishable”).[[20]](#footnote-26388)

The whole phrase “not from perishable seed but from imperishable” is a descriptor and modifies “being born again” (*anagegenēmenoi*), but the main sentence of the verse is: “for you have been born again…through the living and enduring word of God.” The prepositional phrase “through the living and enduring word” (*dia logou zōntos theou kai menontos*) is explanatory, denoting what constitutes the source (i.e., “parentage”) by which the believer is born again. The new birth comes “through” (*dia*) the “word of God”—the good news.

The concept of the “word of God” as seed that is sown is not isolated imagery found only here in the NT. One important passage to demonstrate this prominent metaphor can be found in one of Jesus’ most famous parables: The Sower and the Seed (Matt. 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15). In this parable, the word of God is allegorized as a seed that is sown in soil, representing the heart of the one who hears it. In the explanation of the meaning of the parable in Luke 8:11, Jesus begins by saying, “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.” The point of the parable is that depending upon the type of soil (i.e., receptivity of a person’s heart), the seed that is sown will have different outcomes and produce different effects in the person’s life.

The figurative imagery of the parable is vastly different than the context in 1 Peter 1. But the point is that the word of God identified as a “seed” (*spora*) that is sown in a person is a usage directly grounded in the NT.

Peter states that the “word of God” is “living and enduring,” and this is why he uses the phrase “not from perishable seed but from imperishable” to characterize the “word of God” as something not transient or subject to deterioration and decay. This is in contrast to the “flesh,” which is transitory and subject to perishing. Thus, expanding Peter’s logic in this condensed sentence to show his contrast better, verse 23 could be written as follows:

“*for* you have been born again—not from seed that is perishable, *that is, through the flesh*, but from seed that is imperishable, *that is*, through the…word of God.”

What Peter is contrasting is two different sources of life using a “seed sowing” metaphor. On the one hand, there is a type of seed that is sown, which is earthly, transitory, and fragile; on the other, seed that is sown, which is heavenly, eternal, and enduring. The comparison is in the qualitative attributes of each type of seed that is sown. Life that comes from sowing seed through the physical, created world that is passing away will not last (i.e., it is “perishable”), while life that comes from sowing seed through the “word of God” is spiritual, eternal, and will never fade away (i.e., it is “imperishable”).

While some scholars argue for a distinction between the prepositions *ek* (“from”) and *dia* (“through”) where *dia* could carry an instrumental sense, i.e., the imperishable seed comes “through” the word of God,[[21]](#footnote-32092) it is more likely from Peter’s following use of the quote from Isaiah, which highlights the different natures of the flesh and the word of God as perishable and imperishable, respectively, that the preposition *dia* is functioning with a similar meaning to *ek*.[[22]](#footnote-30543) And in this way, being born again “through the...word of God” is describing what it means to be born again “from imperishable seed.” The variation of *ek* and *dia* for stylistic purposes, but which convey the same meaning, can be seen elsewhere in the NT, such as Romans 3:30 and Galatians 2:16.

To correctly understand 1 Peter 1:23, it is very important to realize that although the verse mentions “seed,” it never directly says what the seed is. Some people say the seed is the gift of holy spirit that a person gets when they are born again,[[23]](#footnote-13279) but the verse does not say that. However, there are several points of evidence in the context that indicate that the “seed” is to be understood as the word of God. The reasons are as follows:

In 1 Peter 1:23, the identification of the “seed” as the word of God and not the gift of holy spirit comes from how Peter makes his point about the “imperishable seed.” Note that 1 Peter 1:23 and 24 can be one sentence in the Greek text. So after saying that believers are born again of “imperishable seed” in verse 23, Peter documents that the Word of God is imperishable seed by quoting from Isaiah 40, which says that flesh is like grass that fades and withers away, “but the word of our God stands forever.” 1 Peter 1:24 begins with the conjunction *dioti* (“for,” which is functioning essentially with a causal meaning like “because) to provide the proof that what he just said in verse 23 is, in fact, true. Given that, 1 Peter 1:23-25 reads, “…you have been born again—not from perishable seed but from imperishable—through the living and enduring word of God, BECAUSE ‘all flesh is like grass, and all its glory is like the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls,’ but the word of the Lord endures forever” (cf. Isa. 40:6-8). Why would Peter quote from Isaiah 40? It does not say anything about “seed,” but it does say the Word of God is imperishable. Thus, Peter is using Isaiah to prove that the “word of God” is imperishable and thus is the “seed” he is referring to in 1 Peter 1:23. What God says, and what God promises does not perish, and in the context of the New Covenant, God has promised that those who believe in Jesus Christ will receive life in the age to come (John 3:16; Rom. 6:23).

And so, Peter is contrasting “perishable” seed (i.e., flesh) with “imperishable” seed (i.e., the word of God), and Isaiah is doing the same thing with “flesh” and “the word of God”—contrasting what is perishable with what endures forever.” Isaiah writes: “All flesh is like grass, and all its dependability is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, because Yahweh’s breath blows on it. Surely the people are like grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever” (Isa. 40:6-8). So, Isaiah strongly makes the point that flesh—“perishable seed” (1 Pet. 1:23)—withers and fades away, but the word of our God—“imperishable seed” (1 Pet. 1:23)—stands forever.

The second birth (i.e., being born again) does not happen through the corruption and limited lifespan of the flesh (like natural birth), but through the spiritual, living and enduring word of God, which will never wither, fade, or fall.[[24]](#footnote-16602) And since the quality of the seed is different—the flesh versus the Word of God—the life it produces is different as well. So, the believer’s new birth is based on an imperishable source because it was produced by an “imperishable seed” (the word of God). And because there is a different basis for this new life, there is to be a different expression of that life in the believer. Their new life is to be revealed in their love for one another. This is the primary point Peter is making in this section (1 Pet. 1:22-25).

[For more information on Christian salvation, see Appendix 10: “God’s Promise of Salvation.” For more on the holy spirit, see Appendix 7: “What is the Holy Spirit?” For more on the new birth, see commentary on Titus 3:5. For more on our new, divine nature, see commentary on 2 Pet. 1:4.]

**1 Peter Chapter 2**

1Pe 2:1

**“and...and...and.”** This is the figure of speech polysyndeton, “many ands,” in which each point is emphasized.[[25]](#footnote-26599)

[See Word Study: “Syndeton.”]

**“put away all malice.”** There are a number of bad traits the believer is to put away (cf. Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:8).

1Pe 2:2

**“the pure milk of the word.”** The Greek adjective *logikos* (#3050 λογικός) is related to *logos*, word. There is quite a controversy over this word. Some commentators and versions attest it should be translated “spiritual” (ESV, NIV, RSV), while some hold that “spiritual” does not make as much sense here and thus assert that it is related to the Word (KJV, NASB, YLT). Robertson simply gives arguments from both sides without drawing a conclusion. Lenski argues quite forcibly that “Word-milk” (i.e., the milk of the Word) is the correct meaning, and the one to be preferred in this context, which refers to the Word in 1 Pet. 1:23 and seems to make more sense in reference to the babies in the verse, who were in need of “the milk of the word.”[[26]](#footnote-23368) We have gone with “the pure milk of the word” because it does seem to fit the context well, and is more concrete than “spiritual milk,” which is not clear in its reference. It should be noted that the only other occurrence of this Greek word is in Romans 12:1, where it is most often translated “spiritual” service. However, first, if it is “spiritual” in the context of Romans 12:1 it need not necessarily be “spiritual” here. Second, perhaps “service related to the Word” would be better in Romans 12:1 also.

**“pure.”** The Greek word is *adolos* (#97 ἄδολος), which means, regarding people, “without guile, honest” and regarding things, “pure, unadulterated.” Interestingly, 1 Pet. 2:1 tells us to put away “guile” (dishonesty), and this verse, verse 2, tells us to desire the “guileless, honest” milk of the Word. The Word of God, unlike the words of man, contains no guile, no dishonesty.

1Pe 2:3

**“you have tasted that the Lord is kind.”** This is very close wording to the Septuagint of Psalm 34:8, “Oh taste and see that Yahweh is good. The Old Testament refers to God, whereas Peter refers to the Lord Jesus, and this adds weight to the idea that Jesus Christ was the image of the Father and did the Father’s will.

1Pe 2:5

**“as living stones.”** Peter uses illustrations that grab the attention of anyone familiar with the Old Testament worship. They used dead rocks, we are living stones; they worshiped at a physical house of God, we are the spiritual house of God; they had a priesthood, we are the priesthood; they offered physical sacrifices, we offer spiritual sacrifices. The verse contains, in the words of Lenski, a paradox: the believer is both the stones that make the house, the house, and the priesthood that worships in the house.[[27]](#footnote-15964)

1Pe 2:6

**“Look!”** The Greek word is *idou* (#2400 ἰδού), and it is used to get our attention. See commentary on Matthew 1:20.

**“put to shame.”** See commentary on Romans 9:33.

1Pe 2:7

“**the cornerstone.** The Greek text reads, “the head of the corner.” That is, the stone with the most important place (see “cornerstone” in commentary on Matt. 21:42).

1Pe 2:8

**“to this *result* they were also appointed.”** The Calvinists and the advocates of free will have argued about this verse for centuries. The meaning is not that God predestined some people to disobey and suffer, but rather that God planned that those people who willfully choose to be disobedient will stumble.

D. E. Hiebert writes: “The clause seems to mean that those who willfully reject the message of God concerning Christ are destined to stumble as the just and inevitable consequence of their deliberate rejection. ...God has established Christ, the Living Stone, as His divinely appointed way for human salvation; He has also ordained that men cannot reject His provision with impunity.”[[28]](#footnote-16870)

1Pe 2:9

**“chosen people.”** The Greek word for “people” is *genos* (#1085 γένος) and it could be translated “family,” “class/kind,” or “group.”[[29]](#footnote-14406) The sense of the word simultaneously points to our common heritage from God as our Father, that we are within our own class as we are the Church, and that together we form a distinct group. The translation “race” is incorrect and unhelpful; the people of God are not set apart based on any racial terms (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11).

**“a people for *God’s own* possession.”** An allusion from Exod. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; and 26:18.

**“glorious attributes.”** The Greek is *aretē* (#703 ἀρετή ar-et’-ay), which is a word with many meanings, including, “a virtuous course of thought, feeling, and action; virtue or moral goodness; any particular moral excellence, as modesty or purity.” Due to the many different meanings and shades of meaning in the word, translations vary greatly. “Praises” (KJV, NIV); “excellencies” (ESV, ASV); “mighty acts” (NRSV); “fame.”[[30]](#footnote-18801) “Glorious attributes” is contributed by Meyer.[[31]](#footnote-26661) “Greco-Roman publics would in the main be conditioned to hear a stress on performance, which of course would elicit praise.”[[32]](#footnote-28596)

1Pe 2:10

**“not a people.”** The Greek phrase is *ou laos* (οὐ λαὸς, pronounced oo lah-'os), which, because Greek does not have the indefinite article (“a”), can mean either “no people” or “not a people.” The impact of this can only be fully understood when we realize that Israel was “the People of God,” and was referred to as “the People” (cf. Matt. 2:4; 26:3; Luke 19:47; John 11:50; Acts 4:8, 25; 12:11; 13:17; 21:28; 26:17, 23; 28:17; Rom. 15:10, 11; Heb. 7:11; 2 Pet. 2:1), and furthermore, Peter is primarily writing to the Jews in the dispersion (1 Pet. 1:1). Given that, why does he say that in time past they were not “a people.” The reference, and the Greek Peter uses, points to the fact that in the Old Testament Israel had rejected God (and continued to do so, as we see in them rejecting His Son, Jesus), and so as early as Hosea, God had said they were no longer His people and He would not be their God (Hos. 1:6-9).

By the time of Hosea, Israel and Judah had rejected God and broken the covenant over and over. God wanted to make that clear to Israel, and so He commanded Hosea to be a “living picture” of God and Israel: God commanded Hosea the prophet, who represented God, to go marry a prostitute, representing Israel, and have children by her (Hosea 1). Her first child, a boy, God called “Jezreel,” which in that context meant “God scatters,” a prophecy of the future of Israel. Her second child, a daughter, God called “Lo-ruhamah,” which meant “No Compassion” (or No Mercy). Her third child was called “Lo Ammi,” which meant “Not My People.” Although God indicated He would bring Israel and Judah back in the future, the fact that Israel was conquered and scattered by the Assyrians and Judah was conquered and scattered by Babylon showed the truth of what God said through the prophet. Although God gathered a remnant of Judah in the time of the Persian dominance of Judah, as we see here in Peter the real restoration of both Israel and Judah came as individuals believed in Jesus Christ; and there will also be a future restoration of the Old Testament believers of Israel and Judah at the Resurrection of the Righteous.

There were Gentiles mixed in with the Jews of the dispersion, and Peter’s words do not exclude them. While Israel was “the People,” in stark contrast, the Gentiles did not even classify as people; they were “no-people,” and certainly not “a people.” The double meaning of the Greek makes exact translation into English difficult. If we translate the phrase as “no people” or “no-people” (cf. ASV, RV, Rotherham, RSV), we get the extra-derogatory sense that a non-Israelite did not even classify as a person. If we translate the phrase as “not a people” (ESV, HCSB, KJV, NASB, NET) we get that before the saved Gentiles were brought into God’s family, they were not “a people,” not a group that God even recognized. Both “no people” and “not a people” apply in this situation, and the Greek has the advantage that the one phrase means both things, so a Greek reader could see both meanings at once. In contrast, we in English have to pick a reading to go in the text, and explain that there can also be a second meaning.

Through the work of Jesus Christ, and the faith of believers, both Jews and Gentiles become the people of God.

[For more on the gathering of Israel and Judah at the First Resurrection, see commentary on Acts 24:15.]

1Pe 2:11

**“soul.”** In this verse, the word “soul” encompasses several of its meanings. Fleshly desires wage war against our mental state, our attitude and emotions, and against “us,” against our persons.

The Greek word often translated “soul” is *psuchē* (#5590 ψυχή, pronounced psoo-'kay), and *psuchē* has a large number of meanings. Any good Greek lexicon will show many of the ways that *psuchē* can be translated. For example, some of the meanings in the BDAG *Greek-English Lexicon* are: that which animates animal and human life; life; that which possesses life; the person himself; and the seat and center of the inner human life in its many and varied aspects, which includes desires, the seat of enjoyment, and the emotions and feelings. As well as our emotions and feelings, *psuchē* includes our attitude.

[For more information on “soul” and its uses, see Word Study: “Psuchē.”]

1Pe 2:12

**“make sure.”** The verb is technically “having,” thus, “having good behavior,” but because it is linked in the sentence with the imperative *apechesthai* (abstain; 1 Pet. 2:11), it also has an imperative force.[[33]](#footnote-25992) See commentary on 1 Peter 2:15, “of senseless people.”

**“in a case when.”** The Greek phrase *en hō* (“in which”) indicates a more concrete situation that Peter has in mind than simply the hypothetical scenario represented by the temporal adverb “when.”[[34]](#footnote-21602) There was a general suspicion, contempt, and even hatred for Christians among the pagan Greeks and Romans, and thus it was not so much as “sometime when” (if) a pagan would speak against a Christian, but “in a case in which,” basically assuming that persecution would occur. Thus, there is a presumption that persecution was not just a possible scenario, but a very real and very likely circumstance that Peter’s readers would experience.

**“your way of life among the Gentiles.”** This is more evidence that Peter’s primary audience is the Jewish Christians in the Dispersion.

**“in the day of visitation.”** Peter is drawing upon a common Old Testament expression. God “visits” when He comes and intervenes in a person’s life for blessing or judgment (see commentary on Exod. 20:5).

1Pe 2:15

**“For *doing* this is the will of God.”** This sentence seems to point both backward and forwards, and the scholars argue over it. It is by submitting to authorities that we do the will of God. And it is the will of God that we do good and thus silence foolish people.

**“put to silence the ignorance,”** We cannot put to silence ignorance. What is put to silence is ignorant speech. In this case, ignorance is put by metonymy for words that are spoken in ignorance.

**“of senseless people.”** This is referring back to the Gentiles in 1 Pet. 2:12, who speak evil against Christians as evildoers. The Greek has the article, *the* foolish men.[[35]](#footnote-27088) In their ignorance, men like this will speak against the church as evildoers in order to justify not becoming Christians. God tells us to live in such a way that evil speakers may see our righteous behavior in the very areas they are speaking against us, and that by our doing good we may silence their accusations and rob them of their excuses.

1Pe 2:16

**“*Live* as free.”** The grammar of this phrase is difficult because the Greek phrase simply starts “as free.” Scholars have suggested many different translations and ways of constructing the sentence, including tying it back to 1 Pet. 2:13, or connecting it with the next verse, 1 Pet. 2:17. Thankfully, the point of the verse is clear. A common, and logical, construction is that the opening phrase is a kind of ellipsis, the verb being left out to emphasize “free.” In that case, “Live as free” is a good translation.

The Roman world was acutely aware of the value of freedom and the burden of being a slave. Peter uses that awareness very powerfully here. He starts in 1 Pet. 2:13 by saying we are to be subject to, or submit to, human authorities such as kings and governors, which would indicate we were like slaves, but then he moves forward to “as free people” in verse 16 to emphasize that we are actually free, but then makes the seemingly ironic statement that we are slaves of God. Christians live in the irony that we are “free” in Christ but “slaves” of God, bought and paid for with the blood of his Son.

**“slaves.”** The Greek word is *doulos* (#1401 δοῦλος), and it was used both of slaves and servants. Here, “slaves” fits best since it is being used in contrast to people who are “free.”

[For more information on *doulos*, see commentary on Rom. 1:1, “servant.”]

1Pe 2:18

**“Household servants.”** The Greek word is *oiketēs* (#3610 οἰκέτης), and it literally means one who is a member of a household (from *oikos*, house). However, it was used of household slaves and servants (cf. Eph. 6:5, which is similar).

**“masters.”** The Greek is *despotēs* (#1203 δεσπότης) which means master or lord, and it refers to someone who has legal control and authority over others, such as subjects or slaves (cf. 1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:9). See commentary on Luke 2:29.

**“respect.”** The Greek *phobos* is often translated “fear,” but here “respect” seems to be more appropriate, even though there is an element of “fear” in respect in the ancient world.

**“reasonable.”** See commentary on 1 Timothy 3:3.

**“cruel.”** The Greek word is *skolios* (#4646 σκολιός), and it literally means “crooked” or “curved” and was used of roads and rivers [it is the origin (via new Latin) of the English word scoliosis, a curvature or crookedness of a body part, often the spine]. However, *skolios* was widely used metaphorically to refer to people who were “crooked.” Exactly how any given person who was being discussed was “crooked” was usually easy to tell from the context of the conversation. However, in this verse, an exact meaning is not being referred to, but rather the verse is referring in a general way to any “crooked” way a master was being toward a household slave. This makes the verse very difficult, and accounts for the multitude of different ways that different English Bibles translate the word. The meaning includes: being unfair, unjust, dishonest, unscrupulous, surly, harsh, unreasonable, cruel, etc. The *TDNT* captures the meaning in this verse: “In 1 Pet. 2:18, the term is perhaps a general ethical concept denoting the perverse master to whom slaves must still show respect. Yet there may also be a specific reference to pagan masters who are still enslaved in idolatry.”[[36]](#footnote-12051) The immediate application in this verse is household servants, most of whom were slaves. However, we must see the wider Christian application of this verse, which is anyone who is subject to another according to the laws of God and man. This would include children, employees, etc. Christians are to submit to, and show respect to, those who are over them, even if those people do not actually deserve that respect by the way they live.

1Pe 2:19

**“*finds*.”** The verb “is” could be properly supplied, but the phrase would be somewhat awkward in English.

**“because of their conscious awareness of God’s will.”** The word translated “conscious awareness” can be either “conscience” or “consciousness” (the Greek is *suneidēsis*, #4893 συνείδησις), and the context seems to favor “consciousness,” that is, their active awareness of God and thus God’s will as well. The word “will” is added in italics at the end of the verse to bring out the clarity of this meaning. Having a “consciousness of God” is to have an awareness of His will.

1Pe 2:21

**“For you were called to this *endurance*.”** The Christian is called to live a holy life, and in this world of sin, which is under the sway of the Devil, living a holy life involves suffering.

**“so that you follow.”** The Greek *hina* (“so that”) demands a subjunctive verb, but that does not force a subjunctive sense onto the sentence; that is a sense expressed by “might” or “may,” i.e., “that you might follow.” Instead, the sentence has a broad meaning: because of the example of Christ, we “could” (can) follow him, and we “should” follow him (the English versions differ). But in any case, Christ never intended us not to follow him; he set an example so that we do follow him.

1Pe 2:24

**“tree.”** The Greek word is *xulon* (#3586 ξύλον, pronounced 'zoo-lon) and it means a tree, log, a piece of timber (1 Cor. 3:12), a piece of wood (Rev. 18:12), or something made from wood such as a beam, a cross, a club (Mark 14:48), or even the stocks that Paul’s feet were placed in (Acts 16:24). However, *xulon* can mean “tree,” and Peter is making the point that the religious leaders had taken the Messiah and hanged him on a “tree” as if he were accursed of God. That does not mean it was a literal tree that Jesus was crucified on, and Peter’s audience understood that. (See commentary on Acts 5:30, “tree”).

**“by whose wounds you were healed.”** This quotation from Isaiah 53:5 is a promise of future healing. It is a fairly common idiom in the Hebrew and Aramaic languages that when an event was absolutely going to happen in the future, it was spoken of as if it had already occurred in the past. This idiom is often referred to as the “prophetic perfect.” This linguistic feature may have been started due to the fact that it is sometimes hard to express that a future event is certain to happen.

Many times when we simply say something “will” happen, it does not happen. One way the Semitic languages avoided that problem and communicated that a future event was really going to happen was by idiomatically speaking of an event as if it had already happened. In the Old Testament, dozens of verses about future events are written in the past tense, and that is the case here in 1 Peter 2:24 (because it is a quote of Isaiah), and also with some other New Testament verses, such as Ephesians 2:6.

[For more explanation and examples of the prophetic perfect, see commentary on Eph. 2:6.]

The phrase, “And by his bruises we were healed” (JPS Tanakh translation) is Isaiah’s prophecy and promise of future healing. Peter’s quotation of Isaiah is not word-for-word, and for example, he changes “we were healed” to “you were healed,” but that is presumably so that the Gentiles in Peter’s audience were included. Nevertheless, the quotation is exact enough to be clearly recognized as a genuine quotation.

Isaiah’s statement was a promise to Israel that in the future, in the Messiah’s kingdom, everyone would be healed by the Messiah. At the time Isaiah wrote (around 700 BC), Jesus had not yet paid for the sins and sicknesses of mankind, and it is obvious from history that at the time of Isaiah, everyone was not healed, nor were they all healed when Christ came, nor are they all healed today. But total healing for every saved person is promised in the future.

Israel was awaiting their Messiah, and they knew from their own Hebrew language and idiom that Isaiah was promising that at some point in the future, the Messiah would heal everyone (that is, every saved person who was in the Messianic Kingdom). Isaiah’s promise that the Messiah would heal people was an “absolute” promise, that is, it was a promise that in the future the Messiah would heal everyone, period. He would not just heal “those who had faith to be healed,” or those for whom God had a special purpose. He would heal everyone. This point becomes very clear when all the prophetic books—Isaiah and all the other Old Testament prophets—are read.

It is very important to understand the prophetic perfect idiom and what Isaiah was saying because Peter is quoting Isaiah and bringing the force of what Isaiah was saying forward to us. Thus, 1 Peter 2:24, in quoting Isaiah, is saying that everyone’s healing is still assured. Peter was not changing what Isaiah said. Isaiah was making a promise that at some point in the future everyone would be healed, and Peter is reaffirming that promise. It is important to understand Isaiah’s promise because many people in the “Faith Movement” believe that 1 Peter 2:24 gives people a right to claim healing now. That is not true. That “right” did not exist in Isaiah’s time, and it does not exist now just because Peter quoted Isaiah. The evidence of that fact should be apparent because many people, even those who have demonstrated great trust in God throughout their lives, get sick and are not healed by “faith” (trust). In fact, many people who have been miraculously healed in their lives and therefore should have great faith for healing, are not healed of subsequent sicknesses. Neither the grammar of the text, nor the context, nor human experience supports the teaching that Christ’s work on the cross means people can now “claim their healing by faith.” That does not mean that Christ does not heal some people now—he certainly does (more on that later), but 1 Peter 2:24 does not confer upon people the right to “claim healing,” it is a promise that in the future everyone will be healed.

When we read what Isaiah and the other prophetic books say about healing, it is clear that they did not promise healing at the time they were written, but promised that healing would come in the future, in the Messianic Kingdom. In fact, the prophecies of physical healing are part of the larger prophetic picture of “healing” that will happen in the Messianic Kingdom. According to the prophecies about Jesus’ future kingdom on earth, not only people, but animals, the ground, and even bodies of water will all be healed, and the earth will become a Paradise once again. Furthermore, this will not happen piece by piece over a long period of time as people have faith, but will happen all at once on “that day,” the Day when Christ establishes his kingdom on earth. Note, for example, how Isaiah 29:17-19 and 29:24 tie together the healing of people, the land, and even social ills:

Isaiah 29:17-19, 24: “17Is it not yet *only* a very little while and Lebanon will be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field will be regarded as a forest? 18In that day the deaf will hear the words of a book, and the eyes of the blind will see out of obscurity and out of darkness. 19The afflicted will find joy in Yahweh once again, and the poor among humankind will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. 24And those who err in spirit will come to understanding, and those who grumble will accept instruction.”

The prophets painted a wonderful picture of the future Messianic Kingdom on earth.

* There will be no war (Isa. 2:4; 9:4-7; 60:18; Hos. 2:18; Mic. 4:3, 4; Zech. 9:9, 10).
* The believers will be healthy, not sick (Isa. 29:18; 32:3,4; 33:24; 35:5,6; 57:19; Jer. 33:6; Mal. 4:2).
* The land will be healed so there will be no hunger (Isa. 25:6; 30:23-26; 32:15; 35:1-7; 41:18-20; 44:3; 51:3; Jer. 31:5,11-14; Ezek. 47:1-12; Hos. 2:21,22; Joel 2:18-26; Amos 9:13).
* Mankind will live safely on the earth (Isa. 11:6-9; 32:18; 54:14-17; 60:11,17,18; 65:17-25; Jer. 23:4; 30:10; 33:6; Ezek. 28:26; 34:25-31; Mic. 5:4,5; Zeph. 3:13-17).
* The house of Israel will know God (Isa. 29:23, 24; Jer. 31:33, 34; Ezek. 11:18-20), and Christians will “know fully” (1 Cor. 13:12).
* The gift of holy spirit will be poured out from heaven (Isa. 32:15; 44:3; Ezek. 39:29; Joel 2:28, 29; Zech. 12:10).
* The people will be holy and blessed, and there will be joy (Isa. 4:2-5; 35:10; 51:3; 60:1-22; 61:4-11; 62:1-12; 65:17-25; Jer. 30:18,19; 31:4,12-14).

But how was that wonderful kingdom to come to pass? How were these promises to be made available? After all, the world is in the sad shape that it is because of the sin of Adam, and how could that sin be atoned for? That is where the great prophecy of Isaiah 53 comes in, because it tells us that the Messiah would pay for the sins of the world and make healing available. Isaiah 53:4-6, 10-11 says, “4Surely he has borne our sickness and has carried our suffering, yet we have considered him plagued, struck by God, and afflicted. 5But he was pierced for our transgressions, was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6We all like sheep have gone astray. Everyone has turned to his own way, but Yahweh has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 10Yet it pleased Yahweh to crush him. He has caused him to suffer. If his soul makes *itself* a guilt offering, he will see his seed. He will prolong his days, and the pleasure of Yahweh will prosper in his hand. 11After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light and be satisfied. My righteous servant will justify many by the knowledge of himself, and he will bear their iniquites.”

Notice how much of the prophecy of Isaiah 53 is in the past tense as if it had already happened. However, as was stated above, that is not because the promises were somehow fulfilled in the past, before 700 BC, but rather because of the prophetic perfect idiom, which is in the text to show us that the promises are guaranteed to come to pass at some point in the future.

Although neither Isaiah 53:5 nor 1 Peter 2:24 somehow confer the “right” to “claim” healing today, God and Jesus do heal. We see that in the book of Acts, and 1 Corinthians 12:9 mentions “gifts of healings.” Many factors play into healing, including trust (faith), the principle of sowing and reaping, the spiritual battle, the fallen nature of the world, and the will of God. That is one reason people, even people who have great trust in God, are sometimes healed and sometimes not.

Another reason we know we cannot just “claim” healing is that sickness is a consequence of sin, and we cannot just “claim” that our sins have no consequences. When we read 1 Peter 2:24, we see that the first phrase in the verse, which is about sins, and the second phrase, about sicknesses, are parallel. Jesus bore our sins and healed us by his stripes. The fullness of both of these phrases will be seen in the future.

When Jesus went to the cross, he certainly bore our sins. Yet this does not mean that right now we do not sin or have no consequences for Adam’s sin and our own sin. The fullness of Christ’s work in atoning for sin will be seen in the future. Furthermore, if a person sins and is in jail, he cannot “just claim” that there would be no consequence to his sin and immediately somehow be out of jail. Similarly, a couple that sins and commits adultery leading to the woman’s getting pregnant cannot “just claim” the sin has no consequence, or a person who sins and commits murder cannot suddenly repent and “just claim” that the sin has no consequence and that life return into the dead body of the person who was murdered. We cannot “just claim” that sin has no consequence. Sickness is a consequence of sin: sometimes our own sin, sometimes our parents’ sin, sometimes someone else’s sin, and sometimes just Adam’s sin. So just like with the consequences of other sins, we cannot “just claim” that sickness be gone.

Many people who are sick have been made to feel bad about themselves, as if they have no faith, simply because they have not been divinely healed. Job’s miserable comforters had personal beliefs that led them to conclude that Job had a “secret sin,” and they berated him for it even though Job was innocent—it was the beliefs of Job’s friends that were wrong, not Job. Similarly, many people who belong to churches that teach “if you have faith you will be healed” end up acting like Job’s miserable comforters and, although their intentions are good, they often badger, berate, criticize, shun, or even attack other church members who do not get healed of physical and/or mental ailments. Paul warns us: “But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another” (Gal. 5:15).

Another confirmation that we do not have the “right” (the ability) to “claim” healing at will is that the language that would support that kind of doctrine is not in the Bible. For example, it is common to hear people who think they can claim healing and other blessings from God say, “I am believing for….” But that language is not in the Bible. The simple fact is that phrases such as “believe for,” “believing for,” or “believed for” do not occur in the Bible—anyone can use a concordance and find that out for themselves. In contrast, the phrase “pray for” occurs many times. The difference between “believe for” and “pray for” is important. If I can “believe for” things, then I have the power, which is what the Faith Movement teaches. But if I have to ask God for things and “pray for” them, then He has the power, which is what the Bible teaches. Thankfully, when we pray to God and trust in his power and mercy, God can move in the spiritual world and get us what we are praying for. Actually, many people who receive from God do so, not because of “their believing,” but because they so faithfully prayed for what they wanted.

Someone might say, “But often when people got healed in the Bible, Jesus said, ‘Your faith has made you whole,” so the person’s faith healed them.” We would answer that “faith” is “trust,” and to be healed, healing has to first be made available by God, which we usually know via revelation. Once healing has been made available to a sick person (which he will usually know by receiving revelation about it), he must then have faith (have trust) in order to appropriate the healing to himself. Jesus did not heal people without revelation first, and we cannot “just claim” healing for ourselves when we are sick. If that were the truth of Scripture, then life would testify to it. However, life shows us that even people who are known for their godliness and faith are not able to “just claim” healing for themselves or others, but that they sometimes get sick and must be healed by doctors and/or let the body heal itself.

The truth is that we usually do not understand why one person is healed and another is not, or why a person is healed of one illness but not a subsequent illness, or why a person who is immediately divinely healed of one illness, say the flu, does not also have his teeth and eyesight completely restored at the same time. But this we know: the Word of God has promised many times, and 1 Peter 2:24 is one of them, that there will come a time in the future when every single person will be healed of every single sickness, and we should look forward to that great day with great anticipation.

[For more on “faith,” “trust,” and the modern Word of Faith movement, see Appendix 2: “‘Faith’ is ‘Trust.’” For more on the Millennial Kingdom and what it will be like, see Appendix 5: “Christ’s Future Kingdom on Earth.” A very helpful book in understanding the modern “Faith Movement” and how and why it differs from the actual teaching of the Bible is: *A Different Gospel* by D. R. McConnell.]

1Pe 2:25

**“you have turned.”** The verb *epistrephō* (#1994 ἐπιστρέφω) can be translated as “returned” or as “turned.”[[37]](#footnote-15121) But even if the verb is understood as “returned,” the verse is not saying that the people were once with the Shepherd, abandoned him, and now “returned.” The idea would be that the sheep went back to where they were created to be, with their shepherd.

**“souls.”** The Greek word often translated “soul” is *psuchē* (#5590 ψυχή, pronounced psoo-'kay), and it has a large number of meanings, including the physical life of a person or animal; an individual person; or attitudes, emotions, feelings, and thoughts. Here it is used more broadly of the individual himself, but including life and his thoughts and emotions. Jesus watches over every aspect of our lives.

[For a more complete explanation of “soul,” see Word Study: “Psuchē.”]

**1 Peter Chapter 3**

1Pe 3:1

**“In the same way.”** The Greek word is *homoiōs* (#3668 ὁμοίως, pronounced hō-'moy-ōs), and it means “in the same way, likewise, in like manner.” This is one of the places where starting a new chapter (1 Pet. 3:1) can detract significantly from the meaning of the Bible. Most people read, “In the same way,” but seeing the new chapter act as if there is a new subject and do not really take the time to ask themselves, “in the same way as what,” and then read back to the start of the subject, which is 1 Pet. 2:18, “household slaves.” The section of 1 Pet. 2:18-25 is about household slaves who have “crooked” masters, and how those slaves should behave in a godly manner in less-than-ideal circumstances. So now 1 Pet. 3:1 starts “in the same way,” and instructs women in how to behave when they are married and are in less-than-ideal circumstances. Thus, what is said about the women in 1 Pet. 3:1-6 is in addition to how God has told the household slaves to behave in 1 Pet. 2:18-25.

**“submit.”** The verb is *hupotassō* (#5293 ὑποτάσσω); (see commentary on Eph. 5:21).

**“won over.”** The Greek verb is *kerdainō* (#2770 κερδαίνω), in this context meaning to gain, to win, to win over. Paul uses this word in 1 Corinthians 9:20-22 when he speaks of winning the lost for Christ. So this verse is not simply saying that a wife could win over her husband to good behavior, although that is included, but that the conduct of the wife could lead her husband to salvation.

**“without a word.”** The Greek text reads more literally, “without word.” The text is not saying “without the Word,” for no person comes to Christ without believing the Word of God. However, that would also mean that the text cannot be literally saying the wife is not to speak to her husband about God and Christ and therefore be “without a word,” because that is not what the Bible says either. In this case, “without word” means without arguing or nagging about the behavior of the husband. The main point that Peter is making is that the way people live their lives can be just as powerful, and even sometimes be more powerful, than what they say.

1Pe 3:2

**“reverent.”** The Greek literally reads, “in fear.” We feel it is most likely a dative of manner and thus is functioning as an adverb. Lenski, however, takes it as the general “fear of God” spoken in 1 Peter 1:16-18.[[38]](#footnote-13327) He is right, though, that the behavior of the wife is not necessarily directed solely toward the husband but is also an act of reverence to God.

1Pe 3:3

**“must not be *merely* external.”** The apostle Paul wrote about women modestly adorning themselves in 1 Timothy 2:9. The addition of “merely” comes from Greek usage. The Bible is not saying that women should not pay attention to how they look or pay attention to their hair and jewelry. Everyone, men and women, must get their worth from being obedient and acceptable to God, not from outward things such as a beautiful look.

1Pe 3:7

**“In the same way.”** The Greek word is *homoiōs* (#3668 ὁμοίως, pronounced hō-'moy-ōs), and it means “in the same way, likewise, in like manner.” When we read, “In the same way,” we must stop and ask ourselves, “in the same way as what?” To answer that question we will have to go back and find the start of the subject and then read to ascertain what God is trying to tell us at that point. Then we add that understanding to our understanding of what God is telling us in 1 Peter 3:7. In this case, the start of the subject is all the way back to 1 Peter 2:18, “household slaves.” The section of 1 Peter 2:18-25 is about household slaves who have “crooked” masters, and how those slaves should behave in a godly manner in less than ideal circumstances. As we continue to read, we find that 1 Peter 3:1 also starts with, “in the same way.” That section of Scripture (1 Pet. 3:1-6) is instructing women on how to live godly lives in less than ideal circumstances, such as with an unbelieving husband.

We might be confused at first when we see that this section of Scripture written to husbands begins, “in the same way.” This is due to the fact that there does not seem to be a connection between husbands and household slaves and wives, because the slaves and wives seem to be in a submissive position that husbands are not in. In fact, some commentators have tried to explain away the natural meaning of “in the same way,” by saying in this verse the phrase is only transitional and does not have its ordinary meaning. Commentators such as those assert that husbands are not to submit to wives (cf. notes in ESV Study Bible). But in fact, the Bible says that husbands are to submit to their wives in some areas of the relationship. For one thing, in the Church, husbands and wives are to submit to one another (Eph. 5:21), and although men lead the family, the woman is the “house despot,” (see commentary on 1 Tim. 5:14, *oikodespoteō*, #3616 οἰκοδεσποτέω, which means to rule a household).

In any marriage, the man has certain authority and accompanying responsibilities, and the woman has certain authority and accompanying responsibilities. A man who has an unbelieving or ungodly wife has to learn to live with her in a godly way just as a Christian household slave or godly wife has to learn how to be respectful to an unbelieving or ungodly master or husband. Also, if a husband is simply a tyrant in the house, and does not care about the family or listen to the wife and children, although there may be obedience in the household, there will not be warmth and the family love that really makes life enjoyable and places the husband and wife in agreement, something important in light of the last phrase of the verse about prayers. In fact, if the husband acts like a tyrant in the house and does not show the mutual submission that the Bible says is part of the family structure, he is in fact ignoring this verse by not living with his wife “in a knowledgeable way,” and certainly not showing her honor, which he could do in part by recognizing the authority God has given her in the house and submitting to that authority.

**“husbands.”** This verse starts a new subject, that of “husbands.” The section and subject, living godly in less than ideal circumstances, started speaking about household slaves in 1 Peter 2:18, then referred to wives in 1 Peter 3:1, and now is referring to husbands.

**“in a knowledgeable way.”** The Greek is *kata gnōsis* (κατά γνῶσις); literally “according to knowledge.” The idea is “according to what you know and understand about your wife and her situation.” This can be ascertained from the context. The word *gnōsis* means both knowledge and understanding, the exact meaning depending on the context. It would not be a bad translation lexically to simply have “live with your wives with understanding.” However, in our culture today, to have “understanding” of someone in the context of an intimate relationship places the emphasis on the mutual mental agreement, accord, and understanding that the couple has for each other. Thus, the modern way we would think about the verse, it would mean the man would “understand” the woman, i.e., what makes her happy, what upsets her, etc. That is one of the meanings in the verse, but there are other important meanings that must not be overlooked. The problem in this verse is that “knowledge” must be understood in light of the biblical culture, not our present one.

The unspoken context of this verse is the biblical culture, which presented significant obstacles for women, and especially any woman who did not have the support of a husband or strong family, and this is confirmed by the use of the phrase “weaker vessel.” The woman was the “weaker vessel,” the one who was less capable of sustaining herself without the support of a husband and family (see commentary on “weaker vessel”). For most of history, women have been abused and ignored by men. At the time of Christ, for example, a woman’s testimony was not even valid in court. That kind of thinking about women ignores the very reason for their creation, that they were to be a helper suitable for man (in contrast to the animals that had been created earlier on day six and were not suitable helpers to man). The New Testament teachings of Christ and the other apostles elevate women in a way that they had never been elevated before. For example, the NT formally recognized that a woman had her “own” husband (1 Cor. 7:2). This negated the polygamy of many ancient cultures, and turned the acceptable sexual dallying of the men in the Greco-Roman culture into “sexual immorality.”

The husband is to live with the wife “in a knowledgeable way,” which means a true knowledge, not the so-called knowledge of women that was accepted as truth in the pagan culture of the first century, that women were inferior to men. The husband who is a man of God must ascertain God’s perspective and heart for women, and also know and act upon that knowledge. In Christ there is neither male nor female because when a person, either male or female, gets born again, that person receives the gift of holy spirit and becomes a spiritually powerful child of God. It is the gift of holy spirit inside a person that gives him or her a holy nature (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4) and enables him or her to walk in the power of the manifestations of holy spirit as set forth in 1 Corinthians 12:7-10 (see commentary on those verses). To be truly knowledgeable of his wife, the husband must understand her physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. If he does, he will honor her naturally. If he does not, he should honor her because this verse commands him to until his knowledge grows to the point the honor is an effortless outflow of his knowledge of her.

In one of the sad turns in history, as the Church developed, the Christian men gradually again reduced the women to subservient roles in the Church, society, and even their own house, and these views were supported by misunderstanding of the text of Scripture (see commentaries on Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 7:2, 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:11, 12).

**“showing.”** The Greek is *aponemō* (#632 ἀπονέμω), and the definition given in BDAG captures the sense very well: “to grant that which is appropriate in a relationship, assign, show, pay.” It is appropriate for husbands to give honor to their wives for who they are and what they do even as it is appropriate for women to respect and submit to the husband (1 Pet. 3:1ff). This word, “give,” or “grant that which is appropriate,” again strikes out against any culture or system that says women are of little value. It is one more way God elevates women: He shows that they are worthy of honor, and it is a serious mistake, with serious consequences in the Church, family, and society, to fail to see that women are worthy of the honor God says they should be given (see commentary on “honor”).

**“honor.”** The Greek word is *timē* (#5092 τιμή, pronounced tee-'may), and it has meanings that relate to price and “honor.” It means the price or value of something, ascribing a value to something, or the price that is paid for something, and it also means “honor,” the honor that someone has or is given, the honor a person has because of their rank or position, or the honor that someone is shown out of respect or reverence.

In the first-century culture, which was an “honor-shame” society, honor was a major part of the fabric of society. To be worthy of honor was a tremendous privilege, while to be dishonored was a huge disgrace. For example, to be asked to “move down” in place because you had taken the seat of one more honorable than you was a big disgrace (Luke 14:8-10). The Pharisees and experts in the Law loved the places of honor in the synagogues and at the feasts (Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:39). God will honor those who serve Jesus the Son (John 12:26). Christians are to honor those who deserve honor (Rom. 13:7), and elders who serve in the Church well are to be considered worthy of double honor (1 Tim. 5:17).

Because we do not live in an “honor-shame” society, it can be difficult for us to understand how it worked, but since the first-century culture was an “honor-shame” society, we will not really understand the Bible until we do understand it. John Dickson writes: “Honor was universally regarded as the ultimate asset for human beings, and shame the ultimate deficit. ...humility was rarely, if ever, considered virtuous. ...Much of life revolved around ensuring you and your family received public honor and avoided public shame....Humility before the gods, of course, was appropriate, because they could kill you….But humility before an equal or a lesser was morally suspect. It upset the assumed equation: merit demanded honor, thus honor was the proof of merit. Avoiding honor implied a diminishing of merit. It was shameful.”[[39]](#footnote-24083)

In the Semitic and Greco-Roman culture of the time of Christ, it was dishonoring (a shameful act), for a person to lower himself before someone who was of equal or lesser status. The thinking of the NT era toward a humble person was expressed well by Aristotle, who thought of a humble person, not as someone who was virtuous, but as “the weak and insipid man who poses no threat.”[[40]](#footnote-22554) When we understand the “honor-shame” society of the first century and see it in light of this verse in Peter, we can see that this command of God for men to give “honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel,” went totally against the grain of the culture. By giving honor to the woman, the woman must be honorable. If a woman was not honorable, then to give her honor was a shameful act.

Women were generally held in dishonor in both the Semitic culture and the Greco-Roman culture. They were considered to be physically, mentally, morally, and emotionally inferior to men. Thus, for a man to “honor” his wife in the biblical culture would lower the man in the eyes of the society around him. Thus, this verse became one more command of God that caused Christians to have to make a choice between obeying God and following their culture (cf. commentary on Rom. 12:2).

We must realize that when God said in this verse that husbands were to give “honor” to their wives, the words would have had a huge impact upon both the men and women—a much larger impact than they have in Western societies which are not honor-shame societies and which do not think of women as inferior. For the women, this command elevated them in the eyes of their families and society. For the men, it usually dishonored them in the eyes of the society around them. But for both the men and women who were believers, it taught that humility was not a weakness, but a virtue.

Sadly, historically, this command to honor wives was ignored. We would expect that the pagan culture would pay no attention to it, but it did not take long after the original apostles died for the Church to again take the attitude of the surrounding culture. Thus, by the time of the post-Nicene Church fathers, women were again considered inferior to men. Any supposed “honor” they were shown, which usually showed up as either decoration ( i.e., fancy clothes, etc.), protection, or the respect demanded of children and/or people of less status in society, was not the real honor of actual participation in the Church, society, and the family that God intended.

Men and women, and husbands and wives, are to honor each other, for we are all “vessels” created by God, each with its own abilities and purposes, none more valuable to God than another (cf.1 Cor. 12:22-25; Rom. 12:10).

**“weaker vessel.”** The Greek translated “weaker” is *asthenēs* (#772 ἀσθενής), which means “weak, sick, infirm,” and the Greek word for “vessel” is *skeuos* (#4632 σκεῦος ), which literally can refer to a container of any material, the context determining the meaning of the container, and it can also refer more generally to “things” or possessions (cf. Matt. 12:29). *Skeuos* was used figuratively for the human body, which holds the soul (life), and that is its use in this verse and others in the NT (cf. Acts 9:15; Rom. 9:22; 2 Cor. 4:7; 2 Tim. 2:21). We must notice that in this verse, both the man and the woman are “vessels,” and thus the creations of God who need to be obedient to Him.

In this verse, the woman is referred to as the weaker vessel, and the meaning of that phrase is simple and straightforward: the woman is not as physically strong as the male. However, the phrase was also used in the Greek culture for the effect of that weakness; the woman was less capable of making a living on her own without family support.[[41]](#footnote-21406) Thus, a woman without the support of a family or husband was often forced to survive by prostituting herself.

In the era before force-multiplying devices such as engines and equalizers such as guns, brute strength was essential for most of the things that led to survival: personal protection, plowing, transportation, and building houses. The need for protection was especially acute in ancient societies because police forces were almost unknown. People survived by being physically strong and by being part of a strong social system, usually a family. Thus, it made perfect sense culturally to compare a person or nation that was weak and unable to protect itself to a woman, as Egypt is in Isaiah 19:16. A woman on her own was very likely to be molested, which is why Boaz had to tell his reapers not to touch Ruth, a woman without family protection (Ruth 2:9).

We need to understand that the Bible referring to a woman as the weaker vessel was not derogatory in any way. It was a simple truth, and it was designed to get the attention of the husbands who were reading this passage of Scripture and point out in a gracious way that a woman needed and deserved the help and support of her husband to be safe and supported. Thus, in this passage, we see God’s love for women and His desire to see them supported in areas where they need it so that they can then graciously and fully contribute the things that they have to offer the family, the Church, and society. In contrast to the ancient culture (and many modern ones) in which men do not take the time to understand their wives, or make the effort to genuinely support them, 1 Peter 3:7 commands men to get to understand their wives and the situation they are in and honor them, rather than using them or abusing them.

One of the terrible things that has happened in the Church when it comes to women is that the male-dominated Semitic and Greco-Roman culture surrounding the Christians was more influential than the actual text of the Bible. For example, Aristotle asserted that women were in every way inferior to men except sexually, and that kind of teaching and belief permeated the culture at the time of the early Church. Thus, it did not take too many years for the Church to be dominated by men who once again reduced women to practically the status of slaves. Women were considered physically, emotionally, and even morally inferior to men (the writings of the Church Fathers make this abundantly clear), and thus women were excluded from positions of authority in all facets of life, even in their own homes. As the Church developed in the early centuries, it was even thought that sexual intercourse with a woman negatively impacted a man’s spirituality, which was a primary reason that the Church (later the Roman Catholic Church) came to have a celibate clergy.

Sadly, the attitude that women are inferior to men still continues in the Church. For example, based on Church tradition and the mistranslations of verses such as Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 14:34, and 1 Timothy 2:12, in many denominations women cannot be ordained or teach. Furthermore, there are Christian commentaries that assert that because the Bible says the woman is the weaker vessel, women are inferior to men in ways other than just physically (“‘Weaker’...refers to physical or emotional weakness”; *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 1983; “Women are weaker in body than men, weaker also in mind...;” *The Biblical Illustrator*, 2006).

If the Church is ever to operate in the love of God and power of the holy spirit, we must recognize women as the gift they are and that God created them to be. God created people male and female (Gen. 5:2), and both sexes have giftings, responsibilities, and certain authority in the Church and family. The Church, the family, and society will never be everything God intended it to be until both men and women can and do walk in the fullness of what God has given them.

**“so that.”** The Greek phrase is *eis to mē* (εἰς τὸ μὴ), a phrase which, in this context, indicates result, not purpose. It is perhaps more literally rendered, “to the end that,” but “so that” expresses the meaning well. The point is not that the man shows honor to the wife just so his prayers will be better answered, but rather as he lives with his wife in knowledge and honor, the result will be that his prayers are better answered.

**“prayers are not hindered.”** It is clear in both the Old Testament and New Testament that if a person lives in disregard of God and His commands, that person will not receive the blessings of God (cf. Deut. 31:16-18; Isa. 1:11-15; 58:1-9; 59:1-8; 66:1-4; Jer. 7:21-29; 14:10-12; Amos 5:21-24; Mic. 3:9-12; 6:6-8; Rom. 2:13-16; James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5). Jesus understood that, and so he told people that if they were making an offering at the altar in the Temple, but remembered that someone had something against them, they should stop making the offering and go be reconciled to the person. Then they could come back and finish offering the gift. (Matt. 5:23-24). From that, we see that Jesus understood Amos 5:24 and Micah 6:8, that righteousness and justice far outweighed sacrifice (i.e., religion, and all its “requirements”). Malachi 2:13-16 made it clear that if a man did not treat his wife in a godly way, God would not pay attention to his offerings, or accept them (Mal. 2:13).

Not only is the Bible clear that God will not look with favor on the offerings of anyone who disregards righteous and just behavior, the Bible also says that there is more effectiveness in prayer when more than one person is praying for something. “Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they ask, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 18:19). A husband who does not live with his wife in knowledge and honor will definitely be hindered in his prayer life both because he is not obeying God, and also because he is not “in harmony with” his wife, so they will not pray well together. It is a “happy coincidence” of language that the Greek word translated “agree” in Matthew 18:19 is *sumphōneō* (#4856 συμφωνέω) “to agree together,” and our English word “symphony” comes from the Greek word *sumphōneō*. When the husband and wife live together with love, respect, honor, and knowledge and understanding of each other, then they are like a beautiful symphony, each instrument different, but playing in tune with the other and making music together that is more wonderful than either instrument could make on its own. In light of the truth revealed in this verse, it is stupid for a man to live in disharmony with his wife if something could make the marriage better (sometimes this means the marriage needs the help of a trained counselor).

The context of this verse shows that “prayers” (*proseuchē*; #4335 προσευχή , the general word for prayer to God) is everything that any husband and wife would pray for in the course of marriage and life. Some commentators have suggested that the context dictates that the primary meaning of prayers here is prayers for the salvation of the wife (since 1 Pet. 3:1-6 seem to be primarily about an unsaved man, so this must be prayers for the wife), but that is not the meaning of the verse. The women were living in a culture that already elevated men, so Peter would not have to make the point that husbands deserved honor. Verse 7 notes that the wife is already an “heir together of the grace of [everlasting] life.” The men were living in a culture that so disregarded women that it would not occur to the man to give the woman honor, or consider his wife his primary prayer partner, which, of course, she is. She and her husband are “one flesh,” and in the eyes of God, there is no more perfect prayer partner, nor are two people supposed to be more in agreement, more “in harmony,” than a man and his wife. This verse is not saying the man is to honor his wife so his prayers for her salvation are answered; it is saying that a man is to dwell with his wife in knowledge and honor so that she is, in fact, in harmony with him and his (and her) prayers are not hindered.

It is stated in the verse in the word “your” (plural in the Greek), that if the man and wife are not in harmony, her prayers are hindered too. But it should not be lost on us that as the head of the family, God places upon the husband the primary responsibility for there being harmony in the marriage. Nevertheless, wives can be disobedient too, and if a wife is in disharmony with her husband, she should not resist God, but do what it takes to come into harmony with him.

In closing commentary on 1 Peter 3:7, it bears repeating and clarifying that it is commonly taught that the New Testament is oppressive toward women. Nothing could be further from the truth. Especially in light of the non-Christian first-century cultural attitudes toward women, the New Testament liberated women and elevated them to a status that they had never enjoyed before.

[For more on obedience and mercy being more important than offerings and sacrifices, see commentary on Matt. 5:24 and commentary on Amos 5:22. For more on God not hearing the prayers of people who are stubborn and unrepentant, see commentary on Prov. 28:9.]

1Pe 3:8

**“having affection for *God’s* family.”** Many verses tell us to take special care of fellow believers. For example, Galatians 6:10 says, “do good to all *people*, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith” (cf. 1 Peter 4:8; Gal. 6:10). Also, the Bible says we are to love and do good to “one another,” and the phrase “one another” refers to fellow Christians.

[For more on “one another” referring to other Christians, see commentary on Gal. 5:13.]

**“humble-minded.”** In the Greco-Roman world, humility was a disgrace, not a virtue. In that world, people were only humble when they were forced to be. It was Christ and Christianity that changed being humble from a disgrace to a virtue, and actually that change is one of the proofs of the reality and effectiveness of the life of Jesus Christ.[[42]](#footnote-25610)

1Pe 3:9

**“insult for insult, but on the contrary, bless.”** Paul did this himself (1 Cor. 4:12).

1Pe 3:10

“For **whoever wants to love life and see good days….”** 1 Peter 3:10-12 is roughly—not exactly—quoted from Psalm 34:12-16 (LXX: Ps. 33:13-17).

“**to love life and see good days.”** The “life” here is everlasting life, and although those days will be good days, and this implies that the future will be wonderful, it also seems that rewards for people who make an effort to live godly and obedient lives is in the author’s mind. Godly behavior results in rewards in the coming Kingdom (see commentary on 2 Cor. 5:10).

**“deceitful speech.”** Cf. BDAG’s translation, “speak deceitfully” and NIV: “deceitful speech.” Literally, the Greek reads, “keep your lips…from not to speak deceit.” The word for deceit, *dolos* (#1388 δόλος), is a noun, so the sense is, do not speak any *deceitful thing*. The translation “keep your lips from deceitful speech” captures the meaning of “do not speak any deceitful thing.”

1Pe 3:11

“**he must turn away from evil and do good.”** The Christian life is not just a matter of passively living and not doing evil, it is also a matter of actively doing good.

1Pe 3:13

**“who will harm you**.” This verse is a proverb; a saying that is generally true but not always true. Although the reality is that most people will not harm you if you do what is right, there are evil people who will harm you if you do what is right, even if it is just out of envy (cf. 1 John 3:12). Some scholars believe that the verse is about our everlasting life and that we cannot be truly “harmed” if we are Christian, and that is certainly part of the meaning of the verse. Persecutors cannot permanently “harm” Christians because they will still get up from the dead at the Rapture. However, in the context, the meaning of the verse includes that generally speaking, if a person does what is good, other people will not want to harm them. However, the context about suffering shows that good people do regularly suffer at the hands of evil people.

**“zealous for what is good.”** In the Greek the word for “zealous” is a noun and not the verb form. However, most versions read something like, “be zealous for what is good.” God is calling us to be zealous for what is good.

1Pe 3:14

**“But even if you happen to suffer.”** The Greek construction implies that people who do right do not normally suffer, but sometimes they do. It is, after all, a fallen world ruled by the Devil (see commentary on Luke 4:6).

**“do not be afraid of them.”** There is a question as to whether the genitive in this phrase is subjective (“their fear,” cf. KJV, NASB, NIV) or objective (“fear them,” cf. ESV, NAB, NET). The context of 1 Peter, however, strongly points toward the objective meaning, “do not fear them.” The book is very much about being persecuted and enduring under suffering. In the immediate context, Peter is speaking of those who would “harm you” for doing good and “suffering for righteousness’ sake.” It would be a strange break in thought to say “do not fear what they fear,” but an encouragement to not fear *them* makes perfect sense. Interestingly, this phrase is alluding to Isaiah 8:12, which clearly has the subjective sense of not fearing what other people fear. In this case, Peter is not directly quoting from the OT passage but using its language to make a new point in his own context.[[43]](#footnote-15684)

1Pe 3:15

**“Christ.”** There is early and diverse manuscript evidence supporting the reading “Christ” instead of “God” (KJV). Beyond that, in this phraseology, the word “Christ” would have been less familiar to scribes than God, so they could have easily written “God” into the text by memory or mistake. The very strong manuscript support for “Christ” is why the vast majority of modern versions read that way.

**“Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.”** This is a command of God and should not be taken lightly. Christians have the high and holy privilege of witnessing to other people and bringing them to Christ. But that takes some preparation. Christians should take some time and think through how they personally would answer people who ask them about God, Christ, or their own choice to be a Christian. Helping someone to come to Christ and get saved is certainly one of the most important things a Christian can do, and so being prepared to do it by knowing some of the things you would say, and knowing where in the Bible some of the important verses about salvation are, such as Romans 10:9 or Acts 16:31, can be very helpful in leading someone to Christ. The Boy Scout motto is “Be prepared,” and that is good advice to Christians as well.

It is important to note that God is not asking Christians to become theologians and answer challenging questions about God or the Bible. Christians only need to be prepared to tell people why they came to Christ and answer basic questions about the Hope that they have. For example, a simple but good answer might be something like “I get to live forever in a wonderful place, in a wonderful new body with God, Christ, and wonderful people, and I am excited about it.” Unbelievers who have difficult questions about the Bible or theology need to be calmly directed to talk to professional clergy.

[For more on evangelism and bringing people to Christ, see commentary on Acts 1:8.]

1Pe 3:16

**“so that in a case when you are spoken against.”** For the translation, see J. R. Michaels, 1 Peter [WBC].

**“put to shame.”** It is important to understand the importance of bearing up under unfair circumstances with meekness and respect. Evil and self-centered people do not do that. If they are treated unfairly they make a huge fuss about it. But if Christians make a big fuss about it, then the unbelievers will think that you deserved what you got and will not be ashamed of their behavior. The example of love, kindness, and maturity is what can make an impact on the heart of an unbeliever.

For the translation “put to shame,” see commentary on Romans 9:33.

1Pe 3:17

**“if that would be God’s will.”** It may sometimes be the will of God for one to suffer for doing good. The next verse, 1 Peter 3:18, explains why by using an explanatory “for,” showing how it was God’s will for Christ to suffer to bring about the much greater good of bringing us to God (cf. 1 Pet. 4:1). The Greek of this phrase employs the figure of speech polyptoton—“if the will of God should will it.”[[44]](#footnote-23457) This structure deemphasizes God’s role in willing that one should suffer for doing good; it could have easily been written with *theos* (God) as the subject, “if God wills.” But by not making God the subject but rather the will of God the subject, He is a step removed from the action, giving the sense that He is slightly distanced from the statement. The philosophical notion of *primary* and *secondary will* is helpful for understanding this verse—God’s primary will is that no one should suffer, ever; but His secondary will is that, given the fallen situation, suffering must be permitted at times to achieve the greatest good. It is not contradictory for one to hold both wills simultaneously. Interestingly, God can *will* for one to suffer for good but not *want* it to happen.

Furthermore, the verb for “will,” *thelō* (#2309 θέλω), is in the optative mood, expressing scant possibility. Specifically, this is an instance of the Conditional Optative, “used to indicate a *possible* condition in the future, usually a remote possibility.”[[45]](#footnote-25702) This verse shows us that it may be the will of God that one suffers for doing good and yet simultaneously portrays this as a remote possibility, reminding us that we must never be too quick to claim God’s will as the cause of our suffering. (See also commentary on 1 Pet. 4:19).

[See Word Study: “Polyptoton.”]

1Pe 3:18

**“unrighteous people.”** The Greek text just says “unrighteous,” but the adjective is a substantive, so the object “people” is supplied.

**“by the spirit.”** That is, by the spirit that God put in him, and will also put in believers when He raises them from the dead. An alternate reading is “in the spirit,” which would mean “in connection with the spirit,” that is, in connection with the spirit that God promised believers that would empower them and give them everlasting life. Jesus was dead, and he came to life when God put spirit in him, giving him life.

Since Adam, the human body has been made alive, “powered” by “soul” (*nephesh* in Hebrew; *psuchē* in Greek). But “soul” can and does die, and the human body loses its life (the concept of the “immortal soul” is not in the Bible).

The Bible has a number of verses that indicate that when dead believers come to life at the resurrection, their bodies will be powered by “spirit” instead of by “soul.” For example, in Ezekiel 37, when God raises Old Testament believers from the dead He says, “I will put my spirit in you and you will live” (Ezek. 37:14). In John 6:63, when Jesus is speaking of the resurrection from the dead, he said, “It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing.” Like in Ezekiel, it is the spirit in the resurrected body that gives it life (for more on John 6:62-63, see commentary on John 6:62).

1 Corinthians 15 is very helpful in understanding that “soul” and “spirit” both give life, but human “soul life” ends while the “spirit life” we will get from God will not. 1 Corinthians 15:42 gives us the context of what the next verses are about: “So it is with the resurrection of the dead.” Before we move forward about death and resurrection, however, it is helpful to understand that English is at a disadvantage when speaking of these things because we do not have the vocabulary in English to describe what the Greek is portraying, so we have to expand the English a bit.

After saying that the context is death and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:42), the Bible says that the body is “sown” (put in the ground; buried) as a “soul body” (1 Cor. 15:44), that is a “soul-powered body” (English does not have a good single word like the Greek *psuchikos*, which in this context refers to being animated by soul life). Corinthians is making a statement of fact: humans, who are animated by “soul” and thus have a “soul body,” die and are buried. But then 1 Corinthians 15 goes on to say that when people are raised from the dead, they will have a “spiritual body” (a *pneumatikos* body; perhaps the translation “spirit-powered body” would be clearer). Jesus had such a spirit-powered body. He was still flesh and bones after his resurrection (Luke 24:39), but he was not animated by human soul but by spirit from God, just like the resurrected believers Ezekiel mentioned will be and like Christians will be at the Rapture when we have a body like Christ’s body (Phil. 3:21).

In light of the information above, 1 Peter 3:18 becomes very understandable. Jesus was a human being and had a soul-powered body like every other human being. He was put to death in the flesh—his soul-powered body died. But, he was made alive by the spirit, when God put spirit into his dead body, just as God promised to put spirit into the bodies of other believers and bring them to life at their resurrection.

Jesus is the “firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18), and the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead should give great comfort and confidence to believers that they too will one day be raised from the dead to everlasting life.

[For more on dead people being dead in every way, see Appendix 3: “The Dead Are Dead.” For more on “soul” and the soul not being immortal see Word Study: “Psuchē.” For more on “spirit,” see Word Study: “Pneuma.”]

1Pe 3:19

**“in which *state.*”** This can also be translated, “at which *time.*”[[46]](#footnote-14707) Both are possible, and both make sense. Jesus went to the spirits in prison in his new, resurrected, spiritual body. It would have been much better for the Bible reader if 1 Peter 3:18-19 had not been broken into two verses.

**“proclaimed *his victory*.”** Jesus was “put to death in the flesh but made alive by the spirit” as 1 Peter 3:18 says. That Christ was raised from the dead in a new spiritual body is in accordance with the pattern revealed in 1 Corinthians 15, which says that the flesh, which is corruptible, is changed (1 Cor. 15:52). The natural body is sown in death, and what is raised is a spiritual body, that is, a body powered by spirit instead of soul (see commentary on 1 Cor. 15:44).

Jesus was raised from the dead as a “life-giving spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45), or “in the spirit” (1 Pet. 3:18). What did Jesus do when he was raised from the dead and had a new, spiritual body? Sometime shortly after he was raised from the dead, he went to the “prison” where the spirits who had defied God before the Flood of Noah were held (the prison is called Tartarus; see commentary on 2 Pet. 2:4). In Tartarus, Jesus “proclaimed” (or “heralded”) his resurrection and victory to the imprisoned demons. The word “proclaimed” is the Greek word *kerussō*, “to be a herald; to officiate as a herald; to proclaim after the manner of a herald…to publish, proclaim openly something which has been done.”[[47]](#footnote-14984) To “proclaim victory.”[[48]](#footnote-17725)

It is sometimes taught that Jesus went to see the spirits in prison during the three days and nights between his death and resurrection, but that is not what the Bible says. Jesus died, then was resurrected in his new spiritual body, and it was in that new spiritual body that Jesus went to the imprisoned spirits: Jesus was “put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which *state* also he went and heralded *his victory* to the spirits in prison” (1 Pet. 3:18-19). During the time he was dead, he was really “dead,” and not alive in any form. 1 Peter 3:18-19 teach that he went “in spirit.” He got his spiritual body and became a life-giving spirit at his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:45), so it was after his resurrection that he went to Tartarus. Furthermore, he did not “preach” to these imprisoned demons, as if they could have believed and been released. They had defied God in the days of Noah by working to create a fallen race and were imprisoned as a result. The fallen race is called the “Nephilim” in Genesis 6:4 (see commentary on 2 Pet. 2:4). The Devil and his demons did their best to keep the Messiah from coming and to defeat God, but the Messiah came in spite of their efforts and won the victory for God, and to prove that to the demons in prison, Jesus went to Tartarus and heralded his victory to the demons there.

It is occasionally taught that the “spirits” in 1 Peter 3:19 are the disembodied spirits of unsaved people who are in hell. However, that is not the meaning of the verse. If the spirits of dead people were sent to hell, then all the spirits of the unsaved people of the Old Testament would have been there, not just the spirits of the unsaved people who died while Noah’s ark was being built, which is the time mentioned in 1 Peter 3:18-20 (cf. v. 20). Also, it is the teaching of Scripture that when a person dies, that person is totally dead and in the ground awaiting the resurrection.

[For more on dead people being fully dead—dead in every way, see Appendix 3: “The Dead are Dead.” For more on the spirits who are now in prison, in Tartarus, see commentary on 2 Pet. 2:4 and Jude 1:6.]

1Pe 3:20

**“who were disobedient…in the days of Noah.”** God announced in Genesis 3:15 that a Messiah would come who would destroy the Devil, and ever since that time, the Devil has tried to prevent the Messiah from coming. One way the Devil tried to keep the Messiah from coming was to change the human race into an evil mutant race called the Nephilim (Gen. 6:4). The Devil did this by sending demons to genetically manipulate human females so that they would produce evil offspring in much the same way that the Devil and demons had genetically manipulated plants and animals so they would be thorny, poisonous, and harmful (Gen. 3:17-18). God’s response to the demons who caused the Nephilim was to put them into Tartarus, a “god prison.” Here in 1 Peter 3:20, the Bible tells us one of the times when the demons were actively producing the Nephilim, “in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark.”

Those demons in Tartarus were imprisoned because they tried to keep the Messiah from coming by altering the human race into an evil race of Nephilim, but their scheme did not work. After his resurrection, Jesus “went and heralded *his victory* to the spirits in prison” (1 Pet. 3:19).

[For more on the “sons of God” who produced the Nephilim, see commentary on Gen. 6:2. For more information on the Nephilim, see commentary on Gen. 6:4. For supporting information on demons producing offspring via human women, see commentary on Jude 1:6. For more information on Tartarus, the “god prison,” see commentary on 2 Pet. 2:4. For more information on Jesus heralding his resurrection victory to the demons in prison, see commentary on 1 Pet. 3:19.]

**“God patiently waited.”** The Greek literally reads, “the patience of God waited,” which is a very poetic way to talk, using the figure of speech personification to personify God’s patience and emphasize how God’s “patience” waits patiently.

**“souls.”** Here, “souls” refers to people. This is similar to Acts 2:41.

[For a more complete explanation of “soul,” see Word Study: “Psuchē.”]

1Pe 3:21

**“an appeal to God from a good conscience.”** The desire for a Christian to be baptized is not about removing dirt from the body, but should come out of a good conscience. This verse has been translated several different ways in the English versions, in part because theologians differ on the practice and purpose of baptism. Many theologians, for example, assert that baptism does not confer any spiritual reality upon the one being baptized but is a symbol, an expression of the good heart of the one who is baptized. Other theologians, however, say that the act of baptism actually confers salvation or some other blessing on the person being baptized. The evidence, both biblical and historical, is that baptism is only a symbol and does not confer any spiritual reality such as salvation. For one thing, there is no scripture that says baptism confers salvation, and also, many people are water baptized whose attitudes and behaviors do not change at all.

Christian baptism is a form of appeal to God for salvation. The one being baptized is publicly declaring that they are appealing to God for salvation through Jesus Christ. Also, however, the Greek word translated “appeal” is *eperōtēma* (#1906 ἐπερώτημα), and it can also be translated “pledge.” If the word is understood as “pledge,” then the meaning would be that when a Christian undergoes baptism, they are committing (“pledging”) to God out of a good conscience that they will submit to God and obey Him. It is quite possible that Peter is using *eperōtema* with the idea that both meanings apply, and that Christian baptism is an appeal for salvation and a public pledge to submit to God.

Whether an appeal, a pledge, or both, they are to come out of a “good conscience.” This is similar to 1 Timothy 1:5, which says that love is to come from a good conscience, and 1 Timothy 1:19 says the believer is to maintain a good conscience.

**1 Peter Chapter 4**

1Pe 4:1

**“the same way of thinking.”** The Greek is *ennoia* (#1771 ἔννοια), and means “the content of mental processing, thought, knowledge, insight.[[49]](#footnote-25266) For this verse BDAG has “same way of thinking.” This general definition is very good in this context. The KJV “mind” is not as good, because “mind” is generally translated from the Greek *nous*, and refers to the mind itself, not specifically the products of the mind. Also, while good, “purpose” (NASB); “attitude” (NIV); and “intention” (NRSV); all seem too specific, although the use of one English word to translate one Greek word is always a valuable goal and should be adhered to when possible.

1Pe 4:2

**“in the flesh.”** This refers to the rest of your time that you are alive on earth, that is, “in the flesh.” Thus, the phrase “that you no longer live the rest of your time in the flesh” means “that you do not live the rest of your life” following human desires, but following the will of God. We humans have a limited lifetime, and we should not debate when we will begin to follow the will of God rather than our human desires. We should begin to follow the will of God as soon as we know the will of God.

1Pe 4:3

**“For you have spent enough time in the past doing.”** The Greek is more literally, “For the time that has passed by is sufficient,” but that is not clear in English, but Peter’s meaning would have been very clear to a native Greek speaker. The Greek is unclear when translated literally, and that is why English versions are sometimes forced to nuance the translation to get the meaning into English. In this case, the NASB has tried to stay quite literal and has, “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles.” While that is quite literal, it can be easily misunderstood. The text is saying that Christians should not do what Gentiles desire to do, but by translating the text as “carried out the desire of the Gentiles” it makes it seem that believers are obeying (“carrying out”) what the Gentiles want them to do, which is not what the text is saying.

**“living in.”** The Greek is more actually simply “go, proceed,” but the translation “going in unrestrained behavior” is unclear. The different English versions try to express the Greek and use “living in” (ESV); “carrying on it” (CSB); “walking in” (DBY); “behaving in” (NJB); etc.

**“lust, drunkenness.”** Both of these terms should be understood as collective singular. Meaning, they occur in the plural in the original Greek, but in English, the plurality is best represented in the singular. When someone commits lust on multiple occasions, in English, it is not proper to say that they, “live in lusts” but that they, “live in lust.” The singular can represent multiple occasions of “lust.”

1Pe 4:4

**“flood.”** The Greek word is literally “flood” or “overflow,” and in this case, it is referring to unbelievers acting out a “flood” (or overflow, excessive amount) of reckless actions. That is very often the case: unbelievers flood their lives with reckless, ungodly behavior. Believers are not to act like that, but are to be self-controlled and godly.

**“reckless actions.”** See commentary on “recklessness” in Titus 1:6.

**“slander.”** The Greek verb *blasphēmeō* (#987 βλασφημέω) means showing disrespect to a person or deity, and/or harming his, her, or its reputation.

[For more on *blasphēmeō*, see commentary on Matt. 9:3.]

1Pe 4:5

**“They will give account to him who is ready to judge.”** Many verses in the Bible point to the fact that on the Day of Judgment, people will have to give an account of how they have lived. (e.g., Eccl. 11:9; 12:14; Matt. 12:36; 16:27; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Pet. 4:4-5).

[For more on Judgment Day and Jesus Christ being God’s agent and doing the judging, see commentary on Rom. 2:16. For more on the fact that on Judgment Day people will get what they deserve, see commentary on 2 Cor. 5:10.]

**“the living and the dead!”** Everyone who has ever lived will be resurrected from the dead. For Christians, both living and dead Christians will be raised at the Rapture and judged (cf. 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 2 Cor. 5:10). All the remaining dead people, both righteous and unrighteous, will be raised at one of the resurrections. The dead will be raised and judged (John 5:25-29; Rev. 20:4-6, 11-14.), and after Armageddon, any living person left on earth will be rounded up and brought before Jesus and judged at the Sheep and Goat Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; see commentary on Matt. 25:32).

1Pe 4:6

**“For this reason.”** The reason is that every person will give an account to God, so they have to have had the chance to say “Yes” or “No” to the Gospel.

**“are *now* dead.”** The simple message of 1 Peter 4:6 is that the Good News was preached to some people when they were alive but by the time Peter wrote they were dead. To understand 1 Peter 4:6, it is important to read it in connection with 1 Peter 4:5, and to realize that it is making a very simple statement. 1 Peter 4:5 is about people who reject the Good News and persecute believers and will have to give an account for it. In fact, for quite a few verses back, God had been making a distinction between those who do not believe and will be judged and those who believe and are persecuted for it but will be vindicated. Eventually, every person will give an account of himself to God, and part of that accountability comes from being told the Good News, which is what verse 6 is saying.

The point being made in 1 Peter 4:6 is that there are some people who heard the Good News but who have died; they are now dead. Some of those people heard and believed, and some of those people heard and rejected what they heard. But the point is that everyone, whether dead or alive, is accountable for what they heard. However, this simple point is often completely misunderstood by Christians because most of them have been taught that when a person dies, his soul (or spirit) lives on after his death. In other words, according to orthodox Christian teaching, when a person dies they are not really dead, but simply disembodied; they have become a bodiless soul and are alive in heaven or hell. However, the Bible does not teach that a person’s soul or spirit lives on after they die, it teaches that when a person dies he is dead; totally dead in every sense of the word, and he is awaiting the Rapture or a resurrection.

[For more on dead people being actually dead, see Appendix 3: “The Dead are Dead.”]

The Amplified Bible does a good job with the translation and has a simple and accurate footnote. The text of the verse reads, “…the good news (the Gospel) was preached [in their lifetime] even to the dead….” The footnote reads, “Most commentators interpret this preaching to be a past event, done not after these people had died, but while they were still alive.” That is true. 1 Peter 4:6 is about people hearing the Good News while they are still alive, before they died. When people are dead they are totally dead, and cannot hear the Gospel.

The orthodox Christian teaching that when a person dies he becomes a disembodied soul (or spirit) causes problems in this verse because if the souls of dead people are going to be told the Good News, who would tell it to them? The standard answer is that Jesus Christ did it, and it is often taught that after Jesus died he told the Good News to the disembodied souls of people who had died before him and were in hell. People who teach that connect this verse with 1 Peter 3:19, about the spirits in prison, and often say those “spirits” are the disembodied spirits of dead people, which is not the case (see commentary on 1 Pet. 3:19). 1 Peter 3:19 is about the demons that caused the degradation of mankind before the Flood of Noah, it is not about Jesus preaching to the disembodied “spirits” of dead people. 1 Peter 4:6 is simply saying that people who are now dead have heard the Good News.

The word “dead” in Greek is *nekroi*, “dead ones,” and it does not have the article before it; in other words, it is not “the” dead ones, but simply “dead ones.” Thus, the text is saying the Good News was told to “dead ones,” meaning some of those who have died. This verse is not saying that every dead person has heard the Good News, only that some of them did.

It is not clear in the verse what Peter means by the “Good News.” It could mean the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ, in which case the ones that heard before they died, but are now dead, are those that died relatively recently, after the Day of Pentecost. However, the Good News does not always have to be the Good News of salvation through Christ. Hebrews 4:2 speaks of the Old Testament Jews who had the Good News told to them but did not believe. Peter could be using Good News in that sense here, meaning the Word of God and salvation through believing it.

One lesson that Christians should take away from this verse is that it is always profitable to teach the Word of God. If people believe, they get saved; if people do not believe, at least they had an opportunity to believe and get saved, and they will be held accountable for the choice that they made on the Day of Judgment.

**“are judged according to human *standards*.”** The scripture is not specific about what the judgment is. From 1 Peter 4:4, the “judgment” could be persecution and being slandered for not acting like unbelievers, or it could go as being killed for the Christian Faith (thus “dead;” 1 Pet. 4:6). The reality being experienced by Christians likely includes both things.

**“​they might live.”** The Good News is preached so the people have an opportunity to believe and thus that they “might live.”

**“by the spirit.”** This is the same Greek construction as occurs in 1 Peter 3:18, where Christ “was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the spirit.” Here, although people are “judged...in the flesh, they might live...by the spirit.” Being made alive “by the spirit” is speaking of resurrection life and that it is due to the inner empowering holy spirit (see commentary on 1 Pet. 3:18).

1Pe 4:7

**“the end [*telos*] of all things.”** This is not referring to the *utter end* of all things, because life will go on in the new kingdom. The word *teleute* would have been the proper word for a temporal end; but the word here is *telos*, the “goal.”[[50]](#footnote-21849) BDAG defines *telos* as, “last in a series; the last part of a process; the goal toward which a movement is being directed, end, goal, outcome.”[[51]](#footnote-21528) The last part of the series of God’s great end goal has come; we are in the last part of the process, the Grace Administration, waiting for nothing but Christ’s return. (Compare NIV’s translation of *telos* in 1 Cor. 10:11: “The fulfillment [*telos*] of the ages has come.”

1Pe 4:8

**“be fervent in your love among yourselves.”** The Bible commands us to be loving toward other Christians. (e.g., Gal. 6:10; 1 Pet. 3:8. For the many ways we are to be good to “one another,” i.e., other Christians, see commentary on Gal. 5:13).

“**love covers a multitude of sins.”** This a rough quotation—not an exact quotation—of Proverbs 10:12. That love covers over sins needs to be understood in light of the whole Bible. It does not mean that love hides criminal activity. It does not mean that love does not reprove and correct error. It does not mean that love forgives universally without consequences. But it does mean that love grasps the circumstances and covers what is appropriate to cover, and there is a lot of sin that is appropriate to cover. In covering sin, love shows how it is the opposite of hate. Hate relishes magnifying and publishing little wrongs or even things that are not wrong but which can be understood the wrong way.

1Pe 4:9

**“hospitality.”** The Greek literally means “being friendly or kind to strangers, showing hospitality.” The original idea was being kind to strangers, not just to one’s friends (see commentary on Rom. 12:13).

**“one another.”** The phrase “one another” occurs in the context of the community of believers, and while we are to be good to everyone, in the context of the New Testament Epistles, the commands toward “one another” are specifically to other believers. Christians are to be “especially good to the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). It is very important for the richness of our lives together here on earth, for our personal growth here on earth, and for rewards in the next life, that each Christian needs to be “other-focused,” focused on others and how we can help them. The phrase “one another” occurs many times in the New Testament, stating and reinforcing that truth.

[For more on the “one another” commands, see commentary on Gal. 5:13, “one another.” For more on “love one another,” see commentary on John 13:34.]

1Pe 4:10

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[For more on the “one another” commands, see commentary on Gal. 5:13, “one another.” For more on “love one another,” see commentary on John 13:34.]

**“good stewards.”** In this context, a “steward” is someone who manages the property of another.

**“many-sided grace of God.”** The Greek is *poikilos* (#4164 ποικίλος) and means, pertaining to that which exists in a variety of kinds or various modes, diversified, manifold, varied. Many-sided was used by Charles Williams in his New Testament and is used in a few other English translations as well. A less literal, but meaningful translation, comparing the grace of God to a gemstone, would be “many-faceted.” BDAG expands the translation but catches the meaning well: “the grace of God, that manifests itself in various ways.”[[52]](#footnote-28413)

1Pe 4:11

**“utterances.”** The Greek word is *logion* (#3051 λόγιον, pronounced 'log-ee-on), and it is the diminutive of *logos*, “word” or “message.” Literally, it is “little words.” See commentary on Acts 7:38.

**“to him.”** That is, to God, not to Jesus.[[53]](#footnote-29278) The arguments are technical, and some scholars do disagree. But given that God is the creator and Christ the creation, and since the glory comes to God “through Jesus Christ,” the primary glory belongs to God.

1Pe 4:13

**“rejoice in so far as you are sharing in the sufferings of Christ.”** The context of this phrase is the fiery suffering the Christians that Peter was writing to were suffering (1 Pet. 4:12). The sufferings of Christ that the Christians were sharing in were both historical and ongoing, because Christ suffers as his people suffer. People who experience suffering can tend to be resentful or feel abandoned, as if God could somehow make their suffering come to an end. But in fact, the fallen nature of the world and of humankind itself means that God cannot stop human suffering right now. He will stop it in the future, but He cannot stop it now. What is happening now as God’s people suffer fiery ordeals, is that Christ is suffering along with them. In fact, no matter how intense the suffering anyone is suffering, Jesus Christ is right there with them, suffering also. So although the temptation is to be angry, resentful, or distant from God and Christ when we suffer, if we properly understand the fallen nature of the world, the spiritual war that is going on between Good and Evil, and the unity that Christ has with his people, we can rejoice in our sufferings like the Bible tells us to. Being angry and distant with God does not stop suffering here on earth and it does not somehow give us a brighter future. If we can rejoice in our suffering, we stay closer to God and Christ, set a wonderful example for others here on earth, and can expectantly look forward to a future in which we will dance and shout with great joy.

**“be exceedingly glad.”** The Greek word translated as the phrase “be exceedingly glad” is *agalliaō* (#21 ἀγαλλιάω), and in general it means, “to be exceedingly joyful,” “be overjoyed,” “be glad,” “be very happy.” Louw-Nida says, “experience a state of great joy and gladness, often involving verbal expression and appropriate body movement.”[[54]](#footnote-25403) In the context of 1 Peter 4:13, BDAG has, “that you might shout for joy.”[[55]](#footnote-24588) This joy, shouting, and body movement paint a beautiful picture of the joy Christians will experience when we are with the Lord—there will be great joy, accompanied by joyful shouting and dancing.

1Pe 4:14

**“spirit of glory.”** The word “spirit” is not in the Greek text before “glory,” but it is properly supplied from the distributive noun. The Greek is literally “the of glory and of God spirit,” where the word “spirit” is being modified by both “of glory” and “of God.”

**“that is.”** The Greek *kai* is epexegetical, and can properly be translated “that is” (cf. CJB, NRSV, NET).

1Pe 4:15

**“However.”** It is important to have the contrast between 1 Peter 4:14 and 4:15, because in verse 14 it is okay if a person is insulted for Christ and thus suffers for it, but in verse 15 it is not okay to suffer as an evildoer.

1Pe 4:16

**“Christian.”** [For more information on the use of “Christian” in the New Testament, see commentary on Acts 11:26.]

**“in *bearing* that name.”** The name is “Christian.” Believers bear the name Christ in their designation as “Christians.”

1Pe 4:18

**“if the righteous person....”** Quoted from the Septuagint version of Proverbs 11:31 (although it is not a perfect quotation). The Hebrew reads, “If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!” (NASB).

**“is saved.”** This is not referring to the one-time event of the New Birth, but is referring to the process of living in the hope of salvation.

**“*while going* through difficulty.”** Christian salvation comes with difficulty, i.e., with suffering, as the context shows. If the righteous have to go through hard times in their salvation, and the sinners are sparing themselves that pain, what will become of them? Peter leaves the question unanswered for effect. R. C. H. Lenski writes that the Greek word *molis* means, “...‘with difficulty’ and refers to the hard time that persecution causes the Christian.”[[56]](#footnote-29177) Salvation is not easy or without hardship. It costs a person the suffering and persecution that go along with bearing the name of Christ.

**“where will they appear?”** The Greek is not, “what will become of the ungodly and sinner.” The Greek verb is “appear,” not “become.” The Greek is more literally, “the ungodly person and sinner, where will he appear?” The ungodly person and sinner certainly will not appear in the Resurrection of the Righteous and be on the new earth and in Christ’s Millennial Kingdom. 1 Peter 4:18 keeps the Hope of a wonderful future in front of the Christians in a subtle but powerful way. While it is true that Christians have much difficulty on earth, at least they are still saved in the midst of that difficulty and can look forward to appearing on a wonderful new earth where Christ is king. In contrast, the ungodly and sinners will not “appear” there at all.

Mark Dubis writes: “...the sinner will appear nowhere in God’s new creation.”[[57]](#footnote-27140) Meyer notes: “...*pou phaneitai*, ‘where will he appear?’ that is, he will not stand, but will be annihilated. The same thought as in Psalm 1:5.”[[58]](#footnote-29103)

The unsaved will “appear” in the Second Resurrection and be thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15). It is at least worth noting that in Daniel 12:3, in the context of the resurrections in which people who are now asleep in the dust of the earth (that is, dead and buried), will arise, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting contempt, and the wise will “shine” (Greek OT: *phainō*; “appear, shine”) like the brightness of the expanse of heaven (Dan. 12:3).

[For more on the Millennial Kingdom, see Appendix 5: “Christ’s Future Kingdom on Earth” For more on dead people being dead in every way, see Appendix 3: “The Dead are Dead.” For more on death in the Lake of Fire, see Appendix 4: “Annihilation in the Lake of Fire.”]

1Pe 4:19

**“according to the will of God.”** It is not God’s primary will for people to suffer, but we live in a fallen, sinful world and sometimes a person has to suffer in doing the will of God. God wants people to obey him, and sometimes we suffer for it. For example, 2 Timothy 3:12 says that everyone who lives a godly life will be persecuted. It is God’s will that people live godly lives, and God knows that because the Devil is the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4) godly people will suffer. God would rather have His people suffer for godliness than attempt to escape the persecution and troubles by living an ungodly life, so our suffering can be said to be “according to the will of God.” There will be a day when the wicked will be punished and God’s people will live in joy in the Messiah’s kingdom. God promises: “and he [God] will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, anymore; the former things have passed away” (Rev. 21:4). The joy we will have in the next life is the will of God for us for all time, but it is not available now due to the evil around us. There is more about the will of God and suffering in commentary on 1 Peter 3:17.

**“souls.”** In this context, the “soul” refers to the human life. This is a similar use to Romans 11:3.

[For a more complete explanation of “soul,” see Word Study: “Psuchē.”]

**“to do what is good.”** “Good” is defined by God. Doing what is good is doing what is right according to God. We must be careful not to define “good” by the culture; God is God, not the “human majority.”

**1 Peter Chapter 5**

1Pe 5:1

**“a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed.”** Peter writes that he is already a partaker of future glory. Peter trusted Christ and was born again, and as such he was confident he would partake of the future glory with Christ, and based on his confidence of future glory, he wrote about it as if it were already his. Peter Davids writes: “What is significant here is that he expects this so vividly that he considers himself *already* to be a ‘partaker’ of that glory.”[[59]](#footnote-14936)

Peter knew Jesus Christ intimately, but the fact is that every Christian can know God and Christ well enough to feel just like Peter did, that they would be partakers in the future glory they will have personally and also the global future glory that they will participate in. Peter’s confidence is rooted in God’s promise-keeping character (Heb. 10:23). Since God always keeps his promises, and God has promised salvation to those who trust in Christ (Rom. 10:9; Eph. 1:13-14), Peter can speak of already being a partaker of the glory that has not literally come to pass yet, because he is so sure it will happen.

Although a few scholars have suggested that the glory mentioned by Peter here is the glory he saw in the Transfiguration, that suggestion is repudiated by most scholars because the glory mentioned here in 1 Peter 5:1 is not in the past but in the future.

[For more on salvation for Christians, see Appendix 10: “God’s Promise of Salvation.”]

1Pe 5:3

**“those in your care.”** The literal Greek is more like, “of the portions,” or “of the allotments.” That is, those given to an elder by “lot.” Many scholars think this refers to the possible structure of the early church and that certain house churches were assigned to certain elders. Although that happened as Christianity developed, it may not have happened as early as the writing of Peter, and Peter may have simply been using vocabulary out from his culture in the sense that often the Lord chooses people to fulfill certain callings, which are then carried out in various communities under a certain particular leader. Just as the apostles chose Matthias by casting lots because they believed that the choice to replace Judas was to come from the Lord and that he was at work rendering that decision, so too it is believed that the Lord chooses people for their ministries and places them in the Body of Christ, and where a person is serving is being expressed as a decision from the Lord as though that is their allotted place. Thus, the people in the care of an elder are said to be “alloted” to them by the Lord.

**“an example to the flock.”** The Greek reads, “an example of the flock.” The Genitive is a genitive of relation or reference, that is, an example in relation or reference to the flock.

1Pe 5:4

**“the Chief Shepherd.”** Jesus is the “Chief Shepherd,” shepherding both the shepherds he has appointed over others, as well as shepherding his flock in general.

When translating from one language to another, such as translating from Greek to English, there are some “happy coincidences” and also some times when literal translations can make understanding more difficult. An example of a “happy coincidence” occurs in Matthew 25:14ff in the parable of the talents. In the biblical world, a “talent” is a unit of weight (and hence money), and we understand that, but when translated into English a “talent” is also a unique ability that a person has been gifted with. So when teaching about the parable of the talents, a preacher can easily communicate to the audience that they best not waste the talents that God gave them, including both material possessions and personal abilities.

But just as there are “happy coincidences” in translation, there are also times when the differences between the languages cause some of what the text is saying to be missed, and that is the case with “shepherd.” The noun “shepherd” (*poimēn*, #4166 ποιμήν) and the verb “shepherd” (*poimainō*, #4165 ποιμαίνω) are usually only translated that way by most English versions when the context clearly involves sheep or people metaphorically being referred to as “sheep.” This is especially the case when it comes to the verb “shepherd,” which is not translated that way by most English versions in the majority of places it appears, and instead, it is translated by words such as “feed,” “care for,” “tend,” “rule,” “look after,” and “herd” (cf. Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 9:7; 1 Pet. 5:2; Jude 1:12; Rev. 2:27; 7:17; 12:5 and 19:15). Also, sadly, it has happened in English that the office of someone who “shepherds” other people is not translated as “shepherd,” but “pastor,” even though the Greek word is the same. Thus, English readers lose the wonderful connection between Jesus, the “Chief Shepherd,” and the “shepherds” that he appointed to watch after his “sheep.” Ephesians 4:11 says that when Jesus ascended, “he gave some to be…pastors (shepherds),” so in that verse we see the Chief Shepherd appointing other shepherds to help him with the work.

Anyone who works with sheep knows that it is impossible to look after a large flock without help. A large flock always had a “chief shepherd” and other “shepherds” who helped with the work. That is exactly the case with the Body of Christ, which has millions of individual sheep. Jesus is the Chief Shepherd, and he works closely with the shepherds (the “pastors”) he has placed in his Body. That Jesus is called the Chief Shepherd should be a great encouragement to anyone who is called to leadership in the Body of Christ, because it is clear that any shepherd can and should look to the Chief Shepherd for help, guidance, support, information, and whatever else is needed to shepherd the flock.

1 Peter 5:2 should help us understand more completely what it means to have fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3) and why we can have an intimate prayer relationship with Jesus Christ. When shepherding a literal flock of sheep, both the chief shepherd and the hired shepherds work hard to have a personal relationship with the sheep such that the sheep know and trust them. It is only the laziest of hirelings who do not get to know the sheep and properly care for them. The same is true with God’s flock. Every godly earthly pastor (shepherd) works hard to have a personal and intimate relationship with the people he shepherds, and in fact, would not be considered a good pastor if he were removed and distant from his flock. So too, Jesus—the “Chief Shepherd”—works to have an intimate and personal relationship with his flock and is not distant from us. He promised, “I am with you always” (Matt. 28:20), and he is. We should not tackle life on our own without his guidance and help. No sheep would expect to tackle life without the shepherd’s help. Let us regularly and diligently look to Jesus for help and guidance.

In the Old Testament, the word “shepherd” was used of kings and leaders of the people (see commentary on Jer. 2:8).

**“the crown of glory.”** The “crowns” are special rewards that will be given out in the future Messianic Kingdom, and the New Testament mentions five crowns that God will give to those people who deserve them. The crown of glory is given to those who willingly shepherd God’s people, not because they are paid for it or because they are “lords” over a group of people, but because they are eager to serve and help people maximize their spiritual potential.

Christians can be very ungrateful and dissatisfied. Almost every leader has at one time or another been at his wit’s end about how to keep people godly and blessed. More than one pastor, elder, or overseer has resigned, not because he or she did not love God, but because it just seemed too difficult to work with people in the Church. There are even Old Testament records of God Himself being disgusted with His people’s attitudes and behaviors. At times He was on the verge of abandoning them altogether. God recognizes that it is hard and often thankless work to shepherd people, so He offers a crown to those who will carry out the task in a godly manner. Although it is easy to see how pastors and elders in churches have the opportunity to shepherd others and help them obey God and be Christlike, there are many people in the Body of Christ who help sustain the Body of Christ by shepherding others, even if it is just a few others. The crown of glory should not be thought of as a crown that only church pastors can achieve, any Christian can help Christ by figuring out ways to shepherd others in the faith and thus achieve the crown of glory.

[For a summary of all the crowns and more information on the incorruptible crown see commentary on 1 Cor. 9:25. For information on the crown of boasting, see commentary on 1 Thess. 2:19. For information on the crown of righteousness, see commentary on 2 Tim. 4:8. For information on the crown of life, see commentary on James 1:12. For more information on rewards and punishments in the future kingdom, see commentary on 2 Cor. 5:10.]

1Pe 5:5

**“the elders.”** This is not simply older people, but those who have qualified by their age, experience, and godliness to be elders in the church (cf. 1 Pet. 5:1).

**“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”** See commentary on James 4:6.

**“one another.”** The phrase “one another” occurs in the context of the community of believers, and while we are to be good to everyone, in the context of the New Testament Epistles, the commands toward “one another” are specifically pointing to other believers. Christians are to be “especially good to the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). It is very important for the richness of our lives together here on earth, for our personal growth here on earth, and for rewards in the next life, that each Christian needs to be “other-focused,” focused on others and how we can help them. The phrase “one another” occurs many times in the New Testament, stating and reinforcing that truth.

[For more on the “one another” commands, see commentary on Gal. 5:13, “one another.” For more on “love one another,” see commentary on John 13:34.]

1Pe 5:7

**“casting all your anxiety upon him.”** This casting of cares upon God is directly related to 1 Peter 5:6. Today, we humble ourselves and we will be exalted in the future. Right now we live in a time when we suffer persecution for our righteous stand for the Lord, and during this time of suffering, we will have anxiety and cares. The proper thing to do in life is not to become fatalistic or bitter and resigned to trouble, but to cast our cares on God, because He does care for us.

1Pe 5:8

**“opponent.”** The Greek word is *antidikos* (#476 ἀντίδικος), and it has two meanings: to be constantly against as an enemy to; or to be an opponent in a court of law (thus, an “opponent at law”). The word *antidikos* occurs five times in the New Testament, and it refers to an opponent at law in Matthew 5:25 (cf. NASB in Matt. 5:25). But the other times were not necessarily in a legal situation, and so the translation “opponent” worked well. Although the Devil is constantly against God’s people, the context here in Peter favors the courtroom scenario.[[60]](#footnote-15587) The Devil may be an enemy all the time, but he cannot devour everyone all the time. The Bible makes it clear that the Devil is constantly looking for people he can devour, often people who have sinned against God. These he accuses in God’s court of justice.

Contrary to what many Christians believe, the Bible does not show “God in control” of what happens in life. Instead, the Bible portrays the earth as a war zone and God’s army pitted against the Devil’s army. That is why the Bible calls God a “warrior” (Exod. 15:3), and portrays God as being angry and hurrying to fight the enemy when His people are in danger and cry out to Him (Ps. 18:1-15).

Furthermore, the Devil cannot just kill anyone he wants, there are limits to his unrighteous acts. However, in God’s court of justice, he is accusing people before God day and night (Rev. 12:10; cf. Zech. 3:1), and sadly, often those accusations are deserved.

The teaching that “God is in control” has so filled Christendom that people do not see the clear teaching in Scripture that our sins sometimes cause God not to be able to protect us from the Devil. God is a just God, and the Adversary demands justice when it suits his plans. For example, Peter sinned, and the Devil “demanded” to harm him in some way. In Luke 22:31, Jesus told Peter: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat.” On what basis did Satan “demand” to have Peter? He demanded “justice” for Peter’s sins. Jesus told Peter it was because he prayed for Peter that Peter was not handed over to Satan.

The legal nature of the struggle between God and the Devil is based upon God being a just God, and the Devil knowing that and using it to his advantage. In Exodus 24, God and Israel made a covenant that we call the Old Covenant (miscalled, the “Old Testament). When Israel broke the covenant, God brought a lawsuit against Israel. Micah 6:2 (HCSB) says: “Listen to the LORD’s lawsuit, you mountains and enduring foundations of the earth, because the LORD has a case against His people, and He will argue it against Israel.” In that verse, the Hebrew word *rib* (#07379 רִיב), “lawsuit, legal case, dispute, or quarrel,” occurs twice. In Hosea 4:1 the Bible says Yahweh has a lawsuit against Israel. From what we see in Job 1, Revelation 12, and other places, Satan would have been an aggressive prosecuting attorney against Israel. The people of Israel would not confess their sin and change, so God dissolved his marriage covenant, divorced Israel, and sent her away (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8). Israel “lost” her case, and the Ten Tribes of Israel were conquered by Assyria, deported, and have never returned to their land, even to this day. The Bible shows that eventually the Devil will be the one judged in God’s court, and he will be condemned (Dan. 7:10).

Christians have long known that, in general, if they obey God there are things that go well for them that do not generally go well if they disobey God. This is not an absolute rule, because there is a spiritual war going on and evil does happen to good people. Nevertheless, it is such a well-established principle that many preachers say that when we sin, we “walk out from under the umbrella of God’s protection.” The effect is certainly real, but the Bible does not use “umbrella” language. What actually happens? According to the biblical text, God has a courtroom in heaven, and the Devil is constantly in it, accusing the believers. If a believer is humble and obedient to God, the Devil has no basis for the accusation and it generally goes nowhere. However, if a believer sins willfully over and over, eventually justice demands that God cannot extend supernatural protection and the Devil is free to move against the person.

This occurs over and over in the Old Testament, although the Hebrew text does not give the Devil the credit for the evil. The language of the Old Testament hides the actions of the Devil and attributes them to God via the figure of speech, the idiom of permission. Nevertheless, all one has to do is read the Old Testament in a cursory manner to see that when believers sinned, bad things happened to them.

[For more on the idiom of permission, see commentary on Rom. 9:18.]

What we must understand is that although we may sometimes have bad things happen to us that we do not deserve, if we ignore God and disobey His commands we will eventually have bad things happen to us. God’s justice, which enables Him to extend protection to people who obey Him, requires Him to hand over to the Devil those people who defy Him. When we sin, we break God’s heart because as our Father He loves us and wants the best for us all the time, but He cannot protect us if we insist on defying Him and doing evil.

**“Devil.”** The Greek word is *diabolos* (#1228 διάβολος), which literally means “Slanderer,” but *diabolos* gets transliterated into English as our more familiar name, “Devil.” Slander is so central to who the Devil is and how he operates that one of his primary names is “the Slanderer.”

[For more information on the names of the Devil, see Appendix 8: “Names of the Devil.”]

**“seeking someone.”** Believers are to be clearheaded and watchful because the Devil is looking for “someone” to devour. The text does not say, “seeking to devour ‘you.’” The Devil would love to devour “you,” but the fact is that he is happy to destroy the life of anyone who is vulnerable. Believers are not just to watch out for themselves, but they are to watch out for others as well so that the Devil does not have anyone to devour. Older, wiser, more experienced believers are to watch over others and try to keep those believers, as well as themselves, safe from the Devil’s traps.

1Pe 5:9

**“steadfast in the faith.”** That is, the Christian Faith, the generally accepted beliefs and practices of Christianity (cf. Col. 2:7).

**“your fellow believers.”** The Greek text is literally “your brotherhood,” but that is not very clear in English.

1Pe 5:10

**“a little while.”** Here, this phrase refers to the Christian’s whole life, which, in contrast to everlasting glory, is only “a little while.” To the person who is suffering, their “little while” lifetime can seem very long indeed.

**“in *union with* Christ”** On the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), being “born again” of God’s spirit first became available, and Christians became part of the Body of Christ and identified with him (crucified with him, died with him, buried with him, and raised with him). Today, Christians are “in Christ” (“in union with Christ”) by virtue of being part of the Body of Christ, and it is important that we also are “in Christ,” that is, “in union with Christ” because we obey him and lead godly lives. When we read a phrase such as “in Christ” or “in him,” we must pay careful attention to the context to see if it refers to our spiritual union due to being part of the Body of Christ, or whether it refers to our being in union with Christ because of our obedience and godliness, or if both meanings apply in that given context. A lot of the blessings that Christians enjoy today are due to the fact that we are in union with Jesus Christ.

[For more on being in union with Christ, see commentary on Eph. 1:3. For more information on the Christian’s identification with Christ, see commentary on Rom. 6:5.]

**“restore.”** *Katartizō* (#2675 καταρτίζω) can mean to “restore to a former condition” or “to prepare; to outfit.”[[61]](#footnote-17926) In this context, it means to restore—“after one has suffered for a little while,” God will put him into proper condition again, and then do more: confirm, strengthen, and establish him.

1Pe 5:11

**“forever.”** The Byzantine text on which the King James Version was based reads, “forever and ever,” but the earlier and better Greek texts just read “forever.” The Greek text of 1 Peter 4:11 reads “forever and ever,” and it is possible that later scribes harmonized 1 Peter 5:11 to agree with 1 Peter 4:11, thus creating the longer reading in the Byzantine text of 1 Peter 5:11.

1Pe 5:12

**“Through Silvanus, *whom* I consider a faithful brother.”** Silas could have penned the letter for Peter, and helped compose the Greek or he could have just carried the letter to its destination. The Greek text is unclear, and either or both things are possible. It has been noted that the Epistles of Peter are complex Greek, and it is somewhat unlikely that Peter, a fisherman from Galilee, could have composed them without some help.

1Pe 5:13

**“Mark.”** This is John Mark, the author of the Gospel of Mark, a close friend and follower of Peter. He was not Peter’s biological son, but his “son” in the sense of being a disciple.

1. Strong’s data, s.v. “παρεπίδημος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-32438)
2. BDAG, s.v. “παρεπίδημος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-10784)
3. R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 26-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-29296)
4. See Bromiley, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia under “Christian,” 1:657. [↑](#footnote-ref-17375)
5. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-31493)
6. Cf. Kenneth S. Wuest, New Testament, “out from among those who are dead,” 549. [↑](#footnote-ref-31055)
7. Michaels, 1 Peter [WBC]. [↑](#footnote-ref-15657)
8. BDAG, s.v. “ἐκζητέω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-12513)
9. BDAG, s.v. “ἐραυνάω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-14026)
10. For more information on this topic, see the Racovian Catechism, s.v. “Thomas Rees” in bibliography, reprinted by Spirit and Truth, pp. 146-148. [↑](#footnote-ref-16114)
11. Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, 247. [↑](#footnote-ref-30818)
12. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 425-27, 746. [↑](#footnote-ref-16889)
13. Gordon Wenham, The Book of Leviticus [NICOT], 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-15800)
14. Dubis, 1 Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text, 32-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-14736)
15. Cf. Wuest, New Testament, “out from among those who are dead,” 551. [↑](#footnote-ref-15262)
16. BDAG, s.v. “ἄφθαρτος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-20933)
17. BDAG, s.v. “σπορά.” [↑](#footnote-ref-21848)
18. BDAG, s.v. “σπορά” [↑](#footnote-ref-22965)
19. Louw & Nida, s.v. “σπορά” [↑](#footnote-ref-13996)
20. Peter used a similar thematic contrast previously when speaking about redemption in verses 18-19, “for you know that you were redeemed…not with perishable [phthartois] things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.” [↑](#footnote-ref-26388)
21. Elliott, 1 Peter [AB], 389. Harris, “Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament,” NIDNTT 3.1171–1215. [↑](#footnote-ref-32092)
22. Forbes, 1 Peter [EGGNT], 50. Achtemeier, 1 Peter [Herm.], 139. Jobes, 1 Peter [BECNT], 124. Dubis, 1 Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text [BHGNT], 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-30543)
23. Giffin, The First Epistle General of Peter, 12. Reasoner, A Fundamental Wesleyan Commentary on 1-2 Peter [PC], 67. Kistemaker, New Testament Commentary: James, Epistles of John, Peter, and Jude, 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-13279)
24. Keener, 1 Peter, 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-16602)
25. See E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 208, “polysyndeton.” [↑](#footnote-ref-26599)
26. R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 79-82. [↑](#footnote-ref-23368)
27. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 88-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-15964)
28. D. E. Hiebert, 1 Peter: An Expository Commentary, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-16870)
29. Cf. BDAG, s.v. “γένος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-14406)
30. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-18801)
31. Meyer’s Commentary. [↑](#footnote-ref-26661)
32. BDAG, s.v. “ἀρετή.” [↑](#footnote-ref-28596)
33. Cf. J. R. Michaels, 1 Peter [WBC]. [↑](#footnote-ref-25992)
34. Cf. Michaels [WBC]; J. N. D. Kelly, The Epistles of Peter [BNTC]. [↑](#footnote-ref-21602)
35. Vincent, Word Studies, 1:646. [↑](#footnote-ref-27088)
36. Kittel, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-12051)
37. Cf. BDAG; Thayer; s.v. “ἐπιστρέφω”; see also CJB, NLT, and Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-15121)
38. R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-13327)
39. John Dickson, Humilitas: A Lost Key to Life, Love, and Leadership, 86, 88, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-24083)
40. Dickson, Humilitas, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-22554)
41. Cf. notes in A. Nyland, The Source New Testament, 465. [↑](#footnote-ref-21406)
42. John Dickson, Humilitas, 99-112. [↑](#footnote-ref-25610)
43. R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-15684)
44. Cf. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 267, “polyptoton.” [↑](#footnote-ref-23457)
45. Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 484, 699-700. [↑](#footnote-ref-25702)
46. Cf. Michaels, 1 Peter [WBC]. [↑](#footnote-ref-14707)
47. Thayer, s.v. “κηρύσσω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-14984)
48. BDAG, s.v. “κηρύσσω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-17725)
49. BDAG, s.v. “ἔννοια.” [↑](#footnote-ref-25266)
50. R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-21849)
51. BDAG, s.v. “τέλος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-21528)
52. BDAG, s.v. “ποικίλος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-28413)
53. Cf. R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 201-04; Peter Davids, The First Epistle of Peter [NICNT]; Meyer’s Commentary on the New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-29278)
54. Louw and Nida, s.v. “ἀγαλλιάω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-25403)
55. BDAG, s.v. “ἀγαλλιάω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-24588)
56. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, 216. [↑](#footnote-ref-29177)
57. Dubis, 1 Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text, 156-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-27140)
58. Meyer’s Commentary on the New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-29103)
59. Davids, The First Epistle of Peter [NICNT], 177 (emphasis original). [↑](#footnote-ref-14936)
60. Cf. BDAG, s.v. “ἀντίδικος.” [↑](#footnote-ref-15587)
61. BDAG, s.v. “καταρτίζω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-17926)