



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

## **New Testament Survey**

### **Lesson 35 – The Two Letters of Peter and the Letter of Jude**

#### **A Summary of Peter's Life**

Peter was originally a fisherman from Galilee. He was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew. Jesus immediately gave him the name Rock or Rocky (Peter, Cephas). His original name was Simon. Peter became a leader among Jesus' twelve apostles. In the Gospel accounts he did more talking than any of the others. He was impulsive and hasty in his actions and speech. This characteristic got him into trouble on numerous occasions, such as when he tried to walk on the water, when he wanted to build tents on the mountain of transfiguration, and when he told Jesus that He should not suffer and die. Peter's worst moment came when he denied his Lord on Maundy Thursday.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared especially to Peter (when he was alone) on Easter Sunday. What Jesus said on that occasion is not reported in the Bible. On a later occasion Jesus asked Peter specifically three times whether he loved Him, to match the three times Peter had denied Jesus. When Peter affirmed his love for Jesus, Jesus gave instructions to Peter to feed His sheep and lambs.

On the day of Pentecost Peter preached the main sermon, and he remained in Jerusalem for some time as a leader of the congregation. Later God sent him to Cornelius, a Gentile soldier in Caesarea. Peter later testified at the convention in Jerusalem that Gentiles, as well as Jews, can be saved only by the grace of God (Acts 15:11). But Peter failed to put that into practice in Antioch when he stopped eating with the Gentile Christians after the arrival of some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem. At that time Paul rebuked Peter publicly (Galatians 2:11-14).

After those first years in Jerusalem, it seems Peter traveled to various places, accompanied by his wife (1 Corinthians 9:5). It is probable that he traveled to Rome around 60 AD.

#### **The First Letter of Peter**

It is likely that Peter wrote his first letter in Rome (which he calls "**Babylon**") while Paul was making his mission journey to Spain. Peter, together with Silas and Mark, wrote this letter to the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. By this time (61-64 AD) Christians were beginning to be persecuted by the Roman government and by the general public. They were blamed for all kinds of criminal acts just because they were Christians. The emperor Nero himself in 64 AD blamed the Christians for setting Rome on fire.

In this letter Peter tells the Christians not to rebel against the government, not to try to get even with those who harmed them, but to live holy, pure, and loving Christian lives, remembering how the Lord Jesus also endured sufferings unjustly without trying to get even with His enemies. Peter tells the Christians to look beyond this earthly suffering to the hope of heaven which Jesus has won for them and for us. We can call this letter therefore The Letter of Hope in the Midst of Sufferings and Persecutions.

Read Peter's first letter. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask them.

1 Peter 1:1-2: Greetings

Contains the three parts: the writer, the ones being written to, greetings.

1 Peter 1:3-12: Peter praises God for all the blessings God has given them

You **"are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation"** (v. 5).

**"You greatly rejoice, though now for a little while ... you have been grieved"** (v. 6).

**"Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible"** (v. 8).

1 Peter 1:13-16: Live holy lives as the children of God

**"As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct"** (v. 15).

1 Peter 1: 17-21: Remember the redemption of Christ

**"You were ... redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ"** (vv. 18-19).

God **"raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory"** (v. 21).

1 Peter 1:22-25: Love one another in accordance with God's eternal Word

**"Love one another ..., having been born again ... through the word of God"** (vv. 22-23).

**"The grass withers, ... but the word of the LORD endures forever"** (vv. 24-25).

1 Peter 2:1-3: Grow up by the power of the Word

**"Desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby"** (v. 2).

1 Peter 2:4-10: Peter calls Christians kings and priests, and living stones in a new temple

**"You ... are being built up a spiritual house, ... to offer up spiritual sacrifices"** (v. 5).

**"You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into ... light"** (v. 9).

1 Peter 2:11-12: Peter tells the Christians that as heavenly citizens they are not of the world

**"Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul"** (v. 11).

1 Peter 2:13-17: Obey the government

**“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake” (v. 13).**

1 Peter 2:18-25: Slaves, be willing to suffer unjustly, just like Jesus

**“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example” (v. 21).**

He **“Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (v. 24).**

1 Peter 3:1-7: Peter gives directions to wives and husbands

**“Wives, ... be submissive to your own husbands ... as Sarah obeyed Abraham” (vv. 1, 6).**

**“Husbands, ... dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife” (v. 7).**

1 Peter 3:8 – 4:6; Peter encourages Christians to be willing to suffer unjustly, like Jesus

**“It is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil” (v. 17).**

**“Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (v. 18).**

**“Made alive ..., He went and preached to the spirits in prison” (v. 18) (His descent to hell).**

**“Jesus Christ ... has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God” (vv. 21-22).**

1 Peter 4:7-11: The thought of the end of the world should make us serious Christians

1 Peter 4:12-19: As in the case of Christ, suffering will be followed by glory

1 Peter 5:1-5: Peter gives final instructions to the pastors and to all the flock

**“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, ... being examples to the flock” (vv. 2-3).**

**“All of you, you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility” (v. 5).**

1 Peter 5:6-11: Cast your cares on God and resist the devil

**“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (v. 7).**

**“Be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion” (v. 8).**

1 Peter 5:12-14: Final greetings from Peter, Mark, and Silas

**“Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.” (v. 14).**

**The Second Letter of Peter**

Peter wrote this letter to the same people to whom he wrote the first letter. He probably wrote it in Rome, around 64 AD, shortly before he was crucified. Jesus had foretold how Peter would die in John 21. According to tradition, Peter was crucified upside down. Peter wrote this letter to warn against false teachings.

Read Peter's second letter. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask them.

2 Peter 1:1-2: Greetings – following the usual pattern

2 Peter 1:3-4: The greatness of God's gifts to us

**"His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (v. 3).**

2 Peter 1:5-11: Strive to lead lives worthy of Christ

**"Be even more diligent to make your call and election sure" (v. 10).**

2 Peter 1:12-21: Let the Word of Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles guide you

**"Shortly I must put off this my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me" (his death) (v. 14).**

**"We did not follow cunningly devised fables ..., but were eyewitnesses" (v. 16). (N. T. apostles)**

**"Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (v. 21). (O. T. prophets)**

2 Peter 2:1-22: Do not be misled by the godless false teachers who will arise

**"There will be false teachers among you, ... even denying the Lord who bought them" (v. 1).**

**"They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam" (v. 15).**

2 Peter 3:1-7: Scoffers say that Jesus will not come again

2 Peter 3:8-10: God is delaying the day of judgment in order to save more people

**"The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (v. 9).**

**"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. ...; the earth ... will be burned up" (v. 10).**

2 Peter 3:11-18: We are always to live in view of the end of the world

**"We ... look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (v. 13).**

**"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (v. 18).**

### The Letter of Jude

The Jude that wrote this short letter was not one of the apostles, but one of the brothers of our Lord. Jesus' other brothers were James, Simon, and Joseph/Joses (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). Jude did not believe in Jesus until after His resurrection. He wrote this letter to the

same people as Peter. He told them that the false teachers Peter had predicted had truly come. He warns against these false teachers in strong and severe language.

Read the letter of Jude. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask them.

*Jude 1-4: Greetings and statement of Jude's purpose*

*Jude 5-13: The warning against false teachers*

*Jude 14-23: God will judge all those who deny Him*

*Jude 24-25: Final words of praise to God*

## **Questions**

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1. Why should Christians rejoice even while they are being persecuted?
2. What is the standard of morality that Christians should strive for?
3. What is the only way by which anyone can attain eternal life?
4. What tremendous power is in the Word of God?
5. What is meant by the priesthood of all believers in Christ?
6. To whom should slaves that are mistreated look for an example of how they should live?
7. What was the purpose of Christ's suffering on the cross?
8. Why must we continue to fight against the devil and his allies?
9. How did Peter describe the transfiguration of Jesus?
10. What is meant by the new heavens and the new earth?
11. What do both Peter and Jude say about false teachers?
12. What will happen when Jesus returns to this earth?