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The First Epistle General of ST. PETER
Translation by John Wesley

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CHAPTER 1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the sojourners scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect (according to the foreknowledge of God the Father) through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath regenerated us to a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, which is much more precious than gold, (that perisheth, though it be tried with fire,) may be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom though ye see him not, yet believing, ye now rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets, who prophesied of the grace of God toward you, inquired and searched diligently, Searching what, and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them signified, when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that were to follow. To whom it was revealed, that not for themselves, but for us they ministered the things which have been now declared to you by them that have preached the gospel to you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things angels desire to look into. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be watchful, and hope perfectly for the grace that shall be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, conform not yourselves to your former desires in your ignorance: But as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of conversation: For it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time

of your sojourning in fear; Seeing ye know ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation delivered by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, Who verily was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in the last times, for you, Who through him believe in God that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

Having purified your souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not by corruptible seed, but incorruptible, through the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flower of grass: The grass is withered, and the flower is fallen off: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which is preached to you in the gospel.

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CHAPTER 2

Wherefore laying aside all wickedness, and all guile, and dissimulation, and envies, and evil speakings, As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; Since ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: To whom coming as unto a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen of God and precious, Ye also as living stones are built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Therefore to you who believe, he is precious; but as to them who believe not, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner. And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, to them who stumble, not believing the word, whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that ye may show forth the virtues of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Who in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly desires, which war against the soul, Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, Or to governors, as sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that by well doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, yet not having your liberty for a cloak of wickedness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men, Love the brotherhood, Fear God, Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, though he suffer wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye commit faults and are buffeted, ye take it patiently. But if when ye do well and yet suffer, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto are ye called; for Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that ye might follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again;

when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin might live to righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls.

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CHAPTER 3

In like manner, ye wives, be subject to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the deportment of the wives, Beholding your chaste deportment joined with fear: Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of curling the hair, and of wearing gold, or of putting on apparel, But the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. For thus the holy women also of old time, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being subject to their own husbands, As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose children ye are which ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement: In like manner, ye husbands, dwell according to knowledge with the woman, as the weaker vessel; giving them honor, as being the joint heirs of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.

Finally, Be ye all of one mind, sympathizing with each other; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are called to this, to inherit a blessing. For let him that desireth to love life and to see good days, refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him turn from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But even if ye do suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and fear ye not their fear, neither be ye troubled, But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: And be always ready to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience, that wherein they speak against you as evil doers, they may be ashamed who falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, to suffer for well doing than for evil doing. For Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but raised up to life by the Spirit, By which likewise he went and preached to the spirits in prison, Who were disobedient of old, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight persons, were carried safely through the water: The antitype whereof, baptism, now saveth us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Who being gone into heaven, is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers, being subjected to him.

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CHAPTER 4

Seeing then Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; (for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;) That ye may no longer live the rest of your time in the flesh, to the desire of men, but to the will of God. For the time of life that is past sufficeth to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when ye walked in lasciviousness, evil desires, excess of wine, banquetings, revelings, and abominable idolatries. Wherein they think it strange, that ye run not with them to the same profusion of riot, speaking evil of you, Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead. For to this end was the gospel preached to them that are dead also, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit. But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent love to each other; for love covereth a multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without murmuring. As every one hath received a gift, so minister it one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him minister as of the ability which God supplieth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the might for ever and ever. Amen.

Beloved, wonder not at the burning which is among you, which is for your trial, as if a strange thing befell you: But as ye partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may likewise rejoice with exceeding great joy. If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters, Yet if any suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God: but if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God, commit their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.

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CHAPTER 5

The elders that are among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and likewise a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed, Feed the flock of God which is among you, overseeing it not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy gain, but of a ready mind, Neither as lording over the heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. In like manner, ye younger, be subject to the elder, yea, being all subject to each other, be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Watch: be vigilant: for your adversary the devil walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Now the God of all grace, who hath called us by Christ Jesus to his eternal glory, after ye have suffered awhile, himself shall perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be the glory and the might for ever and ever. Amen.

By Silvanus, a faithful brother, as I suppose, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and adding my testimony, that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. The Church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and Mark, my son. Salute ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ.

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THE END