

# Introduction (1:1)

**Passage:** 1 Peter 1:1

**Title:** Introduction to the Book and the Man Peter

**Summary:** As we begin this great epistle it has been challenged that Peter could not have written to such spiritual depth because he was just a simple fisherman. Simple fisherman yes, but this book serves as a testimony to Peter and a witness to us, just what God can do with a life yielded to Him.

**(1 Peter 1:1 NKJV) Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,**

*Peter's Life*

## **Written by Peter / Credentials Questions**

Written by Peter. There have been debates in the past, and even recent, that Peter could not have been the author of this epistle because it is too indepth, and too doctrinally sound for a fisherman to write. This is nothing new for Peters credentials have been questioned from the very beginning:

*(Acts 4:13 NKJV) Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.*

## **They Hung Out w/Jesus / University Professor**

How could they preach and teach with power, because they had been with Jesus. If you hang out with Jesus, you too will be a different man or woman of God.

I can remember being saved only about 2 years, and I had been spending the weekend with a friend and his family. The mother was a Religion Professor (but not a Believer), Masters Degree, at the local University for 25 years. We talked about world religions, spiritual things, but then the subject narrowed to Jesus. Someone asked the professor an indepth question about the Lord, and I'll never forget, this University Professor of 25 years, points to me and says ask him, he would know better than me. How could a new believer of only 2 years know more than a college professor? Because I, you, we walk with him, spend time with Him. The world will marvel at our understanding of Him, and if they are honest with themselves, they will know it is because we spend time with Him. So here we are today.

## **Written 64AD**

Written around 64AD, about 30 years now since Jesus had ascended into heaven.

## **Everything Changes After the Resurrection**

Peter is so often summarized by the one who denied Jesus three times, true as it may be, he may have denied Jesus, but everything changes after the resurrection, and there was nothing that would ever come close to turning him from the Lord ever again. We will see that clearly in these two epistles that he writes.

## **The Life of Simon Peter**

Peter's life is an open book for us to read; the highs and the lows:

1. Called also Simon Bar-Jona and Cephas  
Matthew 16:16-19; Mark 3:16; John 1:42
2. A Fisherman  
Matthew 4:18; Luke 5:1-7; John 21:3;
3. The Call of Peter by Jesus  
Matthew 4:18-20; Mark 1:16-18; Luke 5:1-11
4. His Wife's Mother Healed  
Matthew 8:14; Mark 1:29-30; Luke 4:38
5. An Apostle  
Matthew 10:2; 16:18,19; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13
6. An Evangelist

- Mark 1:36-37
7. Confesses Jesus as Christ  
Matthew 16:16-19; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20; John 6:68-69
  8. His Presumption in Rebuking Jesus  
Matthew 16:22-23; Mark 8:32-33.
  9. His Rebuking Jesus when the Throng was Pressing  
Luke 8:45
  10. His Rebuking Jesus by Refusing to Let Jesus Wash his Feet  
John 13:6-11
  11. He was Present at Healing of Jairus' Daughter  
Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51
  12. He was Present at the Transfiguration  
Matthew 17:1-4; Mark 9:2-6; Luke 9:28-33; 2 Peter 1:16-18
  13. He was in Gethsemane  
Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:33-42; Luke 22:40-46
  14. He Seeks the Interpretation of the Parable of the Steward  
Luke 12:41
  15. He Seeks the Interpretation of the Law of Forgiveness  
Matthew 18:21
  16. He Seeks the Interpretation of the Law of Defilement  
Matthew 15:15
  17. He Seeks the Interpretation of the Prophecy of the 2nd Coming  
Mark 13:3-4
  18. He Walks on Water  
Matthew 14:28-31
  19. He Was Sent with John to Prepare the Passover  
Luke 22:8
  20. He Calls Attention to the Withered Fig Tree  
Mark 11:21
  21. His Denial of Christ Foretold  
Matthew 26:33-35; Mark 14:29-31; Luke 22:31-34
  22. He Cuts off the Ear of Malchus  
Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50
  23. He Follows Jesus to the High Priest's Palace  
Matthew 26:58; Mark 14:54; Luke 22:54; John 18:15
  24. His Denial of Jesus and His Repentance  
Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:55-62
  25. He Visits the Sepulcher  
Luke 24:12; John 20:2-6
  26. Jesus Sends Message to Him After Resurrection  
Mark 16:7
  27. Jesus Appears to Him After Resurrection  
Luke 24:34; 1 Cor 15:4-5
  28. He is Present at Another Appearance and Commissioned to Feed the Flock  
John 21:1-23
  29. He Abides in Jerusalem  
Acts 1:13
  30. He Makes Statement about Judas and Recommends Selecting A Replacement  
Acts 1:15-22
  31. He Preaches at Pentecost  
Acts 2:14-40
  32. He Heals the Impotent Man at Solomon's Porch  
Acts 3
  33. He is Accused by the Council and Gives His Defense  
Acts 4:1-23
  34. He is Present at Death of Ananias and Sapphira

- Acts 5:1-11
- 35. He is Imprisoned and Scourged--Gives Defense  
Acts 5:17-42
- 36. He Goes to Samaria  
Acts 8:14
- 37. He Laid Hands on Disciples that They Might Receive Gifts  
Acts 8:15-18
- 38. He Rebukes Simon  
Acts 8:18-24
- 39. He Returns to Jerusalem  
Acts 8:25
- 40. He Receives Paul  
Gal 1:18; 2:9
- 41. He Visits Lydda and Heals Aeneas  
Acts 9:32-34
- 42. He Visits Joppa--Simon, the Tanner; Raises Dorcas  
Acts 9:36-43
- 43. He Has the Vision of Unclean Animals  
Acts 10:9-16
- 44. He Preaches to Cornelius and His Household  
Acts 10
- 45. He Explains His Visit to the Gentile Cornelius to Jewish Brethren  
Acts 11:1-18
- 46. He is Present at the "Jerusalem Conference" on Circumcision  
Acts 15:7-11
- 47. He Was Imprisoned and Delivered by an Angel  
Acts 12:3-19
- 48. He Writes Two New Testament Epistles  
1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1

## **Burly Man / Impulsive / Spontaneous / Gentle- Precious**

Peter, church tradition says was a big burly man. In fact in John 21 it says they are fishing after the resurrection, Jesus shows up and says cast your nets over there, the resultant was a catch so big that the nets were overflowing, but not breaking. Peter knows it is the Lord and he jumps in and swims to shore. It says the catch was so big that the others couldn't haul it into the boats and so they just dragged it shore. When they get there Jesus says bring me some of those fish so we might eat together, what does Peter do, he runs to the shoreline, grabs the net and it says by himself he dragged all the fish out of the water. He must have been a burly man, we also see that he gives the definition of "diving in" to something, for when he saw it was the Lord he dives in and swims to shore, he wasn't waiting for the boats. In the garden before the crucifixion, we read about him cutting off the ear of the Chief Priests servant Malchus. So he was impulsive, he was spontaneous, he was burly, but he was also a gentle giant. I like this, this big burly man uses the word precious 7 times in his writings (and quoting once a passage containing "precious"). How many men go around saying, "isn't that precious"

*John 21:10-11 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught." <sup>11</sup> Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken.

1 Pet 1:7

that the genuineness of your faith, being much more **precious** than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

1 Pet 1:19

but with the **precious** blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

1 Pet 2:4

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and **precious**,

1 Pet 2:6

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, **precious**, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

1 Pet 2:7

Therefore, to you who believe, He is **precious**; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,"

1 Pet 3:4

rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very **precious** in the sight of God.

2 Pet 1:1

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like **precious** faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

2 Pet 1:4

by which have been given to us exceedingly great and **precious** promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

## His Mouth / Highs & Lows

Early on in his walk with the Lord Peter's mouth got him into a lot of uncomfortable positions. His life had some high highs, and some low lows.

Jesus asks the disciples who do people say that I am, then who do you say that I am.

[\(Matthew 16:15 NKJV\)](#) He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

*(Matthew 16:16 NKJV) Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

*(Matthew 16:17 NKJV) Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*

Good, good Peter.

Then Jesus says I must die, and Peter rebukes Him, God;

*(Matthew 16:21 NKJV) From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

*(Matthew 16:22 NKJV) Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"*

*(Matthew 16:23 NKJV) But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

Duh, not good Peter.

Peter had some high highs, and some low lows. His mouth often got him in trouble. On the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:1-9) he opens mouth and inserts foot, let's build 3 tabernacles, build a memorial.

[\(Matthew 17:4 NKJV\)](#) Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

I can picture Jesus just shaking His head.

## Taking Truths Learned With & For Jesus

This letter/epistle is written some 30 years later, and Peter is taking the truths he learned while walking with Jesus, and the 30 years of living them faithfully, and he writes to them and to us, so that they and we may have hope. I might add, Peter did walk on water, maybe for only a few moments, but still enough to be a man who walked on water. He has faith and truths that he desires to impart to his readers.

*Pilgrims Addressed*

### **Pilgrims / Sown Seed**

Verse 1 - To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Written to the pilgrims (or strangers) that were scattered/dispersed abroad. Pilgrim – means "one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives". Simply meaning they were believers living amongst unbelievers. But interesting this word for dispersed means to be sown like seed.

We see God's hand is the one sowing the seed, scattering them into these foreign lands so that they might be living epistles to those who do not know Him. Peter will dedicate almost half this book to the topic of "remembering our example before men". God had sown them, and God still does it today, it is His covert operation, as He moves us around and into the lives of unbelievers. He does it in the workplace, in the neighborhoods, in the youth activities you have to go to, in your schools, all the places you go. We are God's CIA agents, Christians in Action, being sown as seed into the lives of others.

#### *Purpose of the Epistle*

#### **Why Peter Writes / Remember / Doctrine – Duty – Declaration**

Peter tells us in the Second Epistle why he writes to them (and us), to stir us up, to remind us, that we hang on to the things we have been taught in the Old Testament, the Epistles of the Apostles, and the teachings in the Gospels. He says remember these things, hold on to them, no matter how hard life may get.

*(2 Peter 3:1 NKJV) Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), (2 Peter 3:2 NKJV) that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,*

Peter pretty much breaks this letter into 3 areas. Doctrine, Duty, and Declaration; this book takes on the framework of Ephesians, except Peter adds on the Declaration – The Lord is Returning – Remember that!

#### **Outline of 1 Peter 1**

#### **Doctrine: Remember Our Great Salvation (1:2 - 2:10)**

The Certainty of Our Salvation (1:1 - 1:12)

The Calling with Our Salvation (1:13 - 2:3)

The Chosen of Salvation (2:4 - 10)

#### **Duty: Remember Our Example Before Men (2:11 - 4:6)**

Honorable Living Before Unbelievers (2:11 - 3:7)

Submission to the Government (2:11-17)

Submission to Masters (2:18 - 25)

Submission in the Family (3:1- 7)

Honorable Living Before Believers (3:8 - 12)

Submission to One Another (3:8 - 12)

Honorable Living in the Midst of Suffering (3:13 - 4:6)

The Principle of Suffering for Righteousness (3:13 - 17)

The Perfection of Suffering for Righteousness (3:18- 22)

The Purpose of Suffering for Righteousness (4:1 - 6)

#### **Declaration: Remember Our Lord Will Return (4:7 - 5:14)**

The Responsibility of Christian Living (4:7 - 11)

The Rewards of Christian Suffering (4:12 - 19)

The Requirements for Christian Leadership (5:1 - 4)

The Realization of Christian Victory (5:5 - 14)

### **Theme**

He tells us to remember because of the theme of this book. The theme of this book is given to us in chapter 5:

*(1 Peter 5:10 NKJV) But may the God of all **grace**, who called us to His eternal **glory** by Christ Jesus, after you have **suffered** a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.*

He writes to us so that we may be:

*Perfect* - (mature) which means to mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair, to complete, to fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust, to fit or frame for one's self, prepare.

*Established* – to set fast, confirm one's mind.

Strengthen – to make one strong

Settle – to lay a foundation

## Theme – Suffering – Glory - Grace

First Peter is a letter of encouragement (1 Peter 5:12). The theme of suffering runs throughout the letter, mentioned some 16 times (1 Peter 1:11, 2:19, 20, 21, 23, 3:14, 3:17, 3:18, 4:1, 4:13, 4:15, 16, 19, 5:1, 5:10), but so also does the theme of glory, mentioned some 12 times (see 1 Peter 1:7-8, 11, 21; 2:12; 4:11-16; 5:1, 4, 10-11). One of the encouragements that Peter gives suffering saints is the assurance that their suffering will one day be transformed into glory (1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:13-14; 5:10). This is possible only because the Savior suffered for us and then entered into His glory (1 Peter 1:11; 5:1). The sufferings of Christ are mentioned often in this letter (1 Peter 1:11; 3:18; 4:1, 13; 5:1).

But suffering does not automatically bring glory to God and blessing to God's people. Some believers have fainted and fallen in times of trial and have brought shame to the name of Christ. It is only when we depend on the grace of God that we can glorify God in times of suffering. Peter also emphasized God's grace in this letter. "I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it" (1 Peter 5:12, niv).

## Grace

The word "grace" is used in every chapter (8 times total) of 1 Peter: 1:2, 10, 13; 2:19 ("thankworthy"), 20 ("acceptable"); 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12. Grace is God's generous favor to undeserving sinners and needy saints. When we depend on God's grace, we can endure suffering and turn trials into triumphs. It is grace alone that saves us (Eph. 2:8-10). God's grace can give us strength in times of trial (2 Cor. 12:1-10). Grace enables us to serve God in spite of difficulties (1 Cor. 15:9-10). Whatever begins with God's grace will always lead to glory (Ps. 84:11; 1 Peter 5:10).

## 3 Themes Unite

As we study 1 Peter, we will see how the three themes of suffering, grace, and glory unite to form an encouraging message for believers experiencing times of trial and persecution. These themes are summarized in 1 Peter 5:10, a verse we would do well to memorize:

[\(1 Peter 5:10 NKJV\) But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.](#)

## Hope Gives Us Strength

This confident hope gives us the encouragement and enablement we need for daily living. It does not put us in a rocking chair where we complacently await the return of Jesus Christ. Instead, it puts us on the battlefield, where we keep on going when the burdens are heavy and the battles are hard. Hope is not a sedative; it is a shot of adrenaline, a blood transfusion of the Living Savior flowing through us. Like an anchor, our hope in Christ stabilizes us in the storms of life (Heb. 6:18-19); but unlike an anchor, our hope moves us forward, it does not hold us back.

### The Big 3 – Peter – Paul - John

Peter has been called the Apostle of Hope. Peter is mentioned some 210 times in the NT, Paul some 160, and all the others combined mentioned around 115 times. As we study the themes of their writings we see the beautiful interwoven theme of - faith, hope, and love. Peter is the Apostle of Hope, Paul is the Apostle of Faith, and John is the Apostle of Love.

[\(1 Corinthians 13:13 NKJV\) And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.](#)

## Easy to Follow Train of Thought

It is not difficult to follow Peter's train of thought. Everything begins with salvation, our personal relationship to God through Jesus Christ. If we know Christ as Savior, then we have hope! If we have

hope, then we can walk in holiness and in harmony. There should be no problem submitting to those around us in society, the home, and the church family. Salvation and submission are preparation for suffering; but if we focus on Christ, we can overcome and God will transform suffering into glory. Peter gives us the Big Picture, he takes us out of our day-to-day lives, and shows us the big picture of what God is doing.

*Persecution to Come*

### **Written Before Intense Persecution Begins**

These people will need to remember these things, for not only are they dispersed from their homeland, they will soon be put to the fire of Nero. Peter is writing about 9 months before the intense persecution was going to begin against the Christians. For the most part the Roman Empire hadn't cared that much about the Christians, they just seems to be an annoyance to the Jews that caused them to be an annoyance to the Roman Empire. Most of the persecution against the Christians was coming from the Jews.

## **Rome in Flames /**

Historical writings tell us, it was July 19, AD64 Rome was in flames. Though it was never known who started it, it was on such a scale that it was clear that it was not an accident. Many writings said it was Emperor Caesar Nero himself who set the blaze. They say as Rome burned he sat on his balcony twiddling his fingers, just watching it burn, with a harpist playing in the background. He was bored with his world, nothing left to conquer, so in his mind if he could burn Rome down, then he could rebuild it. Rebuild it bigger and more fabulous, a tribute for the ages to come, a legacy for him to be remembered. One example of what he did, Nero had his men burn down the "Circus Maximus" which held over 100,000 people, and then rebuilt it to hold over 300,000 people. Nero wanted a Rome City that would immortalize him.

## **Christians to Blame**

As the citizens of Rome were outraged at the arson against their city, Nero accused the Christians of burning Rome, thus started the wave of persecution against the Christians. This persecution would run for almost 250 years and claim the lives of over 6 million Believers.

## **Twist Words**

He would twist the words around the words the Christians would recite. Like, they always talk about baptism by fire, they are strange people for they talk about eating flesh and drinking blood (referring to commune). He pointed out that the Christians were causing disruption and breaking up of the family (what was happening here was that a spouse was getting saved and refused to join in the sexual orgies and perversion that was prevalent in the region).

## **Foxes Book**

Foxes Book of Martyrs says that Nero would dip Christians into wax, tie them to a stake in his garden, light them on fire and race around them on his chariot, naked, laughing, screaming "light of the world", "light of the world". He would take live Christians and place them inside the gutted carcass of large dead animals and then let the dogs loose on the carcass.

## **Burn Own City / Timeline / Meeting with Paul**

To burn your own city down is insane. But if we look at the timeline we can see the cause of his insanity. Paul's first imprisonment was approximately 60-62AD, it was before Caesar Nero (the Emperor of Rome) began his all out persecution against the Christians. Paul's second imprisonment here is approximately 66-67AD (thus this writing is approx. 66-67AD). The timeline shows that it was shortly after his meeting with Paul that he started an all out assault against the Christians.

### **God Prepares His People**

We should always be ready, living in the light of His soon return, but history shows us that God repeatedly has prepared His people for major trials that were to come. These Christians who were dispersed were suffering already, but this would pale in comparison to the suffering that was to come. We see it here that Peter is writing to the Believers preparing them for this wave of persecution to come,

#### *Peter's Death & Desire*

### **Peter Crucified / Peter Wanted Man**

Shortly after the writing of these epistles, Peter will be crucified; Church History (not Biblical) says that Peter was crucified upside-down because he did not feel worthy to be crucified in the same manner of His Lord. Peter was a wanted man, he was writing as someone who understood their struggles. Nero wanted to kill Peter, among many others I am sure. After walking 3 years with Jesus, and 30 years of walking for Jesus, many people wanted to see him dead.

Foxes Book of Martyrs says:

*Among many other saints, the blessed apostle Peter was condemned to death, and crucified, as some do write, at Rome; albeit some others, and not without cause, do doubt thereof. Hegesippus saith that Nero sought matter against Peter to put him to death; which, when the people perceived, they entreated Peter with much ado that he would fly the city. Peter, through their importunity at length persuaded, prepared himself to avoid. But, coming to the gate, he saw the Lord Christ come to meet him, to whom he, worshipping, said, "Lord, whither dost Thou go?" To whom He answered and said, "I am come again to be crucified." By this, Peter, perceiving his suffering to be understood, returned into the city. Jerome saith that he was crucified, his head being down and his feet upward, himself so requiring, because he was (he said) unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord was.*

## **Feed My Sheep**

The Lord gave Peter a clear assignment, "Feed My Sheep". We follow him through Acts, from the Day of Pentecost to becoming a pillar in the church. And now it is 30 years later and he is still doing what God called him to do, feed His sheep. May that be our story, that should the Lord tarry another day or decade, that we would be found still being faithful to the assignment He gave us. Here is a man that has walked the walk, we are wise to listen and learn from him.

*John 21:17 (NKJV)<sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.*

## **Peter Desire to See Him Again**

Both Peter's epistles are heavy laden with the focus, the Lord's return is near. It isn't hard for me to imagine Peter's desire to see the Lord's return. He was the second disciple called (after Andrew), he walked with Jesus for 3 years, he ate with him, sang with Him, laughed with Him, cried with Him. He watched Him go to the cross, he saw the empty tomb, he saw the risen Savior, and then he watched Him leave as He ascended into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father, and then from that day he waited. How many times he must have looked to the skies looking for Him, everyday waiting.

*(Acts 1:9 NKJV) Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.*

*(Acts 1:10 NKJV) And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,*

*(Acts 1:11 NKJV) who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

He writes to us, to encourage us as we wait, to hold fast, remember the things written to us by the prophets and apostles, to not lose hope, and to keep looking up. He did it for 30 years, I don't think we will have anything near that to go.

Peter writes to us so that our passion doesn't dim, and if it has to rekindle it. He writes to remind us of our "Great Salvation", Our Example Before Men, and that Our Lord's Soon Return. He writes to stir us up, to Light the Fire Again. This is a wonderful Book to Study.

### **He Lives to Make Intercession**

Let me close with this thread regarding Peter, and you will see how it regards you as well.

First of all, may we be reminded, God is unchanging, and His heart for us:

**Malachi 3:6 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.



**Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever.

**Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Let *your* conduct *be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*"

**Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)** <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light."

**John 6:37 (NKJV)** <sup>37</sup> All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Jesus interceded for Peter:

**Luke 22:31–34 (NKJV)** <sup>31</sup> And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. <sup>32</sup> But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." <sup>33</sup> But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." <sup>34</sup> Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

He lives to make intercession for us, just as He interceded for Peter; and we can all agree His intercession for Peter worked.... And why would we have any belief other than, so too His intercession will work for us.

**Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV)** <sup>25</sup> Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

**Romans 8:34 (NKJV)** <sup>34</sup> Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

The intensity of Jesus' intercession was displayed in the Garden, and I believe is indicative of His intercession today for us:

**Luke 22:41–44 (NKJV)** <sup>41</sup> And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." <sup>43</sup> Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. <sup>44</sup> And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

We are and were always on His heart:

- I/we were on His heart in the Garden
- I/we were on His heart on the Cross
- I/we were on His heart today. I believe He is praying for every last person here today some specific, something just for you, for where you are at, what you are experiencing, what you need to hear in your heart for today.

Christianity is a personal relationship religion, with Jesus Christ, who is God. A relationship with the God who says – Come and I will

- Come, and I will change your heart!
- Come, and I will give you power over that addiction!
- Come, and I will give you power over that destructive behavior!
- Come, and I will give you a peace which passes all understanding, and overcome your fears!
- Come, and I will give love instead of that hatred

These are the things He is interceding for you on your behalf. But I/we have to meet Him along the way, He says Come and I will, and if/when we come, He can.

Peter I prayed for you, Ray I have prayed for you. I/we have to believe that He lives to make intercession, and what we say cant be done, is the very thing He is desiring to do.

And here are some applications for us, as we watched God accomplish in Peter, and what we too can apply to our lives personally.

First is the simple, follow Me, regardless of past failings:

**John 21:19 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Follow Him, regardless of how difficult it gets (as we see it is the theme of this Book, and Peter lived it and excelled in the midst of hardship and suffering).

**John 21:17–19 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. <sup>18</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." <sup>19</sup> This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

And, don't be looking back, looking back on whose doing what, or not doing what, who is here, and who is not, Jesus said what is that to you, follow Me, and Peter did and as they say, the rest is history!

**John 21:20–22 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" <sup>21</sup> Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."

Why did Peter "finish well", because Jesus said "come and I will....", because I live to make intercession, and Peter came, God did all that He said He would. And so too will it be for you and I because our God lives to make intercession.... And we need simply to "come".