

Standing in Grace

1 Peter 5:12-14



In Conclusion

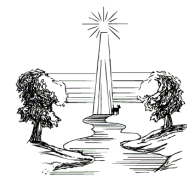
- ❑ Peter concludes his letter with final greetings. Read 1 Peter 5:12-14.¹
- ❑ Peter sums up his letter with these words: “I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it” (5:12b, NIV). Peter testifies to the truth of what he has written, and it’s all God’s grace. To truly “live well in an unwell world,” we desperately need God’s grace, and we need to stand firm in it.
- ❑ “God’s grace” may be generally defined as “God’s kindness and/or favor given to those who do not deserve it.” And *none* of us deserve it! To understand God’s grace, we need to see the “big picture” of God’s grace, which Peter presents in his letter. While most of Peter’s letter concerns what believers are to do in the present, he builds on the past and points to the future.

The Past

- ❑ In the Old Testament (OT) Scriptures, we begin to see God’s gracious plan to redeem the fallen creation. The OT promises and prophecies pointed forward to their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. As Peter writes in his letter, the gracious salvation that has come to Christians is the same salvation foretold by the OT prophets (1:10-12).²
- ❑ God’s gracious provision of salvation in Christ was planned before the creation of the world (1:20). Christ’s earthly life, death, resurrection and ascension are now historical events. If we have received Christ as Savior, our entrance into salvation is also an historical event (1:3).
 - 📖 “For Christ also suffered [and died] once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.” (3:18).
 - 📖 “...you were redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ” (1:18-19).

The Future

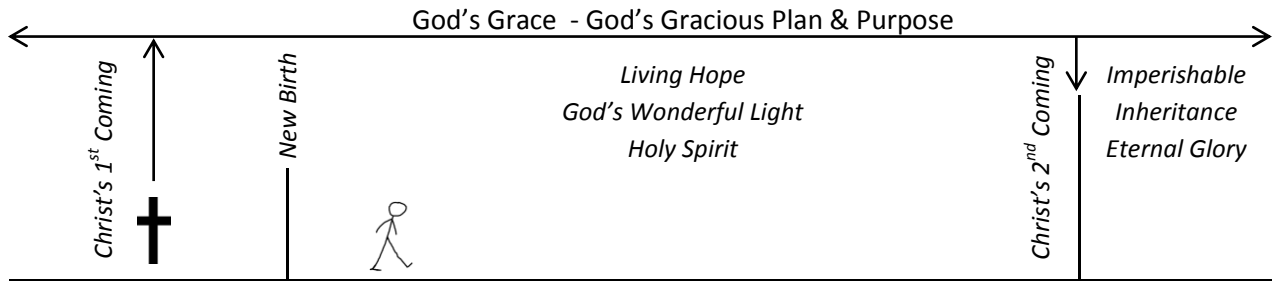
- ❑ Christians have entered³ into a “living hope” which includes...
 - 📖 “...an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time” (1:4-5, NIV).
- ❑ The path of Christ which we follow is the path of victory, honor and glory (1:7; 3:22; 5:6, 10). These blessings of God’s grace will be fully realized when Christ returns in the future.
 - 📖 “Therefore... set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming” (1:13, NIV).



¹ Verse 12: ‘With the help of Silas’ (*Dia Silouanou* – through Silvanus) – Silas was probably the courier of the letter but not necessarily a secretary as the NIV indicates. Silas (Silvanus) is probably the same man who was a courier of the apostles’ letter from Jerusalem (*Acts 15:22-23*) and accompanied Paul in his travels (*Acts 15:40; 6:19-29; 17:4-15; 18:5; 2 Corinthians 1:19*). He is also listed with Paul and Timothy in 1 and 2 Thessalonians (*1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1*). Verse 13: ‘She who is in Babylon’ probably refers to the church in Rome. As Babylon was the capital during the Babylonian exile, Rome is the capital during their present ‘exile’ (*1 Peter 1:1, 17; 2:11*). ‘Mark’ is probably John Mark (*Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37, 39; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11*), the author of the second Gospel.

² Peter’s letter is full of Old Testament references. In addition to 20 OT quotations, there are 31 to 41 OT allusions (D.A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007], 1015).

³ This entrance is called ‘new birth’ (1:3), which refers to the new life (regeneration) brought by the Holy Spirit.



The Present

- ❑ While our future is glorious, our present lives can be difficult. We are like “exiles” (resident aliens, foreigners, sojourners) on earth (1:1; 2:11). We face opposition, criticism, accusation, trials and suffering *because* we are followers of Christ (1:6; 2:12, 15, 20; 3:14-17; 4:12-16, 19; 5:8). So we need encouragement to stand fast in God’s grace (5:12).
 - ❑ As Christians, we need to remember who we are *by God’s grace*. We are “God’s elect” (1:1); God’s children (1:3, 14); God’s house (2:5); God’s people (2:9-10); set apart for God (1:2, 15; 2:9). We are “born again” into a new life (1:3, 23); gifted and strengthened by God’s grace (4:10-11); indwelt by the Holy Spirit (4:14); cared for by the Chief Shepherd (5:4, 7).
 - ❑ As God’s children, we are to think and behave appropriately. We are to be alert and of sober mind (1:13; 4:7; 5:8). We are to turn from evil and do good (2:2; 3:11; 5:9). We are to live honorably (2:12) and submit to authorities (2:13, 17-18; 3:1; 5:5). We are to clothe ourselves with humility (5:5) and willingly serve others (4:10; 5:2). We are to love one another deeply (1:22; 2:17; 4:8). We are to be holy in all we do (1:15).
 - ❑ We are to fear God (1:17; 2:17) and glorify Him (4:16). We are to entrust our lives to God (4:19; 5:6). We are to honor Christ as Lord (3:15) and follow in his steps (2:21; 4:1).
1. How does understanding “the big picture” of God’s grace help Christians stand firm? What practical steps can we take to always keep “the big picture” in mind?
 2. What else can help us “stand firm” in the Christian faith and life, even when we are facing opposition, trouble, or discouragement?⁴
 3. As you reflect on 1 Peter, what has impressed you? What has challenged or encouraged you? What questions do you have?

Reflection & Application

- Because of God’s grace, Christ died for our sin and shame, and was raised from the dead. Through faith, we can be restored to a relationship with God. Do you need to trust in Christ?
- Are you standing firm in God’s grace? Re-read 1 Peter, asking God to refresh you, and seek to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

⁴ Many things could be mentioned. Of course, it starts with God’s grace, faithfulness and power. We could also mention our knowledge of God’s word, faith, prayer, worship, fellowship, the encouragement of others, and ‘the armor of God’ (Ephesians 6:10-17). Also see 2 Corinthians 1:18-22; Colossians 4:12; and 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15.