

A Peek at the Character of Peter

Read Mk 8:27-33, Jn 13, to get a feel for Peter's personality.

1. What do these passages tell us about Peter's personality?

Walking on water: read Mk 6:45-52 (Mt 14:22-33)

2. Why is Jesus walking on water? (The context, provided by the preceding passage, is important.)
3. This miracle demonstrates Christ's lordship over nature. What experiences in the normal Christian life™ teach the Christian about Christ's lordship? (Feel free to give personal examples.)
4. How does Peter respond to Christ's rebuke of his doubting?
5. How should we respond when we face failures in our lives caused by our own doubts?

General Questions about Peter

6. What attributes of Peter make him the target for ridicule or criticism among Christians?
7. Why did Jesus choose Peter to be the first apostle and the rock on which the church would be founded?
8. Which attributes of Peter are worth imitation? Which are specific to the leadership position he filled?

EXTRA CREDIT

9. What was the name of the soldier whose ear Peter cut off?
10. Is it true that authentic English scones are made with bugs rather than raisins?

I Peter 1

What the passage says:

- 1) 1:3 refers to hope. What is it hope for? Is it hope the recipients of the letter already have or ought to have?
- 2) 1:5 refers to God's protection. What is God protecting them from, and how? What role does faith play?
- 3) What is the cause of the joy referred to in 1:8?
- 4) What is an example of the O.T. prophecies Peter was thinking of in 1:10-11?
- 5) What does Peter mean by "the Spirit of Christ" in v. 11 (cf. I Cor 10:4, 10)?

How it relates to our lives:

Peter describes believers who are being persecuted but are filled with hope and joy by the message of salvation, which the prophets foretold. He describes this persecution as playing a positive role in the lives of those he is writing to.

- 6) What do we (and don't we) have in common with the Jews of the Dispersion?
- 7) In what ways have we experienced God's protection in our own lives? What sort of protection can we count on from God? What do we currently fear most (if not most often) which Peter says God will protect us from?
- 8) In what ways have we personally experienced the hope and the joy which Peter describes? What can we do to experience it even more?

Background (from the J.B. Phillips translation intro):

- AUTHOR:** Peter, one of the original Twelve, writing probably from Rome, symbolically described as "Babylon." It is thought that Silvanus, or Silas, did the actual writing of the letter.
- DATE:** Almost certainly 64.
- DESTINATION:** This letter, like that of James, is addressed to the Christian Jews scattered, by the persecution or force of circumstance, to various parts of Asia Minor.
- THEME:** We are here largely concerned with the Christian's attitude towards

I Peter 1:13-2:3

- 1) **Review Question:** In v. 13 what is Peter concluding such that he start with the word “therefore?”
- 2) **Vv. 15-16:** What is holiness? What does it mean to be holy? How does one become holy? Is it something one “becomes?” What holds us back from doing so?
- 3) **V. 17:** How does one fear or reverence God? What are the outward signs of such a lifestyle? Do American Christians fear God?
- 4) **Philosophical & Theological Tangents:** (V. 17) What are the ramifications of this on judgement, individual potential, justice and mercy?
- 5) **V. 20:** What are some of the consequences of this concerning foreknowlegde/free will?
- 6) **Comment:** Hope resurfaces in vv. 13 and 21. Hope was the theme of v. 3 and will continue to be a major theme of Peter’s. Why?
- 7) **In Vv. 2:1-2:** What is spiritual milk? How does this compare with the “milk” as compared with “adult food” that Paul talks about in I Cor 3:2? What is our spiritual milk, in Peter’s sense?
- 8) **V. 23:** Should we talk about the “born again” term? Or is that old hat?
- 9) In the whole passage there are ten different commands or exhortations. Pretty dense, eh? What are they, do some seem more important? Are only some generally applicable to us? Are all of them normative?
- 10) In v. 22, obedience plays a purifying role! Obedience leads to love which is Christ’s greatest command! No questions here!

I Peter 2:4-12

Christ the Cornerstone & Us As Living Stones

Vv. 4-6

- 1) What is the significance of Peter using the stone metaphor to describe both Christ and us (in 6 Christ is identified as the cornerstone)?
- 2) What is the house that we are being built into? Is it significant that we are “being built” and have not yet “been built?”
- 3) The metaphor shifts in Peter’s description from describing us as the stones that make up the house to being the priesthood that works in it. What is our function as “stones” in today’s church? What is our role as the “holy priesthood” today? What types of “spiritual sacrifices” should we be offering on a regular basis?

Vv. 7-9

- 4) Christ the cornerstone is precious to believers but is a stumbling block (“rock of offense”) to those who do not believe. What does it mean to “stumble/take offense” (same Greek word as in these references: Mt 11:1-10, Mk 6:1-6, Rom 9:30-33, I Cor 1:22-25)? Can Christ be a “stumbling stone” to us?

Vv. 9-11

- 5) Why would these verses be especially meaningful to the Gentiles amongst whom this letter was circulating? Can they bring a similar message of hope to us? We don’t often focus on the delayed effects on others which result from “living good lives” as described in v. 12. This should be a source of encouragement to us! Note especially the terms describing the body of believers in v. 9.

Vv. 2:13-17 – Submission to Rulers

- 6) What exceptions are there (if any?!?!!) to the authorities instituted among men to which we must not submit ourselves?
- 7) How is it that by doing good we can silence the ignorant talk of foolish men? Doesn’t seem to work a lot for me!
- 8) How does v. 17 (*show proper respect for everyone...*) lend a balance to the prescription to submit ourselves to all earthly authorities?
- 9) Can anyone find a verse which indicates there is a divine speed limit greater than 65 mph?