



unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

v87

1 Peter

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1 Peter

1 ¹ I am Peter, whom Jesus the Messiah sent to represent him. I am writing this letter to you whom God has chosen to belong to himself. I am writing to you who are temporarily living in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, far away from your true home in heaven. ² God our Father chose you according to what he had already decided. He did this by his Spirit, setting you apart in order that you may obey him and in order that the death of Jesus the Messiah may make you members of a covenant with God. I pray that God will increase his kind acts toward you and make you more peaceful.

³ Praise God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus the Messiah! Because he is very merciful to us, he has caused us to experience the new birth by bringing Jesus the Messiah back to life after he had died. God did this in order that we would have hope that will never disappoint us, ⁴ that is, in order that we might inherit what cannot perish, be defiled, or fade, which is what God has kept for us in heaven. ⁵ God's power is guarding you by means of your trust in Jesus. He is guarding you in order to reveal your salvation at the final time when Jesus returns to judge everyone. ⁶ You rejoice a lot because of what will happen then, even though now for a short time many different hardships must grieve you. ⁷ These hardships happen in order to prove that you really trust in Jesus. That trust is more valuable to God than gold, which someone can destroy even though someone has tested it by passing it through fire. Because you trust in Jesus, God will praise, glorify, and honor you when Jesus the Messiah returns and reveals himself. ⁸ You love Jesus, although you have not seen him. Although you do not see him now, you trust him and rejoice with joy that you can hardly express, ⁹ because you are experiencing the result of trusting him: God is saving you from the guilt of your sins.

¹⁰ Long ago prophets investigated very carefully about God saving you. They spoke what God told them about God graciously saving you. ¹¹ They were trying to find out to whom the Spirit of the Messiah that was in them was referring to, and to what time the Spirit was referring to. The Spirit was referring to these things when he told them beforehand that the Messiah would suffer and that glorious things would happen afterwards. ¹² God told these prophets that it was not for their own benefit that he was revealing these things to them, but that it was for your benefit. Those people who preached the good news to you now have declared these things to you by the Holy Spirit, whom God sent from heaven, enabling them to do that. Angels would like to know more about what these people declared to you.

¹³ As a result of all these things, prepare your minds for action. Be alert. Be completely confident that God will graciously save you when Jesus the Messiah returns and reveals himself. ¹⁴ Because you obey God like children ought to obey their fathers, do not allow yourself to be controlled by the sinful desires you used to have when you did not know the truth about God. ¹⁵ Instead, just like God, the one who chose you to belong to him, is holy, act in a holy manner when you do anything. ¹⁶ Be holy, because Moses wrote in the scriptures that God said, "Be holy, because I am holy."

¹⁷ God is the one who judges what each person does, and he judges without bias. Since you call him 'Father,' behave in a way that shows you fear him while you are temporarily

living far away from your true home in heaven. ¹⁸ Behave in that way because you know that God paid to free you from behaving foolishly, as your ancestors taught you to behave. God did not pay to free you with things like silver or gold that will not last forever. ¹⁹ Instead, God paid for you to be free by the Messiah's priceless death on the cross. That death was like the deaths of the entirely perfect lambs that the Jewish priests sacrificed. ²⁰ God chose him to do this before he created the world. But it was now, in this last time period, that God revealed him to you. ²¹ Because of what the Messiah has done, you are trusting in God. He caused the Messiah to become alive again after he had died and has shown how great he is. As a result, you are trusting God and expecting him to do great things.

²² Because you have made yourselves pure by obeying the true teachings of Jesus in order to genuinely love other believers, love each other sincerely and fervently. ²³ Do this because God has caused you to experience the new birth. You did not experience this new birth by means of something that will perish. Rather, you experienced it by means of something that will never perish: the message about Jesus that came from God and truly lasts forever. ²⁴ We know that this is true because, as the prophet Isaiah wrote,

“All people are like grass, and everything that is great about people is like flowers in the grass.

Just as grass dies and flowers wither, so do people die and what is great about them only lasts for a short time,

²⁵ but God's message lasts forever.”

This message that lasts forever is the good news about the Messiah that we have declared to you.

2 ¹ Because these things are true, do not act wickedly or deceive others in any way. Do not be hypocrites, and do not envy others. Do not speak evil things falsely about anyone. ² Just as newborn babies strongly desire their mothers' pure milk, so you should strongly desire to learn true things about God so that by learning them you may become spiritually mature. You must do this until the time when God saves you completely from this sinful world. ³ You must do this because you have experienced that the Lord acts very kindly toward you.

⁴ You have come to the Lord Jesus. He is like a stone that is part of a building, but he is alive. Although people rejected him, God chose him and greatly values him. ⁵ And you are like stones that are alive. Like men build houses with stones, God is joining you together like a building in which his Spirit dwells. He is also making you be like priests whom he has set apart in order to do spiritual acts, pleasing to God, by means of Jesus the Messiah. ⁶ What Isaiah wrote that God had said in Scripture shows us that this is true: “Pay attention! I am placing in Jerusalem someone who is like the most important stone in the building. I have chosen him. He is very valuable. And anyone who trusts in him will surely never be humiliated.”

⁷ Therefore, God will honor you who believe in Jesus. However, those who refuse to believe in him are like the builders that someone wrote about in the Psalms: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the most important stone in the building.”

⁸ Isaiah also wrote in the Scriptures that the Messiah would be like

“a stone that causes people to stumble,

and a rock that offends people.”

Just as people become injured because they trip over a rock,

people become offended because they disobey God’s message;
that is what God determined would happen to them.

⁹ In contrast to them, you believers are people whom God has chosen for himself. You are like a group of priests who worship God and rule with him. You are a people group that God has set apart for himself. You are a people who belong to God so that you might declare the praiseworthy things he has done. He has called you out of your former manner of living, when you were sinful and ignorant about God, and he has made you understand the wonderful true things about himself. ¹⁰ What Hosea wrote is true about you who used to be “no people group at all,” but now are “God’s people group.” At one time “God had not acted mercifully toward you,” but now “he has acted mercifully toward you.”

¹¹ Fellow believers whom I love, you are like foreigners whose real home is in heaven. So I urge you not to do the things that your sinful human natures want to do. Those desires will destroy you. ¹² Behave well among those who do not know God in order that, concerning the things you are doing, which they falsely say are evil, they will see that you are actually doing good things and they will honor God when he comes to judge everyone.

¹³ In order to honor the Lord Jesus, obey everyone who has power to govern people. This includes the king, because he has the greatest human power. ¹⁴ It also includes governors, because the king has sent them to punish those who do evil things and to praise those who do good things. ¹⁵ Obey those who govern people, because this is what God wants: He wants you to do good things in order to stop fools who do not know God from being able to ignorantly say that you have done evil things. ¹⁶ Obey those who govern people as people who are free to do so voluntarily, but do not try to use your status as free people to hide evil deeds. Instead, obey as those who serve God should. ¹⁷ Be respectful to everyone. Love all your fellow believers. Revere God. Be respectful to the king.

¹⁸ You household slaves who are believers, submit to your masters with a completely reverent attitude. Do this not only to those masters who act very kindly toward you but also to those who act unjustly toward you. ¹⁹ Submit to your masters, because this is something that God prefers—if someone endures hardships and suffers undeservedly because that person is aware of who God is and what he wants. ²⁰ Submit to your masters, because there is certainly no honor for you if you endure when someone beats you because you have sinned. However, this is something that God favors: if you endure when you suffer even though you did what is good. ²¹ God favors this because he has called you to suffer while doing what is good. He has called you to this because the Messiah also suffered for your sake in order to be an example for you with the purpose that you would imitate what he did.

²² “He never sinned.

And he never said anything to deceive people.”

²³ When people insulted him, he never insulted them in return.

When he suffered, he never threatened those who caused him to suffer.

Instead, he trusted God, who always judges rightly, to prove that he was innocent.

²⁴ The Messiah himself was punished for our sins in his body **when he died** on the cross with the purpose that we would live rightly because we are no longer controlled by sin.

God has healed you because people wounded the Messiah. ²⁵ **God healed you** because you were **alienated from God** like sheep that had become lost, but now God has brought you back to Jesus, who cares for you and watches over you **as a shepherd cares for his sheep**.

3 ¹ In a similar way, you women **who are believers**, submit to your husbands. **Do this** in order that you may persuade any husbands who do not believe the message **about the Messiah** to become believers without you saying anything to them. ² **They will believe in the Messiah** because they see that you behave sincerely and **act** reverently **toward them**. ³ Do not make the outside of your bodies beautiful by having fancy hairstyles or by wearing gold jewelry or fine clothes. ⁴ Instead, make your unseen mind beautiful in a way that will never fade. I mean, have a humble and peaceful attitude. This is something that God values very much. ⁵ **Do this** because this is the way that the women who lived holy lives long ago made themselves beautiful. They trusted in God and submitted to their husbands. ⁶ Sarah, for example, obeyed her husband Abraham and called him **her** master. God will consider you to be her daughters if you do good deeds and are not afraid of anything terrible happening to you.

⁷ You men **who are believers**, in a similar way, dwell together with your wives in an understanding manner. **Treat them as you would treat** someone who is weaker **than you are**. Honor them as those who will also receive God's gracious gift with you, which is eternal life. **Do this** so that nothing will hinder you from praying.

⁸ To end **this part of my letter**, I say to all of you, have the same mindset **among yourselves**. Be sympathetic **toward each other**. Love each other as fellow believers. Act compassionately **toward each other**. Be humble. ⁹ When people do evil things to you or insult you, do not do the same to them. Instead, bless them, because that is what God has chosen you to do in order that he may bless you. ¹⁰ **We know that this is true** because, as David wrote,

“As for those who truly want to enjoy good lives,
they must not say evil things or speak deceitful things.

¹¹ They must also refuse to do evil, and do what is good **instead**.
They must diligently strive to have peaceful relationships with other people.

¹² **They must do these things**, because the Lord watches over righteous people.
He listens **and responds** to the prayers of righteous people,
but he opposes people who do evil.”

¹³ It is unlikely that anyone will harm you if you are eager to do what is good.

¹⁴ However, even if you suffer because you did what was right, God will bless you. “Do not be afraid of or troubled by the things that other people fear.” ¹⁵ Instead, acknowledge in your minds that the Lord Messiah is holy. Always be ready to answer anyone who asks you to tell them about what you are confidently expecting **God to do for you**. ¹⁶ But **answer them** humbly and reverently, while not doing any wicked thing, in order that God may shame those who despise the good things you do as people united with the Messiah. **God will shame them** regarding the very things they are speaking falsely against you. ¹⁷ **Do these things** because, if God wants **you to suffer**, it is better for you to suffer because you did what is good than **to suffer**

because you did what is evil. ¹⁸ This is true because the Messiah also suffered. He suffered one time for the sake of other people's sins. He was a righteous person who died for the benefit of unrighteous people. He died in order to enable you to be with God. Although people killed him, God's Spirit caused him to become alive again. ¹⁹ The Spirit also enabled him to go and announce God's victory to the evil spirits whom God had imprisoned. ²⁰ Those evil spirits disobeyed God long ago, during the lifetime of Noah. When Noah was building a big boat, God waited patiently to see if people would stop doing what is evil. Only a few people were saved in that boat. Specifically, God brought only eight people safely through the waters of the flood. ²¹ That water is a symbol that represents the baptism which now saves you. This baptism does not wash dirt off of your bodies. Instead, it shows that we are asking God to assure us that he has forgiven our sins. This baptism saves you by means of God having caused Jesus the Messiah to become alive again. ²² After God caused every evil and powerful spirit to submit to him, the Messiah went to heaven, where he is at the place of highest honor next to God.

4 ¹ Therefore, because the Messiah physically suffered, prepare yourselves to suffer as Christians by thinking about suffering the way that Jesus thought about suffering. Do this because those who physically suffer are no longer involved in sin ² in order that they would not do the things that sinful people want to do during the rest of their lives. Instead, they live to do the things that God wants them to do. ³ I say that to you because you have already used too much of your lifetime doing what the people who do not know God like to do. Like them, you committed sexually immoral and lustful acts, got drunk, participated in immoral parties and drinking parties, and worshiped idols, which God has forbidden. ⁴ Regarding those things, people who do not know God are surprised that you do not join with them anymore when they do these recklessly immoral things. As a result, they say bad things about you. ⁵ One day these people will have to admit to God everything that they have done. He is the one who will judge all people. ⁶ This is the reason why people preached the good news about Jesus to believers who are now dead: in order that those believers who, although people judged them according to human standards during their lifetimes, by means of the Holy Spirit now live forever according to God's standards. ⁷ All things on this earth will soon end. So think sensibly and clearly in order to pray well. ⁸ Most important of all, love each other sincerely, because if you love others, you will forgive them for many sins that they may commit against you. ⁹ Provide food and a place to sleep for fellow Christians who come to you, and do it cheerfully. ¹⁰ Serve your fellow believers with the gifts that God has given you. Manage well the various gifts that God has kindly given you. ¹¹ Those who speak should speak as if they were speaking words that God has spoken. Those who serve others should serve them with the strength that God gives them. Do so in order to glorify God by doing everything that Jesus the Messiah enables you to do. I pray that everyone will see how glorious and powerful he is forever. May it be so! ¹² Fellow believers whom I love, do not be surprised by the painful things you are experiencing. Those things are testing you as people test metal by putting it into a fire. Do not think that something unusual is happening to you. ¹³ Instead, rejoice to the degree that you are suffering the same kinds of things that the Messiah suffered. Rejoice when you suffer, in order that you may also be very glad when the Messiah returns and shows everyone how glorious he is. ¹⁴ If other people insult you because you believe in the Messiah, God has blessed you, because your suffering shows that the Spirit of God, the Spirit who reveals how great God is, dwells within you. ¹⁵ Make sure that you do not suffer because you murdered anyone or stole anything or did some other kind of evil thing or because you interfered in someone else's affairs. ¹⁶ But do not be ashamed if you suffer because you are a Christian. Instead, praise

God that you have the name “Christian.” ¹⁷ I say this because it is now time for God to begin judging people, and first he will judge those who belong to him. Since he will judge us believers first, think about what terrible things will finally happen to those who do not obey the good news that comes from him! ¹⁸ Solomon also wrote in the Scriptures,

“If righteous people must suffer many difficult trials before going to heaven, how much more will the ungodly and sinful people surely suffer!”

¹⁹ Therefore, those who are suffering because God wants them to suffer should trust God with their lives while continuing to do what is good. God is the one who created them, and he always does what he promises to do.

5 ¹ Now I, Peter, urge those among you who are elders who lead the assemblies of believers; I am also an elder. I personally witnessed the Messiah suffer, and I will share in his glorious nature that God will soon reveal. ² You elders, take care of the believers with you as if you were shepherds who take care of their flocks of sheep. Take care of them not because you must do it, but because you really want to, as God desires. Do not do this in a greedy manner to get money for doing it, but do it enthusiastically. ³ Do not act like domineering bosses over the people whom God has assigned to you. Instead, be good examples to those believers by how you conduct your lives. ⁴ If you do those things, then when Jesus, who is like our ruling shepherd, appears, he will give each of you leaders a reward. That reward will be glorious and will last forever.

⁵ In a similar way, you young men, obey the elders who lead the assemblies of believers. Now all of you believers should act humbly toward each other because what Solomon wrote in the Scriptures is true: “God opposes proud people, but he acts kindly toward humble people.”

⁶ Since that is true, humble yourselves before God, who has the power to save and to punish people, in order that he may honor you at the proper time. ⁷ Trust God to take care of everything that worries you because he cares about you.

⁸ Think clearly and alertly, because the devil is your enemy, and he is going around, looking for people to destroy. He is like a lion that roars as it searches for people to kill and eat. ⁹ Resist the devil by continuing to firmly trust in the Messiah and his message. Do this because you know that your fellow believers all over the world are suffering in similar ways.

¹⁰ But after you have suffered for a brief time, the God who acts kindly toward you in every way will himself restore what you have lost and will completely strengthen you in every way. God is the one who chose you to experience his glorious presence in heaven forever as you are joined to the Messiah. ¹¹ I pray that he will rule powerfully forever. May it be so!

¹² Silas has written this letter for me as I have dictated it to him. I consider him to be a faithful fellow believer. I have written this short letter to you in order to encourage you and to declare to you that what I have written is about the true and gracious message from God. Continue to firmly believe this message!

¹³ In this city that we call ‘Babylon,’ the believers, whom God has chosen to belong to him just like he chose you, send their regards to you. Mark, who is like a son to me, also sends his regards to you. ¹⁴ Affectionately greet each other with a kiss to show that you love each other. I pray that God will continue to make all you who are joined to the Messiah feel peaceful.