

# Chosen Exiles: Hope for a Scattered People

*Studies in 1 Peter for the White Station Church of Christ*

## **Week #1**

*These questions are designed to help you explore background information to 1 Peter.*

### **Video 1 – The Writer: One Man’s History**

1. Name two or three biblical authors whose life backgrounds seem to have qualified them to deliver uniquely powerful messages to God’s people.
2. Answer the following questions about Peter:
  - a. What do we know about his family background? Matt 16:17; John 1:40.
  - b. How did he and his brother come to be followers of Jesus? John 1:35-42; Mark 1:14-20.
  - c. Was Peter married? Mark 1:30; cf. 1 Cor 9:5.
  - d. How did he die?
3. What personal history did Peter have that made him appropriate to write this epistle?
4. Rubel characterizes the development of Peter’s faith this way: *untested faith, tested faith, renewed faith*. Do you understand that language? Agree with it?
5. Have you ever felt “bullied” or “threatened” for your faith? Realized that your faith was being “tested”? Been able to encourage someone else facing a similar threat or test to one you have faced before?

### **Video 2 – The Recipients: What Peter’s Readers Were Facing**

1. Where was Peter when he wrote this? To what (modern) map area is this letter addressed?
2. In what sense were the recipients of this letter “exiles”? “Dispersed” or “scattered”?
3. Were Peter’s readers experiencing a formal, empire-wide persecution or a local, confined opposition? In what sense were Christians being made “scapegoats”?
4. What historical event in Rome is critical to know about in connection with this letter? What do you know about Nero? The great fire of A.D. 64? The types of rumors, bullying, and tortures the Christians faced under Nero? The fates of Peter and Paul?
5. How does Paul’s language at Philippians 3:20 fit this letter’s background story?

### **Video 3 – The Epistle: An Overview of Peter’s Counsel**

1. From what you learned from the first two videos, what message(s) do you think would be most important for Peter to deliver to his reading audience?
2. The first move of the epistle (1:3 – 2:10) is to emphasize **The High Calling of Christians** as God’s chosen, cleansed, and sanctified people. *Why was this so critical?*
3. The second move (2:11 – 4:11) is a description of **God’s Chosen People in a non-Christian World**. Scan that material to notice the different *groups* and *individuals* to whom guidance in Christian living is given. *Why is this so important to the letter?*
4. The final section of the epistle (4:12 – 5:11) is specifically about **Suffering as a Christian**. Do you see the irony of language at 4:12? *Why does this come last in the epistle?*
5. The ultimate challenge to Christians in the Roman Empire would be the choice between one’s willingness to say “Caesar is Lord!” versus “Jesus is Lord!” How does that play out in the first few centuries? In our own period of history, how can this choice present itself?