

# FIRST PETER

## The Christian's Life in Exile —Part 30

### “The Testimony of Peter”—November 22, 2015

*“And so we take our leave of thee, thou generous, impulsive, wayward, impetuous, yet true-hearted man of God! We have come to know ourselves better through our acquaintance with thee...Now thou hast ascended to the true Mount of Transfiguration, whereupon thou dwellest...and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, may there be for us as for thee ‘a crown of glory that fadeth not away.’”*  
—William M. Taylor’s closing words in *Peter the Apostle* (1876)

#### Concerning Martyrdom

- The term *martyr* is from the Greek word **μάρτυς** which means \_\_\_\_\_. [Steven in Acts 7:1-60]

*“[These] early Christians...believed that martyrdom was not something that one chose, but something for which one was chosen by God. Those who were chosen were strengthened by Christ who suffered for them, and for that reason were able to stand firm. Their firmness was not of their own doing, but of God.”*—Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity—Vol. 1*

#### The Misguided Martyrs of Paris:

1. Those who are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ themselves and others.

⇒ \_\_\_\_\_

2. Those who are willing to die for that which is exclusively \_\_\_\_\_.

⇒ \_\_\_\_\_

- Only Christianity offers a proper balance between the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and \_\_\_\_\_ of life.

#### The Ministry of Peter

- Jesus’ last words to Peter shaped the rest of his life and ministry. —John 21:15-17

- How did Peter ‘feed’ Jesus’ sheep?

1. Proclaiming the Gospel—(Acts 2:14-41; 4:11-36; 10:9-48)

2. Shepherding the flock of God

⇒ Shaping the doctrine and practices of the early church—(Acts 10:44-48; 15:7-11)

⇒ Establishing churches

- \* Jerusalem—(Acts 2:42-47; 11:1-18)
- \* Antioch—(Gal. 2:11-21)
- \* Corinth—(1 Cor. 1:12, 9:4-5)
- \* Asia Minor—(1 Pet. 1:1-2)

⇒ Serving as an elder in a local assembly—(1 Peter 5:1-4)

## Peter's Last Years: A Testimony From Silence

It's very difficult to piece together an outline for the events and locations of the last phase of Peter's life and ministry. Following the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 and brief references by Paul in 1 Corinthians and Galatians, all we know of the end of Peter's life is derived from his epistles (1 & 2 Peter) and from the early church fathers.

### Peter's Writings:

- ⇒ 1 Peter was written to declare to Christians the true grace of God and exhorting them to live in accordance with it in the midst of suffering during their time in exile (1:1-2; 5:12)
- ⇒ 2 Peter was written just before Peter's death to remind Christians of all they had in Christ (1:3-4) and that they were to live out these truths (1:12-14) so that they might be guarded from false teaching (2:1-22) as they awaited the return of Jesus (3:1-18).
- ⇒ It is also quite likely that Peter played a significant role in the writing of the Gospel of Mark. Given his close association with Mark (1 Pet. 5:13) as well as how he is portrayed throughout the Gospel, this is highly likely.

What we know of Peter's life should remind us that our lives and ministries have \_\_\_\_\_. (Ecc. 3:1-8)

Our continued perseverance and \_\_\_\_\_ in the seemingly mundane seasons of life is just as important in God's sight and glorifying to Him as are the seemingly dramatic things that He may do in our lives or use us to accomplish.

### Peter in Rome:

- There are some who debate whether or not Peter was actually in Rome when he died.
- The earliest sources that we have outside of the Scriptures, however, indicate that it was there that he served during the last season of his life and was eventually martyred.

The Epistle of 1 Clement (95-97 AD)—Declared that Peter and Paul both suffered martyrdom.

Ignatius of Antioch's Epistle to the Romans (105-110 AD)—Seems to imply that both Peter and Paul served important roles in the church in Rome.

Irenaeus' Against Heresies (180 AD)—States directly that both Paul and Peter helped to establish the church at Rome.

### John 21:18-19

"Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

### 2 Peter 1:13-15

"I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things."

Eusebius of Caesarea's Church History (Early 4th Century AD)— "*Peter appears to have preached in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia to the Jews of the dispersion. And at last, having come to Rome, he was crucified head-downwards; for he had requested that he might suffer in this way. What do we need to say concerning Paul, who preached the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and afterwards suffered martyrdom in Rome under Nero? These facts are related by Origen in the third volume of his Commentary on Genesis.*"

## Psalm 23 — Psalm 34:18-22

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To Him be dominion for ever and ever. Amen.