

Book	1-Peter
Study	Study 1
Topic	Introduction and Life as Exiles
Reference	1 Peter 1:1-2
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Speaker	Dr Peter Ng

1 Peter 1:1-2 (ESV) **Peter**, an **apostle** of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

So, these two verses are packed with a lot of interesting things. First of all, Peter an apostle. Now Peter is mostly the most outspoken of all the apostles. He is the boldest one. He is the one that says whatever comes to his mind, but an honest fellow. He was born at the turn of 1 BC; he was martyred in Rome in 67 AD. Jesus changed his name to 'rock'. Cephas was his old Aramaic name. He was follower of John the Baptist, brother of Andrew and he actually comes from Bethsaida, which is around the sea of Galilee. So, he is not like Paul who was a theologian. Paul writes his own letter, highly refined, he is a pharisee. Peter was an average factory worker. He is a fisherman. Fisherman in those days are like fisherman today. So, they were very rough and tumble people. Mark tells us how Peter's mother-in-law was healed by Jesus of her fever.

Peter met Jesus when he was trying to catch fish all night and didn't quite get there and then Jesus came and then Jesus asked him to through the net over the other side, Peter said, hey look man we have tried all night, we are professionals and not amateurs. But he answered Jesus and put the net on the other side, they caught a lot of fish and then suddenly Peter realized that Jesus was divine

Luke 5:8 (ESV) But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Then,

Luke 5:10-11 (ESV) And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him

This is actually quite astounding. You just have one miracle and he actually give up the entire livelihood. Now the reason why Bible writes things like that is to illustration the authority of Jesus. I am sure there was a lot of conversation there

which was not recorded, but Luke just summarizes the conversation. Fisherman were gruff, unkempt, vile, shabbily dressed, and often used vulgar language. Man's man. They were full of vigor and had boisterous tempers. He is the one that was with Jesus all throughout the ministry. He was at the Mount of Transfiguration. He is the only one who had a view of Jesus from underwater when he fell down into water. He was the one who actually answered Jesus's question in Mark,

Mark 8:29 (ESV) And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ."

So that's Peter. He is so controversial. On one hand, he is brave enough to get the sword and chop the fellow's ear and yet when the little girl asked him, do you know Jesus and he refused. Three times he actually betrayed Jesus Christ. So, it is a little big enigmatic. He was brought back from Jesus. He was one of the first few men who actually ran and discovered the empty tomb. Then we have Jesus, the risen Christ, cooking some fish and then Peter sees him from far away and instead of running from Jesus, now he runs towards him. Why? Because he knows he has been covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.

First sermon preached by Peter and 3000 people became Christian. Fantastic ministry. He was the first person to preach to Samaritans. He preached to Cornelius and his family and brought them to Christ, they were basically gentiles. He probably have not written this letter in Greek because he was a fisherman. If we look in chapter 5, it says

1 Peter 5:12-13 (ESV) By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it. 13 She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son.

So therefore, he didn't actually used his hands to write it, but he wrote it using a secretary, which is very-very common. Even Paul uses secretaries to write. Mark is like his disciple, so therefore when Peter writes the Book of the gospel. The only gospel attributed to Peter is book of Mark because Mark is the disciple of Peter. If you actually look at the Gospel of Mark, it is actually the Gospel of Peter, because Mark is actually nobody. So, this is the background that you actually get.

Peter was with Jesus in most of the things and basically in the end he was martyred in Rome in 64 to 67 AD. He was hanged upside down.

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Now the word is important because we are talking about the exiles of the dispersion. This word applies to the Jews. The Jews were exiled all over the Mediterranean and this particular letter goes to the dispersed Jews. Now he is not writing to Jews, he is writing to Christians. There is an important word, 'elect exiles'. Why are we exiles? We are exiles because we are elect and are suffering. If you look in 1 Peter

1 Peter 1:6-7 (ESV) In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7.

So, because they are exiled, because they don't belong to where they have migrated, they are actually suffering by various trials. In chapter 2, again he uses the same word

1 Peter 2:11 (ESV) Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

So, this theme of the church being exiles are not really belonging to where they actually sit in, it is a common theme through Peter and is the cause of a lot of the suffering. So the challenge of living as strangers and exiles, it is counterculture, there are problems and opportunities. As we know, you live in a different culture people will be against you. We have rise of antisemitism all over Europe. France reports 74% rise in offences against Jews and Germany records 60% surge in violent attacks. Jews are the most common people to hate, I don't know why. In the old days, it was because of the nature of their faith. They only believe in one God and if you believe in one God and you don't accept everybody's God, it means you are very charitable. When you say there is only one God, it makes you very-very antagonistic

"Exclusive nature of the monotheistic Jewish faith, the apparent haughty sense of being a chosen people, a refusal to intermarry, a Sabbath observance and the practise of circumcision were all things that marked Jews out in antiquity for a particular odium."

That's why people persecuted the Jews at that time. not only that, later on the Jews were also persecuted because of Jesus Christ. A lot of Christians persecuted them, because they killed Jesus Christ. Martin Luther for example, hated the Jews.

The New Israel are the people of God. So, Peter is aligning the Christians with the Jews as it were, in a similar fashion because they were monotheistic as well.

Persecution of Christians even today is rising, it is very-very bad. So, the role of suffering is important because suffering burns away false hopes and distractions, reminds us of our true hopes. Actually, the paradox is, suffering actually deepens your faith. So therefore, it is very-very important when we actually study this book

to understand the context of suffering in all our lives. If you are a Christian and you don't suffer you are probably not a Christian. Everybody suffers, it is a matter of how you handle suffering and whether it is by illness or accident or something else and what Peter would teach you will have valuable application throughout your life.

So here we are talking about exiles or resident aliens. They are misunderstood, alienated, discriminated against education, employment. Here is an article from Christopher Teh Boon Sung. He writes,

Like any responsible parent, I would like my child to flourish. I want my son to learn, live, work, and love in a society that is intellectual, sophisticated, adaptable, and culturally-rich, one that provides him with opportunities to discover his talents and use them to lead a meaningful and productive life. That Malaysia is still far from being such a nation is not what upsets me. No, what upsets me the most is that Malaysia is regressing from being such a nation, that the country today is becoming increasingly oppressive, intolerant, narrow-minded, and unscientific, and that the rot in Malaysia is simply this: the Malaysian mind is closing.

So there is a tension between the racist, even in this country because we are different. You actually have Ahmad Sabri who come out from UMNO recently and said,

"No country is governed by the minority. This is why I say our struggle is a jihad. It is a holy war to overthrow an anti-Islamic government. "When they took control of the government, the Islamic, Malay agenda was set aside because DAP is in charge," the UMNO leader added.

This guy is trying to magnify the differences between the immigrant race, which is basically the Chinese versus them. So you either live in this world as a tourist who is like those who live in a village far away. They have a different culture, different tradition, they never interact with anybody else, you go back it is like going back 200 years. So basically that is called withdrawal and Christians aren't supposed to withdraw. The other aspect is being immigrant. We actually blend with the population and you become them.

How do Christians live?

Peter is saying, we should be like the Nepali worker. We should have a dual culture and we are exiles but we are nonpermanent. There is a lot of tension. A good example is when you are a student overseas studying. You are there temporarily; you are engaged, and you work there but you don't share their values. You have different loyalties. You can't vote and you are temporary. Then there is a lot of tension because of that. Should you learn their language or not, these is always this tension because there is a difference of cultures. Now it applies to Christians. If you are talking about resident aliens, we are talking about being Christian. Because you

are elect, you have become alien. When you are alien, we are talking about Christianity being a culture, not a subculture. A subculture is like joining a bowling club. They all will have the same uniform and then they will talk different language. They will have certain goals in life. But when they are back of that club, they are different. A lot of people inside the church are like that, when they go to church they speak a different language, but when you go back to the world it is totally different. This is not what Peter means. Peter means, because you are elect you are in exile, because you are an exile it is the entire culture. It affects the way you think, the way you act, the way you feel, the way you work and the way you live and where you live. That's what he is saying. If you look at exiles in those days, Jeremiah writes to exiles who are Israelites in Babylon. He writes to them,

Jeremiah 29:4-7 (ESV) Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

That's the principle that wherever you are, we are to live, work, multiply, seek the welfare of our nation because if our nation does well you will do well as well. But the trouble is, we also have a tension because whatever you do in your country you are torn by two cultures. You are struggling, you are not exactly at home and psalm 90 says,

Psalms 90:1-2 (ESV) Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

So the only place where we are actually going to be at home is with God, but we are here temporarily. There was a movie based on the trilogy. It is about a bunch of hobbits. The hobbits were short, unimpressive people and these four of them went and joined forces with the race of high-end angelic beings, living in a mortal land, across what they call the Western Sea. They fight tremendous battles. They win honor and glory and go through ordeals and adventures through fire and water to win great triumph and they actually end up fighting Sauron and then they actually defeated Sauron and they came back and they saved their own homeland in the process.

When they came back, they were changed. They became leaders in their own community because they have a new perspective. They have been taken out of their homeland. They have seen things that their people have never seen. They laugh louder now, they sing better, they cry more, they are just bigger people, greater people. They have a depth of character and insight that their neighbor

simply cannot understand and yet they understand that there is greatness about them. So many of them become leaders in their community. In many ways, they help their homeland better than they had before they left. Why? Because they began to realize that there is something inside them that has changed. Something of the other life, the immortal land past the Western Sea has passed into their hearts and they are not the same anymore. They are not happy in their homeland anymore. They love their homeland and would have died for their homeland and yet it is not their homeland anymore and the other natives of the homeland don't understand them. They continually walk to sing songs to the beach and realize they don't belong here anymore and they sing,

*we remember, we remember,
we who dwell in this far land beneath the tree
the starlight in the Western seas*

You will realize that our true home is not here for us Christians. In many ways like the Hobbits you are going to realize that you got to be more useful to the people here, more integrity, more stability, more love, you are going to be very useful here, but they are not going to understand you. You walk off every Sunday morning and you sing songs about the land beyond the sea just like the Hobbits, we remember we who dwell in this land, we need to see the starlight on the Western sea. They are going to say, what is wrong with you, they won't understand. You will know why because you have a very complex relationship with the world. You are in the world, but you are not part of it, you love it and yet it hates you because you don't really belong here and that's the meaning of strangers and exiles. It is beautiful illustration of what being a Christian is. You are like a Hobbit who have experienced something wonderful in your life and you bring that wonder back into your own society and you are changed and you change your society and yet you long for a land beyond the Western Sea because that is what actually guides you. That is what a Christian should be.

John Stott says, *"It is not possible to be faithful and popular simultaneously."* Because you are a Christian, people would hate you. Jesus said, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). But unpopularity stems from unfaithfulness, not from hypocrisy. So, we are countercultural. Where we live, we cannot live like the people, we have to be countercultural. For example, we actually have a physical presence, embodied gathering. We are looking at a society today that is basically being into the cyber world. It is to re-sensitize to people of what it really means to be human. So, we are different. We have the Lord's Supper. We share moments together. We are also countercultural because we are a family.

If we look into relationships, human beings are supposed to flourish in community. The world is increasingly divided. It is divided according to race, divided according to political things or views which you hold and here you have a church, FBC, where you

have vision of being intergenerational. Culture, races, age, we are all united in Christ. When you go in a community, you will very rarely see that. You will see children together, youth together, different races on their own but you very seldom see in entirety where there are all sorts of different races, all sorts of different ages, all united by one person who is Christ and when the world sees that that's countercultural and then they wake up and say, oh my goodness there is something here that we have not seen before. So, it is this embodied unity amid diversity, which is a picture of the world to come, because you know, in Revelations it says, when we worship every tribe will be worshipping Jesus. Revelation says, every tribe, every race. So, it is diversity that can only be captured by the Holy Spirit of God and the world sees that and the church is so important, it is so countercultural. That's why we shouldn't split our church along, always the youth together, the old people together.

If a church has only old people, that doesn't reflect the vision of the church in heaven. In the church in heaven, you have got different people, different ages and different races and the power of Christ can do that.

Church is countercultural in its transformation:

The church is about transformation, the world is about, you are fine, I am fine, you are okay, I am okay, I don't come after you, you don't come after me. Now the church is not like that. So, you pursue authenticity but you do not change. You go the world, nobody will come after you to change, they respect you. You believe in this or that, they don't care about you. If you come to a church, it is about transformation. The church meets you as you are but does not let you stay. So, when you come to Gamma, I meet you where you are, which means we repent of our sins, we pursue repentance but I am not going to leave you alone, you have got to change. You have come here to change. You go to any other society, you go to a pub and you join the guys in the pub, they are not going to ask you to change, but when you come to church the countercultural transformation is that it meets you where you are but you do not stay the same. We meet together with solidarity in small groups in terms of brokenness, yes you confess your sin but we also grow in holiness. The only body that actually helps to grow ethically to be holier, more godly, more truthful, more loving, more kind, those things must be happening in your church. It is not happening because today we have a church where everybody is left on their own and nobody disturbs anybody else. That is not what the church is about, a church is about transformation, a church is about helping each other to change.

Countercultural Mission:

We actually have the world that has infected the church. We got people like Joel Osteen who say, your best life now. That's a very-very dangerous thing. When you say your best life now then you are actually going to worship comfort, glory, wealth

now. You are not going to suffer for tomorrow. We have a culture where people are always looking at themselves, everything is about themselves, but we should be countercultural in terms of our mission. If you live for yourself you would die. The countercultural Christian ethic is that we have got to grow and change so that we become great witnesses for the gospel and the glory of Christ. The best life is not now, is yet to come. The best life you can actually have now is a life of sacrifice, service, bearing your cross. Our vision is of living stones, a spiritual house, all of us glowing so that the world will see what Jesus Christ looks like. That is our vision and that vision has to include sacrifice. That is the way we change the world. That's how we live as aliens.

If you look at Rodney Stark, he is a non-Christian sociologist. He looked at the growth of the church and he has seen the church in the first 300 years of Christianity grow from 0.0126 of population to 300 AD to 56% of the population which is huge. It is a 40% growth per year on average. He looked at why the church grew? The church grew because of its response to human suffering. You have got three waves, 2nd century Antonine Plague, 3rd century Cyprian Plague and in 6th Century Justinian Plague. In each of these plagues 5000 people die in a single day. Normal people in Rome under Roman religion, if you are sick they throw you outside because the gods have forbidden you. It is that kind of society and yet the Christians responded and actually Rodney Stark looked at the growth of the church and growth of the church coincide with the three plagues. The more plagues you have, the more the Christians rapidly grew, why, because the plague showed that the Christians had countercultural mission. Their job was not to look after themselves but they look after other people and that's how the church grew.

If you look in the world today, the catholic orders devoted to care, the Mennonites in Holland, Quakers in England, each one of these groups embark on medical mission and the church grew as a result of that. If you look Emperor Julian the Apostate. He was the nephew of Constantine. Constantine did a lot of bad things as a Christian. Julian the Apostate saw all that and he really hated Christianity. In front of people before he became emperor, he was a Christian but when he became an emperor he went back and became a pagan and he started his own pagan religion, but even though he started his pagan religion he wrote this letter.

The religion of the Greeks does not yet prosper as I would wish, on account of those who profess it.... Why then do we think that this is sufficient and do not observe how the kindness of Christians to strangers, their care for the burial of their dead, and the sobriety of their lifestyle has done the most to advance their cause? For it is disgraceful when no Jew is a beggar and the impious Galileans [the name given by Julian to Christians] support our poor in addition to their own; everyone is able to see that our coreligionists are in want of aid from us.

What he is saying is that, hey my Greek religion nobody is helping each other. The Christians not only help their own poor, they also help our poor. This is coming from

a non-Christian who actually hates Christians. This is why Christianity grew. It is a countercultural thing. We actually are different, we act different, we actually have a completely different culture that's what Peter is saying. That will cause persecution and that will cause transformation. The time of the first 300 years most persecution happened and yet the most growth because Christians were resident aliens.

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

The whole idea of election is that too much depends on you. The whole idea of election is the foreknowledge of the father, in the sanctification of the spirit for the obedience of Christ, which means election is for the purpose of obedience to Jesus Christ. So here the foreknowledge of God the father, means God not only knows but God actually determines, because if you look at the same word in Greek in chapter 1 verse 20,

1 Peter 1:20-21 (ESV) He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 21 who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

The word foreknown means chosen ahead of time. So we are actually chosen. If we look at Ephesians

Ephesians 1:4-6 (ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

So we are chosen, which means if we are elected beforetime and because we are elected by God, He will call us, we will be born again, will be converted, will be justified, will be adopted and then we will slowly be changed into holiness, one day we die and we go to glory. The important thing is God's choice appears here, is absolutely wonderful and if you look at Spurgeon who gave us a very nice illustration,

To be chosen by God means you go to a suburb and you decided that salvation goes to this house and that house, that is called election. Now predestination is actually the precise road where salvation comes to you, the timing, the manner, the means, the moment and the spirit. So that means if we are talking about new converts, so God knows before they were even born that He wants him to be his son and that's called election and because he is elected somehow, he will find his way to the

church. It is actually all planned out by God. If you look back in your life, every step is like an individual road, it is all planned out, it is predestined. It is a wonderful doctrine. If you look at John, he says,

John 6:63-65 (ESV) It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed

You have to be appointed. Thessalonians says,

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5 (ESV) For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

So election is very important because it removes our pride. It puts the weight on his choice, which means before you are even a sperm or an egg, God choose you, which means you got zero worth, it is somehow He can choose you. If that's the case then you don't have to worry about how clever you are, how moral you are as it were to earn your way, basically He already made His choice. It gives you security and confidence because the cause of your election is outside yourself and is based on an unchanging God. It is very important for God to be unchanging. The security that we have is because the cause of election is outside ourselves and it is rooted in unchanging nature of God. The Word of God is heavier than the heavens and earth. The heavens and earth will fall away but the Word of God will never change. So imagine your security is rooted in the unchanging God, in the circumstance outside yourself. No matter how bad you feel about yourself.

So when you are elected, it means there is clarity and purpose in sharing gospel, because we know that when we share the gospel the chosen people will come up. The other thing about selection is that it gives you courage and joy in your trials because you are chosen by God, nothing bad will happen to you spiritually in the end, God will protect you all the way to the end. So this doctrine of election is extremely important. Some people say, did you choose God or did God choose you. It is like falling in love.

God's choice is ultimate, your choice is penultimate. He chose you and because He chose you, you actually choose Him. So there is no contradiction there. So we are talking about predestination and God choosing you. That's basically the cockpit view. When you look far up above, you will see God's point of view, He choose you a long ago. The street view is that you choose God, you came to Alpha and then

somebody shared with you the gospel and then you accepted. Because it was you who got the problem, because if it is all dependent on you, you are going to wonder, maybe I don't have the strength to make it, maybe I am not elected, maybe I have got to try to make my very best to make it, I can't really trust God, God not powerful enough to keep his word, I can't take it anymore, I better give up. If there is no election, if it is all up to you then you have got a lot of worries, because you never know when you are going to go.

If you are a Muslim there is no such thing as elected, you will not know whether your good works will outweigh your bad works, but if you are elect you know for sure, so important thing is that the foreknowledge, election and sonship all pushes it towards holiness and obedience, it is not towards power, prosperity and success that is false.

Sanctification:

"the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness."

So what we are chosen, we are going to experience the Holy Spirit. Here Peter talks about the foreknowledge by the father, sanctified by the spirit, obedience to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit makes you like Jesus Christ, it enables you more and more to die to sin and to live on the righteousness. So this sanctification process is not something which you can do actively on your own or some people say, let go and let God. This is wrong. The idea of human sanctification is basically human effort dependent on God's strength, which means I have decided to go to Gamma to learn, but I don't feel like it but I make a decision and somehow when you make a decision despite the rain and traffic jam somehow God brings you here. That is the power of the Holy Spirit.

So sanctification is both human effort, as well as, depending on divine power itself. How does God grow you? He cuts you; things will be taken away so that you grow in your faith, suffering will be put into your life and that's a fact. We will be refined like gold. Now refining of Gold process is very interesting. You have got gold, which is impure, you have got lot of dross inside when you actually melt it all the dross floats up and you skim it away and then you heat it again and you repeat this process again and again. How do you know when you are perfectly pure? The goldsmith says, it is pure when you look at the gold you can see your face. That's when you know the gold is pure enough. We are going to be so refined by God that one day God is going to look at your face and He will not see you, He will see a perfect reflection of Jesus Christ and mark my words, we are all in the process and I guarantee you, one day we are going to wake up or not and God is going to see His face in yours and that is a guarantee, you know why, because you have been elected, you have been chosen.

Now if that's the case, no matter how much pain and gold is melting, you are not going to be worried because God is going to have his glory reflected in your life and that's going to be the most. So you don't worry about your hair falling, you don't worry about your tummy, you don't worry about all the bad skin you have and your bad teeth and your halitosis because one day you are going to look like Jesus Christ and He is not bald. He is going to be the most beautiful person in the world. That's our vision, that's what Christianity is about. Christianity is about hope, that's why in the Roman Empire during that time Christianity grew about 40% per year to a 56% of population, why because all Roman empire has got no hope in its religion. Christianity gives you hope, it emancipates people, it looks into the full value of people, woman for the first time were not put up to be killed, woman had dignity and many-many more woman survived and then they are married and they there spouses became Christian. That's how the Christian grew in the first three centuries. It gives you hope.

How do we know that we are loved for sure?

Because we are sprinkled with his blood. The blood of Jesus Christ is proof that God so values you that He is willing to ransom his son for you, every single one of you. That's how it is, it is sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ.

So this is the vision. We are called to be exiles, why because we are elected. If you are not elected, you won't be exiled. We are a people where our hearts are towards that immoral land beyond the Western sea and yet we live in this land which we must have a counterculture to show them what Jesus Christ is like and because of that we will suffer, but when we suffer we will remember we are elected by God and nothing is going to change that. We are being transformed by the spirit and we have been sprinkled by the blood of Christ.