

## PETER'S EPISTLES

### **1 Peter: Living In Conflict With The Culture**

#### **XX. The Need For Godly Relationships During Apostasy**

##### **(1 Peter 5:12-14)**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. Several believers in different states have reported on the increasing difficulty they face in living in accord with Bible truth since doing so conflicts with the godless world's deteriorating culture around them.
- B. "First Peter was written to Christians . . . whose stand for Jesus Christ made them aliens and strangers in the midst of a pagan society" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 837), so we study 1 Peter for insight and edification.
- C. 1 Peter 5:12-14 in its New Testament context reveals the need for godly spiritual relationships during apostasy, so we view this passage for our insight and edification (as follows):

### **II. The Need For Godly Relationships During Apostasy, 1 Peter 5:12-14.**

- A. Peter wrote 1 Peter the year before the start of Nero's persecution of Christians (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Intro. to the First Letter of Peter: Circumstances of Writing," p. 1757), and fear of persecution at that time led some to defect from the faith as in the case of Demas in 2 Timothy 4:10 where Paul wrote 2 Timothy at the start of Nero's persecution. (Ibid., "Intro. to the Letter of Paul to Titus: Historical Background," p. 1723)
- B. Thus, it was necessary that in writing to believers facing persecution pressure, that Peter convey trust in other proven men in the Church that they might help stabilize and lead the Church were the apostles to be martyred.
- C. Thankfully, Peter closed his epistle by promoting the reputations of two men, those Peter's readers would thus trust, and the effect of Peter's promotion of these men had a profound effect on the Church in Church History:
  - 1. First, Peter supported the credibility of Silvanus his secretary who actually penned the epistle of 1 Peter:
    - a. Peter claimed that Silvanus was a "faithful" brother in Christ according to Peter's "opinion" (*logizomai*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 477), 1 Peter 5:12a ESV.
    - b. In accord with that opinion, Peter used Silvanus as his important secretary to write this epistle (1 Peter 5:12a), what in Peter's era would involve significant trust on the part of the author:
      - i. Secretaries in Peter's day "were allowed considerable freedom in writing down their master's ideas, even to the extent of filling in the contents of a bare outline. The master would check over and authenticate the finished product," so though "the language would be that of the amanuensis, the fundamental ideas would be those of the master," Zon. Pic. Ency. Bib., vol. Five, p. 433.
      - ii. Accordingly, in view of the "well known" truth of the "considerable freedom in writing" that secretaries like Silvanus would have with their masters' writings, Peter conveyed to his readers his trust in Silvanus' capacity to write his epistle as a reliable presentation of his teaching.
  - 2. Second, Peter called Mark his son in 1 Peter 5:13b, leading to the inclusion of Mark's Gospel in Scripture:
    - a. Mark's full name is John Mark (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to 1 Peter 5:14) whom Paul refused to take with him on his second missionary journey because he had abandoned Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, Acts 15:36-38. Barnabas and Paul so strongly disagreed on this matter that Paul took Silas on his second journey while Barnabas took John Mark to Cyprus likely to finish disciplining him, Acts 15:39-40.
    - b. Later when writing to the Church at Colossae, Paul gave special instructions regarding John Mark's probation as Mark sought to recover from his initial failure to assist Paul and Barnabas, Colossians 4:10.
    - c. Mark eventually so fully rebounded from his defeat that just before Paul's martyrdom, he asked Timothy to bring Mark with him because Mark was then profitable to Paul in his ministry, 2 Timothy 4:11.
    - d. News of Mark's spiritual recovery along with Peter's claim to be the spiritual father of Mark in 1 Peter 5:13 led the Early Church to include Mark's Gospel in the New Testament canon of Scripture as the first gospel to be included (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 95), and that with no challenge as to its canonicity! (Ibid., Ryrie, "Intro. to the Gospel According to Mark: Mark and Peter," p. 1397)

***Lesson:*** Since Peter in an apostate era supported the credibility of Silvanus who wrote 1 Peter as Peter's secretary and Peter strongly supported Mark as his spiritual son, the First Epistle of Peter and the Gospel of Mark were both further condoned to be canonical by the Early Church as it entered a time of great apostasy and persecution.

***Application:*** (1) May we hold to godly relationships during apostasy for the welfare of the Church. (2) For the same reason, may we be CAREFUL who we TESTIFY to be CREDIBLE in times of apostasy lest we do much harm to the Church by supporting unreliable men to others. (cf. 1 Timothy 5:22; Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to 1 Tim. 5:22)