

# **Series: 1 Peter**

## **Sermon #2: Peter: Tac Up!**

**1 Peter 1:13-25**

**Dr. Matt Cassidy --- April 18, 2021**

Well, good morning, Grace! Good morning, online! I hope everybody's sitting down. All right ... I'm bringing it today. 1 Peter 1:13-25 is coming at you –how to live as an exile. We're to live three ways.

Let me start with this. In the summer of 2014, the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria came into power. You know it as ISIS. And they felt like they were the Sunni jihadists. “Jihad” means “holy war.” And they started holy war. They were especially violent. They specialized in genocide. Anyone, everyone, who wasn't like them was to be killed. And they started with their fellow Muslims because they weren't Muslim enough. And then the Jews and the Kurds and the Turks. And when they found Christians, they would mark them.

They would put this marking on them. It is Arabic, a symbol for “the Nazarene”--the followers of Jesus the Nazarene.



And word got out. Christians in the Middle East were going to get tagged with this, and they said, “Well, then, let’s do it.” And they tagged themselves.



They wore shirts with that logo on it, they had pins made up. Some of them had it tattooed on themselves. And it spread throughout the world. Christians were saying, “I’m part of the Nazarenes, and I’m not hiding, and I won’t be alone.”

Those Christians in the Middle East feared God. And because they feared God, they didn’t fear anything else.

## **Context of 1 Peter: Rome Under Nero's Rule**

That's the same attitude of confidence and hope that Peter is trying to inflict upon us in the Book of 1 Peter. Because in the context of 1 Peter, it's the summer of 64 A.D. Nero, the Emperor of Rome, has burned the city for nine days. And to get out of trouble, he lies and blames this small group of already persecuted people, the Nazarenes, the followers of the Nazarene, the Christians. And now it is open season on God's holy Church.

That's the context in which Peter writes. Peter's writing people that are being persecuted unto death by this emperor Nero and his army and his media machine. And he's trying to help us to live joyfully in the context of storms and persecution.

## **1 Peter 1:1-12: This World Is Not Our Home**

And here's how he starts. He wants us to have a whole different worldview. He wants us to understand the way we are to think. We are to think as though we are aliens. This is not our home. We are foreigners. We are in exile. We're supposed to be different. We're supposed to be different because we have a different kingdom, we have a different authority. Therefore, we have a different set of values. So, we're not going to blend in. We're going to feel out of sorts. In the first few verses of 1 Peter, he starts off—and Peter's tender-hearted in these twelve verses—he's going to tell us who we are and what we have. And he tells us in such a special and nice way. He says who we are. He says that we are chosen exiles. It was all part of the Father's plan, and through the execution of the Spirit and the obedience of the Son, all three parts of the godhead have involved themselves in premeditating and ensuring that we would be God's chosen exiles—foreigners from somewhere else.

Our home is in heaven. And in this section, the first twelve verses, I mentioned that Peter's polite. It's literally in the Greek. It's in the indicative mood. He's going to indicate to us all that we are and all that we have.

## **1 Peter 1:13-25: Peter Coaches Us To Get Our Minds Ready**

And then in verse 13, there's a change of mood. Oh, there's a literal Greek change of mood. From this point on the mood in grammar will be the imperative mood. And Peter's going to bark out five exhortations right away. He's going to tell you how to be, how you ought to live. He's not talking like he is in the first twelve verses, informing you; he's coming after us. He's

going to come at us like a coach, or, probably better, like a drill instructor, because he wants you and me to wake up. Because if we get this wrong, people get hurt. People die. There are consequences for our decisions. And Peter is concerned that some of us just don't get it.

And so, since that's the way he's taught these verses, 13 through 25, I'll be doing the same thing, because mood is part of this truth, part of the message. So, here it comes.

### **1 Peter 1:13-16**

**Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming. <sup>14</sup> As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. <sup>15</sup> But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; <sup>16</sup> for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”**

Peter starts off with “Therefore ...” in chapter 1, verse 13. He starts with “Therefore ...”. In other words, *Since I already told you those things, that you're God's holy people*, he's going to come in and say, *Look, you need to tac up*. That means get your tactical gear on. He says, *Jock up—where's your helmet?* He's going to say here, *Suit up. Wake up, let's get going*.

Look what he says. We're supposed to live in holiness, awe, and love. “Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires that you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”

### **Hope Starts Here: Tac Up, Jock Up, Suit Up**

Here's what he's saying. Hope starts here. Before he starts talking about how to live in holiness and in awe and in love, he says that hope starts here. Hope is “tac up, jock up, suit up—you're mine.” The literal translation of that first sentence says this: “Therefore gird up your minds for action. Keep sober in spirit. Fix your hope completely on the grace that was brought to you on the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ.” He's literally saying, *Get dressed for war*. He's saying, on the back hand, *What are you doing wearing street clothes into combat? You should have tactical gear on. That's what “tac up” means. Look at you in your cute little loafers. We're*

*hiking fifty miles the first day. Your feet will be bloody. You won't have a chance. Do you know we're at war? Did you know that?*

He's literally saying, *Get dressed for war*, a literal, physical war. That's what those first few words mean. But he's not talking literally; he's talking metaphorically. And so, Peter is saying, *Suit up, tac up, jock up your thoughts, your mind. It's not a physical war; it's a mental war. It's a battle for your mind. It's a fight for your thoughts.* And that's why he's saying here, *Gear up your minds. Get sober. Don't you know we're in a war here? Think about your thoughts.*

In other words, not only just think about thoughts that are lies; but also, are you making decisions on feelings? This is no time to be consulting feelings about what is right and real and true. Peter and starts and ends this letter to his people because they're in trouble here. And there's a sense of urgency at the beginning and the end. He's saying, *Think; think soberly. You've got to watch your thoughts.*

### **1 Peter 5:8**

**Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.**

Look what he says in chapter 5, the last chapter: "Be alert and of sober mind." He's talking about thinking. Be alert and of sober mind. Why? Because "your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." *Listen, you're going to get killed here—your soul. Look—the enemy is not this Nero character and his army and his media machine; the enemy is the devil. Wake up your brain to this,* he's saying. Because the lion devours the weak thoughts, those who are sloppy in their thinking.

And some of us are sloppy thinkers. I mean, we're just taking in the lying liars in politics and media and social sites and stuff, and we're just taking it in. And the devil is playing us like a flute. And when the dance is over, he'll devour us. He'll spit us out. And it's no wonder so many people in the church live their lives ping-ponging back and forth between anger and fear. Here's why: they're not taking their thoughts captive. They're not suited up. They're not jocked up. They're not tactical in their thinking. They're afraid. Sloppy thinking is going to get us killed. That's what Peter is saying here. Wake up, suit up, tough-minded, sober thinking. That's the

world we're living in right now. That's how you're supposed to live right now. There's a devil and he wants to be between your ears.

You want to know more about that? I want to tell you about how awesome our youth group is, how wonderful it is. They just had a retreat talking about how the devil is out to destroy us. If you want to know how that works, you can come to their wrap-up tonight. It's at 6:30 right here in the worship center. You can bring a dinner if you want, come early and eat out on the picnic grounds. Or, if you don't want to do that, the youth group has put together for us a little temptation test. It just kind of shows what kind of things the devil is going to dangle in front of you so that he can devour you. You can go online at [grace360.org](http://grace360.org), go to "Youth Group," travel down on that site, and it will say "Temptation Test." Take that test. Talk about it amongst your friends and your family. I think it will be helpful. Because there's a devil out there and he's a roaring lion. He's going to devour the sloppy thinkers that don't know any better.

### **Look Up to the Object of Your Hope**

Peter says this: Tac up your mind. Sharpen up your thinking. And then he says this. Here's hope. He says, *Look up. Look up to the object of our hope.* He's going to tell us to be focusing on the triumphal return of our king. Here's the thing: sure, we get to know Jesus Christ in our justification. And then right now, yep, we are part of the sanctification process that the Spirit is working in our lives so that we can become like Christ. We know Christ, we become like Christ.

#### **1 Peter 1:13**

**Set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming.**

Peter keeps pointing to Jesus' return because we get to be with Jesus Christ. That day is different. We get to be with Jesus Christ. Look what he says in verse 13, "Set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming."

"Revealed"—you know the Greek word for "revealed." It's the word "apocalypse." In Greek, the word "apocalypse" means "revealed." This is the fourth time that Peter has used a reference to the apocalypse in thirteen verses—four times. And do you know why? Because he

wants us to be thinking about that ultimate expression of salvation that's coming later. Because his audience that he's talking to, that he's writing, is thinking, *What about justice?*

I can just hear a conversation with someone that has been killed by Nero and his gulag. And he gets to heaven and he pulls over an angel after the end times, and he says, *Hey, look, I just want to make sure on something. What about Nero? Was Nero brought to justice?*

And the angel says, *Nero? Like all those dogs?*

*What? Dogs named Nero?*

*Yeah. I mean, there's a lot of dogs named Nero.*

*People name dogs Nero?*

*Yeah. I guess you weren't there for that. But anyway, yeah, who are you talking about?*

*No, Nero, the great emperor of Rome.*

And the angel says, *Never heard of her.*

It won't matter then. Justice will come. Have you read about the apocalypse? When Jesus comes again, He's going to be riding a great white war horse that will have blood up to its stirrups—the blood of the justice of the King. That's what we're looking forward to. Oh yeah. Justice is going to be there. And on that day of justice you and I are going to have our hope in this; here's how we're going to survive that according to that passage. We are going to survive that because we are going to be absolutely doused in the smell of the grace of God, like some seventh-grade kid sprayed us with Axe spray. We will have this pungent aroma of God's grace on us, and that will cause demons to hack and cough and gag. That's what our hope is in—grace.

Look what it says: "Put your hope completely on the grace..." We're putting our hope on the grace "to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming." Two things: I want to make sure you get this. Where's your hope? It's not even in Jesus. Your hope is in the grace that you're going to receive on the day He comes into town riding that great white war horse and he's stirrup-deep in the blood of justice. We're going to be hoping in that.

But what else does it say? It says "completely." "Put your hope completely in that grace..." Not mostly grace and a little bit of my intelligence; not mostly grace and some of my contacts; not a whole lot of grace and some of my money that I have in savings. No. He says to put your hope completely in the grace that will be given to you at the revelation at the apocalypse of Jesus Christ. Because when you have some hope in that grace, all those other things you have

hope in are devoured by a roaring lion that comes in. I mean, that's going to get caught between his teeth and he won't even care. He chews up that hope all day long.

So, Peter is saying this. Let me make it clear. Look up. Look up completely at the hope in the grace that you'll receive on the day of the glorification; when we see Him; when we are with Him. That's how we're to live. That's our hope. That's how we live—it's hope.

How are we to live between this day and that day? How do we live from today until the apocalypse? He says there are three ways. **You want to live holy, you want to live in awe, and you want to live in love.**

### 1 Peter 1:13-16: A Life of Holiness

#### 1 Peter 1:14-16

**As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. <sup>15</sup> But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; <sup>16</sup> for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."**

Here we go—a life of holiness. He says, "As obedient children, do not conform"—don't slip into—"the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; as it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'"

This is how we're supposed to live—as obedient children. How are we supposed to live? Holy. How are you supposed to live holy? Literally, how do you do that? He tells us. It's two parts. And it's throughout the Bible, by the way. Stop doing bad; start doing good. He says, *Stop being like the old you*. You should know better, in other words. Don't be like the old you. Don't slip into the old patterns. He's saying this: *tac up your thinking*. Why did you leave that old lifestyle? Because it was killing you and everybody you loved.

He's saying, *Look, think about this. Jock up your thoughts*. Because every time you go back to some old memories, you keep remembering all the laughter, but you keep boxing out the tears. Why don't you jock up and remember all those tears too? He's saying, *Suit up your thinking about your old days when you were ignorant. And now you know better*.

Look, this is how sloppy thinking will get you devoured. This is how it happens. I love the New Living Translation how it says “slip into old patterns.” You just entertain thoughts. You just like entertaining them. *I’m just bringing this lion cub home. It’s this little thing and it’s cute. It’s cute, and I can control this. Okay, that’s good.*

And every time you revisit that area of thought that usually leads to action, you’re feeding that little lion cub. And it grows in its power and its influence. And then one day you’re wrapped around its finger. The Bible calls it a stronghold. The Bible says you’re in bondage. And it was your choice. They were little choices. But all along the way, you just kind of slipped into it, it says. He just says that you should know better.

Peter says, *Stop thinking, stop doing the old you.* And then he turns and says, *Start being the new you.* Start being holy. Look what he says: “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; as it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”

Holiness means “wholeness.” As a matter of fact, the English word “wholeness” comes from the Bible word “holiness.” In other words, it means “complete.” It’s a version of perfect. And we love holiness, wholeness attached to holy or perfect justice, perfect love, perfect goodness. There are areas in our lives where we want that to happen. We don’t want to marry someone who is ... aaa ... mostly truthful. Right? We want them to be wholly truthful. We want to be somewhat faithful? No, we want them to be wholly faithful. We’d love it if they loved us sometime? We want them to be wholly loving, complete, the way we were meant to be.

I love how he appeals to our design. Because he says that just as God is holy and we are in His image—we are in the image of God, and God is holy, so be holy. Be who you are designed to be.

To be clear, the highest calling for a Christian is to be holy, not happy. And this is where, I think, some people, especially in our country, tend to get a little mixed up, because they think God’s call is for them to be happy. And so, whenever they’re not happy, they think, *Wait a minute, I must not be in God’s will. Something must be wrong if I’m lonely or I’m uncomfortable, or I am nervous, or I am having to take risks. He’s asking me to do something that would lead me to suffering. That must be wrong.*

No. Quite often, suffering leads to holiness. Sometimes happiness leads to holiness. But holiness is God’s aim for us. He’s premeditated and predestined for us to be holy.

“Holy” literally means (not the English word that we get from it, but rather the other way around)—the literal Greek and Hebrew words mean “cut away” or “cut apart from the common.” In other words, different. You and I as Christians are totally different. We’re exiles. We’re foreigners. We’re supposed to feel weird here, out of place. And if you don’t—like, if you just fit into the culture—that should make you nervous. If you can fit right into the culture, that means that you might not be born again. You might not be an exile. You might find this place home.

I love how Augustine explains the contrast between exiles and the locals. He says this: “Christians are most out of sync with the world in their relationship with three things: money, power and sex. The world is stingy with its money but promiscuous with its sex. Christians, by contrast, are promiscuous with their money and power but stingy with their sex, the exact opposite of the world.”

See? These three areas all have extreme power and influence and consequence, right? A Christian knows that sex is something that is an expression, a metaphor, of the intimacy that we have with God. Also, the Christian says that not all body parts are created equal. And when body parts are in contact with one another, our souls and spirits become one with each other. And so, we’re pretty stingy with that and we want to make sure there’s a complete give when that happens.

As far as resources go, the world is stingy with its power and money. We just say, *Aaaa, it’s temporary*. And so, we use it like Jesus’ power and His wealth. We try to use it to help other people. We try to give it away as much as possible.

Here’s the thing. I think sometimes the greatest hindrance for some people to be holy is they want to fit in. I think it’s an intuitive desire to not be alone. But God didn’t make us to fit in. He literally designed the Christian to stand out. He didn’t make us to blend in; He made us to be different. We are to be different.

So, this section of Scripture, before he starts talking about living in awe, he is saying, *Suit up your thoughts. Get sober in the way you’re making decisions, my brothers and sisters. You need to be completely fixated on the grace that you will receive when Jesus Christ comes back to be our judge. Don’t go slipping back into old patterns. Come on! We all know better than that, right?* We are made to be holy by the holy God, so we should live and be holy.

## 1 Peter 1:17-21: A Life of Awe

Now Peter is going to answer the question, How do I be holy and why should I be holy? How does this work and why does it work? And that's when he says that the second part of living in exile is to live in awe. To live in awe—verses 17 through 21. It's really dense, so I'm going to give you the outline before we get there. It's just so full of meaning. He says, *This is how live in awe: you're going to live in awe because of who God is, His title.* And then he's going to say, *Because of what He did and how much it cost.* All three of those things will put you in a place of awe.

### 1 Peter 1:17

**Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.**

In the first part he says who God is. Here's how you should live in awe: "Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear."

We should be in awe. First, he leads with the title "Father", who is this objective judge. He is the judge, and He will judge every person according to his deeds. And He's going to absolutely fair in all that. And because of that, because He judges impartially, we're supposed to live with a tender conscience and doing whatever it takes to keep it tender. We need to be watchful about temptations, not letting anything into our lives before it gets too strong and takes over it. We don't want to live a life that displeases God. He's our father and he's a judge. So, we live reverently. That's what he says—living holy, in awe, because of who He is.

### **1 Peter 1:18-20**

**For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors,<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.<sup>20</sup> He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.**

Now he's going to tell us what He did and how much it cost, verse 18. "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed"—or "ransomed"—that's the literal meaning—"from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake."

What did He do? The Father sent the Son, His only son, the one that He loved, Jesus, the Nazarene. And what does the ransom do for our sins against the holiness of God? Was it the wealth of God, the vast wealth of God, all the created things? No. Because if it was created, it could be perishable. The ransom for our sin was not something; it was someone—the only begotten Son—not created—the only begotten Son. Our freedom in our life costs Jesus His freedom and His life. And He was beaten and literally bled to death to pay our debt. He was shamed in ways that made angels weep and the demons gloat so that we would never be shamed again.

### **1 Peter 1:21**

**Through Him you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so that your faith and hope are in God.**

And all of that was part of a plan that was come to before the beginning of time, it says. Look what he says. Because of that, "through Him"—through Jesus—"you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so that your faith and hope are in God." Now you're in awe! How are you supposed to live from this day to that? You live in awe. You live holy. And you live holy because you're overwhelmed in awe.

## 1 Peter 1:22-25: A Life of Love

### 1 Peter 1:22-25

**Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.<sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.<sup>24</sup> For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,<sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.**

And finally, it says, here's another way to live between now and then: live and love. Look how he talks about loving each other here. “Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply.” “...sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.” *No, really, little girl—* like you're talking to your son or daughter. *No, really, love your sister.* “For you have been born again.” Here's why. “You have been born again, not with perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, ‘All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.’ And this is the word that was preached to you.”

Why does Peter have to say to love each other? I mean, we're living holy, we're living in awe ... oh yeah, love each other. Why does he do that? I don't know. Maybe it's just me, but in very difficult times when there's persecution and the devil is mixed into that, the devil goes after unifying all those things sacred—sacred things like the family and the family of God, the Church. And when times are good we can get along famously, can't we? When the cotton is high, I'm generous. I'm facing out to other people, I'm giving, I'm giving grace, I'm forgiving in a large way. All good. Look, it's easy.

But that's not where these people are. It's persecution. It's hard times. Did I tell you there's a lion roaring about and he's getting into their minds, into their thoughts? They haven't suited up and now they're starting to get divided. They're turning on each other. When times get

tough, people turn in their flesh. They turn in and they say, *It's about me and mine. I've got to make sure. Fear and insecurity are driving me now.*

And they're on the same team. They're on the same team, is what he's saying here, no matter what the circumstances are.

We have a thing in our family where someone gets to scream, "Same team!" when we get in arguments and we're going back and forth during very difficult times, like during persecution, when we're going to the beach together and someone touched somebody, right? One of those really difficult times in families. And we're back and forth until someone says, "Same team!" *Right, we love each other! Same team!*

In the kitchen, Melinda and I are going back and forth—"Same team!" *Right. Yeah, what are we doing?*

I'll tell you what we didn't do. We didn't suit up. We didn't tac up. We didn't jock up our thinking. We thought we were here all by ourselves in the kitchen or on this little road trip down south. There's a devil out there. He's a roaring lion and he's prowling, looking for someone with sloppy thinking. That's all you have to do.

And so, we go back and forth, don't we? And nowadays...Hey, let's do it on public forums, shall we? Why don't we just do that in front of the whole world? And what do you think is going on in the spirit world when two Christians, a brother and a sister, are on one of these mediums and they're violating all the laws of reason and building straw men and making accusations and dividing? I mean, you just see the demons just eating popcorn, just feeding these thoughts. And the whole world watches, and the Trinity weeps.

And Peter is saying, *Same team, man! Come on! Really, in front of everyone? Over something that's political that you bought into, that is the thing of the week that has been invented so that you would be divided? Come on, man! Come on! Tac up! Jock up! What are you thinking? This is no time for that! We're going to get devoured! He's going to divide and conquer, because that's what he does. You've got to stay sharp and get your mind back where it was meant to be.*

Awestruck, smelling the grace of God that we're going to be covered with when He returns—think about that. Be in awe for that. Have your hope completely in that. Love each other, sincerely, deeply, authentically. And do you know why? He says right here—"Because you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and

enduring word of God.” You’re born again from above by a supernatural experience for eternity. This brother/sister thing is going to go on for a while.

So, let me read it. Hey, Grace, listen up. Check your passport, would you? Where are you from? You’re not from here. No. You’re strangers. You’re out-of-towners. This isn’t your home. You belong to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. And you’re going home to them soon, very soon. So, until then, could you tac up, and get sober with your thinking? My brothers and sisters, don’t let this culture get in your head. Because when it does, it is progressively digressing. And not only will it destroy you, it will destroy all those things that the Lord touches. So, be completely fixated on the aroma of your grace that you will have surrounding you when Jesus comes in and make this right—all things right. When He comes to judge the world, don’t toy with kitten lions of your old days of the past. You know better than that. That’s why you left it. You were saved from that. And it’s the blood of Jesus that got you out of that. So now, until then, you live in awe. You live holy because you were made to be holy. You live in awe because the Father is going to judge everyone. He’s going to be fair. And what He did to make us His—He gave us His Son, His only begotten Son, who not only paid with His life, He paid with His honor.

So, could you love each other, totally, completely, sincerely? We’re all born again, from the eternal word of Jesus Christ. Let’s live that way, a life without regrets, until His coming. Amen.