

## Standing Fast in the Grace of God

# Stand in True Grace

### 1 Peter 5:12-14

As we come to the end of 1 Peter, we find Peter's closing testimony to suffering believers. Throughout this epistle, we have seen how God's people are to live as strangers and pilgrims in a hostile world. Peter has written of a living hope, a holy calling, submission under pressure, Christ's example in suffering, humility before God, vigilance in spiritual conflict, and steadfastness in the faith.

In these last verses, Peter gathers that burden of this epistle into one final assurance: "This is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." These verses are more than a farewell — they are Peter's final confirmation that everything he has written belongs to the grace of God, and that believers must stand firmly in it.

#### I. THE TESTIMONY OF TRUE GRACE (V. 12)

##### A. The servant commended

"By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose"

##### 1. "By Silvanus"

- a) Silvanus is generally understood to be the same as Silas in the book of Acts (he was the first traveling companion of Paul). "Silvanus" is the Roman or fuller form of the name.

(1) He was with Paul on missionary journeys (Acts 15:40; 16:19)

(2) He was present at Corinth (2 Cor. 1:19).

(3) He was connected with Thessalonica (1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1)

(4) He was later associated here with Peter.

b) His name being connected here is historically significant because it shows how interconnected fellowship of apostolic Christianity was.

c) There are varied views regarding the phrase "by Silvanus." Some think he simply carried the letter; some think he helped write or compose it; others think he did both. I think, at the very least, he was the bearer of the letter to the churches where it was read.

## 2. "A faithful brother unto you"

a) Peter was sending this letter through a trusted servant of Christ.

b) The phrase "unto you" may suggest that Silvanus was known to at least some of the believers.

## 3. "As I suppose"

a) The word used here (λογίζομαι) is a word that has the idea of settled persuasion or assurance.

Romans 3:28

<sup>28</sup> Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

b) This isn't to be understood as we might read it in today's English as saying, "I think he might be faithful." Rather, it carries the sense of as I regard him, as I account him, as I consider him to be.

## B. The message summarized

"I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying"

1. "Written briefly" — he's not saying that the contents are unimportant, but that he has written concisely. In other words, he hasn't wasted words.
  
2. "Exhorting, and testifying"
  - a) These two terms define the whole purpose of the letter of 1 Peter.
  
  - b) "Exhorting" — this letter has certainly done that. Peter is pressing upon the will and life of believers.
  
  - c) "Testifying" (ἐπιμαρτυρέω – only time this word is used in the New Testament) — this carries the idea of bearing witness to, establish by testimony, or to corroborate.
    - (1) The force of the term gives a tone of certainty. Peter is speaking with settled conviction.
  
    - (2) The word also suggests confirmation, not just assertion. Peter is, as it were, adding his witness to the truth of what has been written.
  
    - (3) The rarity of the word used here makes it seem more deliberate. He chose a strong, witness-focused word rather than a more ordinary verb.
  
  - d) These two terms show us that Peter had not only urged these believers how to live, but has solemnly borne witness that the message of this epistle is the true grace of God.

### **C. The grace affirmed**

"That this is the true grace of God"

1. "This" points back to the contents of the letter

itself. It's everything he has written to them: the salvation he has described, the hope he has proclaimed, the suffering he has explained, the submission he has commanded, the holiness he has urged, the humility he has required, and the steadfastness he has called for.

2. "The true grace of God" — "...the grace which they possess is truly God's grace, though sufferings are a passing incident of their sojourn here" (Exp-GR)

#### D. The stand exhorted

"Wherein ye stand"

1. This phrase (εἰς ἣν ἐστήκατε) is in a form (perfect tense) that carries the idea of a present state resulting from a prior action. So the sense is something like: you have taken your stand and you are standing.
2. Peter says this is the true grace of God in which these believers stand. He is assuring suffering saints that all he has written belongs to the grace of God, and they are standing in that grace now. Yet that assurance carries an implied challenge as well — if this is the grace in which you stand, then do not be moved away from it.

Romans 5:1–2

<sup>1</sup> Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup> By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

#### E. The force of the verse as a whole

This verse lets the reader look back over the whole

epistle and see that:

1. Grace gave them new birth — chapter 1
2. Grace taught them holiness — chapter 1
3. Grace sustained them in suffering — chapters 2-4
4. Grace shaped their humility — chapter 5
5. Grace steadied them in conflict at the end — chapter 5
6. And now grace is where they are to stand

## II. THE FELLOWSHIP OF TRUE GRACE (V. 13)

After demonstrating the true grace of God, Peter now shows that this grace is not only doctrinal, it is shared among the people of God.

### A. A church joined in grace

1. "The church that is at Babylon" (I gave the following in the first message in this study of 1 Peter)

Some believe this refers to the literal city of Babylon in Mesopotamia, where Jewish communities still lived. Others understand it as a symbolic name for Rome, a usage already common among first-century Jews and Christians to describe the world's power opposed to God.

Whichever view one holds, the point of the verse isn't the geography but the grace: Peter was writing from a place *of* pressure to believers

*under* pressure, reminding them that God's grace reaches His people wherever they are.

From this setting — whether the literal Babylon of the East or the symbolic Babylon of Rome — Peter sends greetings from fellow believers who were standing firm in the same grace. Though scattered in different places, they were united in the same faith and fellowship in Christ.

2. "The church...saluteth you" — this isn't just Peter giving closing remarks. He closes with the greeting of a body of believers. The idea is:
    - a) One church greeting another
    - b) One body of suffering saints acknowledging another
    - c) Grace forming bonds across distance
- The Christian life is not solitary. Even scattered saints belong to a larger fellowship.

## **B. A people joined in election**

"Elected together with you, saluteth you"

1. The underlying thought here is that those sending greetings share the same glorious standing before God as those receiving the letter.
2. Peter started the epistle (1:2) with the idea of election and he comes back to that theme here. I spent a fair amount of time on this subject when we studied that verse at the beginning of our study so I won't spend much time on it here.

What I will say is that they are called "elect"

because they believed the gospel that God graciously gave to all mankind. If they had not received Christ, they would not be counted among the "elect."

#### Ephesians 1:4-5

<sup>4</sup> According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: <sup>5</sup> Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

3. Their fellowship was grounded in the sovereign grace of God. They are joined together because they are joined to the same Lord.

### C. A servant joined in affection

"And so doth Marcus my son"

#### 1. "Marcus"

- a) This is the same as John Mark, the Mark known from Acts (Acts 12:12, 25) and the author of the Gospel of Mark.
- b) As we noted at the beginning of our study of 1 Peter, the mention of John Mark here reminds us of:
  - (1) His earlier failure and withdrawal in Acts (Acts 13:13)
  - (2) The sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas over him (Acts 15:36-41)
  - (3) His later restoration and usefulness (2 Tim. 4:11)

(4) And now his close association with Peter.

- c) "My son" — most likely means spiritual son, not biological son. The Apostle Paul makes the same statement regarding Timothy (2 Tim. 1:2).
- d) The grace of God not only saves; it binds hearts together in loving spiritual relationships.

#### **D. The force of this verse as a whole**

This verse shows that the grace just described in verse 12 is not abstract. It creates fellowship, shared identity, affectionate bonds, and mutual greeting among the saints.

### **III. THE PEACE OF TRUE GRACE (V. 14)**

Verse 12 gives the testimony of grace, and verse 13 shows the fellowship of grace, and verse 14 gives the peace of grace.

#### **A. Grace expresses itself in loving fellowship**

"Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity"

1. "Greet ye one another" — in the New Testament, greetings among believers often carry more weight than our modern casual sense of the word. It is an expression of mutual love, spiritual kinship, and shared belonging in the household of faith.

In his closing, Peter is calling the saints to actively express their bond with one another.

2. "With a kiss of charity" — this wasn't just a custom of the day. The inclusion of "charity" shows is an expression of Christian love.

The more the believer stands in grace, the more their life together should be marked by real charity.

## **B. Grace grants peace to those in Christ**

“Peace be with you all”

1. Peter has not described an easy life in this letter. He has written to people facing pressure, opposition, and trial. Yet he closes with peace — the peace God gives in Christ.
2. The idea of “peace” here includes inward rest, spiritual well-being, wholeness before God, and quietness of soul grounded in faith.

## **C. Grace ends with Christ as its source**

“That are in Christ Jesus. Amen.”

Peter ends the letter where the Christian life itself must end — in Christ Jesus. Love among the saints and peace for the soul both flow from union with Him.

## **D. The force of the verse as a whole**

This verse closes the epistle with a beautiful threefold emphasis: love among believers; peace from God; and Christ as the source of blessing.

Conclusion:

As this letter closes, the people of God were left with a final reminder of what it has been about all along: the true grace of God. Everything written about belongs to that grace. Peter’s final call is for believers to stand in it, share its fellowship with one another, and rest in its peace through

Christ.

As we move into 2 Peter next, we will find that Peter is still concerned for these same believers — that they remain grounded, protected from error, and growing in the truth they have received. So while this letter closes with grace, fellowship, and peace, Peter's ministry to these saints isn't finished. He still has more to say for their stability and ours.

If 1 Peter has taught us how to stand in grace under suffering, 2 Peter will teach us how to stand in truth amid error.