

1 Peter 1:1-5 (NIV)

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, 2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance. 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

60-01-01-The Saints: Hopeful Sojourners

election, pilgrimage, consecration, new birth, hope, apocalypse

1 Pe 1:1-5

Our future hope in Christ defines our present sojourn on earth.

INTRODUCTION: (Text read as Scripture Reading)

–Question: Do you “*want to be in that number, when the saints go marchin’ in*”? [Devil’s Dictionary: “*Saint: a dead sinner revised and edited.*”] The word *saints* means “*holy ones*” (*consecrated, set apart, purified*) [Blaise Pascal in his *Pensées* wrote, “*To make a man a saint, it must indeed be by grace; and whoever doubts this does not know what a saint is, or a man.*”]

–This sermon, (**title**) is 1st in a series on various aspects of being “*saints*” as described in 1Peter. What does *sojourner* mean? [A lost traveler found a town and told a local he was *confused*: “*I don’t know what to do.*” “*Well, you’re on a journey, right? SO, JOURN!”] Actually that does capture the meaning, which is about being a *pilgrim*, a traveler staying in a place that is not home. And it helps us better understand the theme of this message: **HOM.idea**.*

I. We are Pilgrims of the Dispersion”– v.1, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, [NKJ; translates scattered “dispersed**,” as if referring to the Dispersion of the church away from its Judean homeland.]**

A. *Pilgrimage* is a concept as old as Israel’s sojourn in Egypt...

1. Christians are citizens of God’s kingdom, *sojourning* as in a foreign land, [Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus: “*They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers... They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven.*”]
2. The Gk. word “*strangers*” used later in 2:11 (*paroikos*) is where we get the word “*parish*” (an outpost of the coming Kingdom).

B. “*scattered throughout*”– God is a *missionary God*, calling us to live as “*strangers in the world*,” but also to be an influence on the world.

(Christians are *set apart from* but not to live aloof from the world.)

TRANS: [Many people who report near-death or back-from-death experiences, say they *wanted to stay* in the afterlife but *had to go back*. They learned they weren’t done. Their work on earth wasn’t finished.] Becoming a Christian is like that.

God's Kingdom is our *new home*. Life here becomes a pilgrimage, a *sojourn*, but it's a sojourn within a divine plan behind it....

II. We Are “Chosen” by God, v.2, ...chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: *Grace and peace be yours in abundance.* [“elect” (NKJV), selected to be a part of God's plan. *But how is human free will involved in God's selection process?*]

- A. **What is election?** [H. W. Beecher: “The elect are whosoever will, and the nonelect, whosoever won't.”] Israel was “chosen” by God but disobeyed His plan [Officials elected by the people can refuse the office.]
- B. **How are we elected?** “chosen according to the foreknowledge of God” [Gk.: *prognosis*]. God's chosen plan is based on the prognosis of our response. (The *prognosis* is His concern. Our concern is the *plan*.) [The Architect chooses the building materials; workers just follow His plan.]
- C. **What's does election do?** Being “chosen” destines us to become “saints” [holy or set apart] “through the sanctifying work of the Spirit”
1. We're not holy on our own but by the Spirit's purifying work.
 2. We're also set apart for service by the Spirit's empowerment.
- D. **Why are we elected?** We're “chosen” “for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood” (3 OT concepts relating to *sprinkled blood*)--
1. the idea of *cleansing* (Lev 14, when healed from *leprosy of sin*)
 2. the idea of *consecration* (Exo 29, for *service in the priesthood*)
 3. idea of *covenant* (Exo 24 for a *pledge of obedience to the Law*)

TRANS: All these OT rituals pointed to a future fulfillment in Christ. The *sprinkled blood* of the Passover lamb became the *blood* of “the lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.” Once, it was animal's blood on the door posts of exiled Jews in Egypt; now, it's the blood of Jesus, cleansing our hearts to become “*hopeful sojourners*” in this world. It's our future hope in Christ that defines our present sojourn on earth.

III. We are People of Hope— v.3, *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

- A. The **context** of our “*living hope*” is embedded in 2 spiritual realities:
1. The 1st reality is God's “mercy” through a “new birth” [Wm. Barclay said, “Whatever else this means, it means that, when a man becomes a Christian, there comes into his life a change so radical that the only thing that

can be said is that life has begun all over again for him.”]

2. The 2nd reality is God's power in Christ's “*resurrection*.” (We don't have to wait for Resurrection Day to *experience this power*. The same power that raised Jesus out of the grave has already raised us out of *spiritual death* into *spiritual life*!)
- B. The **content** of our “*living hope*” is (v.4) “an **inheritance** that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you.”
1. (NKJV) “incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away” [In this life, lottery winnings and inheritances are spent quickly. But we will spend eternity never exhausting our everlasting “*inheritance*” in Christ.]
 2. Christians are *God's servants* with permanent job security during this life (never out of work, down here). But our retirement plan in Christ is literally *out of this world!* (“*kept in heaven for you*”)
- C. The **culmination** of our “*living hope*” is divine safety— v.5, *who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*
1. During this life, “*faith*” in “*God's power*” is a protective shield for safety from spiritual attack— Eph 6:16, “...the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one”
 2. But our “*hope*” will ultimately culminate in a safe eternity, where every sense of the NT word “*salvation*” will be experienced: final deliverance from *danger*, from *disease*, from *condemnation*, from *sin* (“*the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time*”).

CONCLUSION:

—Our future hope in Christ defines our present sojourn on earth. In our Christian pilgrimage—in the midst of *ups & downs, trials & errors, gains & losses*, we're citizens of a coming kingdom, living a heavenly life on earth, accessing a future grace in present time. SO, later in this chapter, Peter says (1 Pet 1:13b), “set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

—In Christ, we are children of the future. Our “*living hope*” is in our returning Savior. That *future* and *hope* define our present pilgrimage on earth. We are God's “*saints*,” and His *saints* are “*hopeful sojourners*,” pilgrims here below with our *hope* set on our coming King up above.