

1 Peter: I Am an Alien //

1 Peter 1:1–12

We just finished a series on the gospel. I want to spend the next few weeks just reading a book of the Bible with you (**1 Peter**), because I love the questions that this book asks and answers.

The author, Peter: People love Peter because there is something about him we can identify with.

- He was just a normal guy; he had a big mouth; he said some stupid things.
- And he was not real churchy, either, which sometimes I find refreshing. Paul is sometimes way up here; Peter is almost always down here. Paul was like, “I was a Pharisee of the Pharisees; I graduated from the highest school in the land;” Peter was like, “I know the difference between a carp and a crappy.” Paul probably would have sat around and watched the history channel; Peter seems like more of a Sportscenter guy.

Peter writes this book to people who are in the midst of suffering. They don’t understand why they’re going through it, or what they should do about it.

- One thing I think is helpful to see: the Bible writers don’t hide themselves from this question of suffering: **they are fully aware of the problem that suffering presents to faith in a good God;**
 - Sometimes it seems like we think we came up with the question of how suffering and pain could coexist with a good God: back then everyone assumed that good people got rewarded and bad people got punished... and now we’re like, “*Wait... innocent people seem to suffer. Children die of starvation. The wicked go unpunished and the good unrewarded.*”

- Peter is not only aware of this question; he and the people he’s writing to are *living* it.
 - At one point in the book Peter talks about the “**fiery**” **trials** they are going through. That might have been literal. Some Roman emperors were known to dip political prisoners in oil and impale them on poles and light them on fire. We know for a fact this happened to many Christians around Peter’s time. Genocide was a part of the Roman system: whole families; men, women and children would get slaughtered on the whim of a Roman emperor. So they were living this question.

So let’s start in vs. 1: **1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,)**

- “Elect exiles:” that’s a very important name.
 - “Elect” means that they are God’s chosen people;
 - “Exiles” meant they are not in home territory. Some translations say, “Aliens.”
 - These were both names that had been given to the Jews at one point: the Jews were God’s elect people, and for a while they have had been driven out of Israel to live in a foreign land. “Elect exiles”: God’s blessed and favored people, but not in a place where God rules; under subjugation to a foreign, enemy power.
- Peter now gives that name to the church: you are God’s chosen people, but you are living in a land under the domination of an enemy power.
- In other words, you don’t really belong here. You’re citizens of another country. Again, some translations say “aliens.” Some say “strangers.” You’re odd. You don’t fit. That’s because they are tuned into something different.
 - **Imagine you’ve got a huge drum corps... all watching a guy on a platform.** But one guy in the middle is paying no attention to the guy... he’s got his headphones on and is listening to an Usher song

on Foxy 107. He's going to look odd. But that's because he's tuned into something entirely different...

- When you are tuned into God, you're supposed look odd. Extremely. In fact, if you're not odd, it maybe because your life is more in rhythm with the world than with God.
- BTW: When the Bible talks about Christians being odd, this is what it's talking about. It's not because Christians come up with a subculture where they have their own ways of dressing and new kinds of music. In some of the churches we grew up in, we were taught that Christians should be different because of how he dressed and the kind of music we liked.
- If you took a still shot... no difference. Put it in motion; what you value; how you forgive, and, as we'll see in 1 Peter, it's how we deal with pain and disappointment.

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy he has caused us to be born again to a living hope,

- *Mercy*: Peter begins their thinking with God's mercy. That's a good place to start... A lot of times the assumption we have in pain is why are all these bad things happening to us good people? The Bible takes the opposite approach. This world is under a curse. All of it. The human race... what about the kids? They are part of the race. What about people who have never heard? All people have a resistance and rebellion to authority.
- Peter reminds them all God's goodness is mercy. **Religion says, "We are good, so God owes us." The gospel is, "We are evil but God has been merciful so we owe Him."**
- **In mercy we has caused to us to be born again to a living hope**: Hope is what you look forward to on the other

side of pain; it's what tells you everything is going to be OK; that it will all be worth it.

- The quest for hope in pain is a universal human experience. I was listening to Tim Keller preach a message recently on hope and he referenced the work of a guy named Victor Frankl, a Jewish-Austrian psychoanalyst that was imprisoned in Auschwitz. Frankl noted how different people responded to suffering in the death camps and he wrote a book about it later called *Man's Search for Meaning*.
 - He said that some of the prisoners responded to their hopeless situation by becoming *brutal* and cruel themselves. Part bitterness; part a quest for power.
 - Others, Frankl said, just *gave up*. He wrote, "*Usually this happened quite suddenly, the symptoms of which were familiar to us experienced camp inmates. We all feared for this moment in our friends. Usually it began one morning when the prisoner simply refused to get dressed, or wash or go out to the parade grounds for inspection. No entreaties, no blows, no threats had any affect. They just lay there. They had given up. Nothing bothered them anymore because they had no hope.*"
 - Many, he said, held onto the hope that if they stayed alive, their health, family, professional achievements, fortune and position in society would be restored to them. That was their hope. After liberation though, he said, many of them home and found that those things were irretrievably gone, and they went into deep depression and even committed suicide. Their hopes had been shattered.
 - Frankl said that the ones who truly overcame Auschwitz were those who had a fixed reference point beyond the world, something they held onto that was out of the grasp of death and destruction.
- Frankl said: "*Life in a concentration camp tears open a soul and exposes its depths and its foundations.*"

- That’s essentially what Peter is saying: trials and pain expose where our hope is:
- For many of us, our hope is simply that our circumstances will change
 - One day, you think, I’ll get the recognition I deserve
 - One day people will like me
 - One day I’ll have a good job
 - One day I’ll be married
 - For years I had hopes of what I would become...
- When it looks like you won’t ever get that, you despair. You give up.
- You become bitter. Ever seen a girl get hurt by a guy and say, “All men are pigs. All of them.”

Peter says we have a living hope...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,

- There is your fixed reference point: something glorious, wonderful, beyond the scope of this world. An inheritance and a hope that death and disease cannot touch. Something that is so glorious it makes all the pain worth it.
- Peter says: “*and I see this inheritance through the resurrection of Jesus.*”
- Think for a minute about what the resurrection of Jesus meant for Peter.
 - Peter’s darkest hour had been when Jesus died.
 - That’s when everything fell apart. He had based his whole life on the fact that Jesus was the Messiah. But now Jesus has died. That Friday and Saturday was a time of utter despair. Peter is so disappointed that he denies even knowing Jesus.
 - But then Sunday, he goes to the tomb and it is empty. And then Jesus appears to him and His sadness turns to joy; his despair is turned into triumph, and he realizes that the whole time, God had a plan. Yeah, Friday and Saturday were painful, but there was a

Sunday coming that reversed all of the pain of Friday and Saturday.

- Peter sees that we all, right now, are living in a kind of Saturday. We are exiles. But that time is brief and the joy of resurrection Sunday is coming.
- JRR Tolkien described the resurrection as a time when “every sad thing becomes untrue.” (Sam says this in *Lord of the Rings*.)
- **There is a great Sunday morning in eternity where all sad things come untrue; you are reunited with a lost child; disease is taken away; there is no more pain and crying and God wipes away every tear.**
- Here’s another thing Peter saw in the resurrection: on that worst day, where it looked like God was the least in control, God was most in control.
 - The greatest day in human history was the day of the crucifixion. But to them it looked like the worst. It wasn’t just that God won in the end, it was that God used the apparent defeats as a part of His plan.
 - *Signs*

What if you saw your life through the lens of the cross and the resurrection? That there was a glorious Sunday morning coming when all sad things would come untrue? An inheritance death and disease could never touch. And then you see how even the most painful parts of your life were working toward that end?

What does that give you? Say it: **Hope.**

[6] In this (in what? In this promise...) you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,

- Here’s something interesting about those two verbs: Rejoice & grieved:
 - First, they are both very intense verbs. “Rejoice” means intense rejoicing (later Paul says it is

exceeding joy that can barely be expressed);
“Grieved” is the Greek word *lupeo*, same word used to describe Jesus as he went to the cross. Crushed.

- Second, they are both present tense verbs.
- **Walking with Jesus is often simultaneously great joy and deep pain.**
- Some of you don't think that is possible.
 - Some of you can't have joy in the midst of bad circumstances because your joy is in certain circumstances
 - Other Christians seem to deal with pain by never really feeling it... You walk around with a surreal look on your face: chipper. God is good, all the time. Let go and let God. Don't worry; God will put a rainbow on that dark cloud!
 - When Jesus faced the cross, he didn't say, “Well, praise the Lord.” He wept; cried out to God.
- Christians hurt. But see, their hurt can only go so deep, because their ultimate hope is in a God who brings life back from the dead; turns tragedy into triumph and takes us through the cross to bring us to the resurrection.
- So they can simultaneously be filled with intense joy and deep pain.
- In fact, it's like a **thermostat**: like the cold kicking on the heat; the cold of trials actually kicks on the the heat of your faith.

[7] so that the tested genuineness of your **faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—**

- Here you see part of God's purpose: God allows trials to purify faith in you.
 - Peter says it is like gold: tested by fire...
- **Trials reveal those places where you don't really trust God:**
 - Some of you don't: as soon as things start going wrong, you start thinking, “Oh, God, you've forgotten me.”

- There's a lady in here that is about to give up on her marriage because she thinks God has forgotten her and now you're going to take things into your own hands.

- **Trials reveal where you love God's gifts more than you love God:**
 - I know of a guy who grew up in one of those prosperity churches... he was into God. Then, he was disappointed; things went wrong for him. Quit believing altogether. Now, looking for reasons to discredit Christian faith.
 - That's the problem I have with the prosperity gospel: it turns God's into a means to an end. It gets people excited about God, but the way **I'd be excited about a winning lottery ticket**. The lottery ticket is itself worthless; but you would hold onto it and guard it, but it is only a means to an end.
 - The prosperity gospel creates idolaters who use God as a means to His gifts rather than lovers of God who would give up His gifts to possess Him.
- Trials show you both those things and purify your faith.
- Some of you have never had your faith tested.
 - **Me in Indo**. I didn't trust God and I was not ready to die. I felt naked.
 - Peter had been through that: Jesus' arrest on Thursday night revealed that He didn't trust God at all. Laid him bare.
 - God allows trials to test and purify you; Don't hate them, God is using them for good.
 - Can you believe that? John 11:5, “*Because he loved her.*”
- Trial produce faith and produce joy, the way that cold makes thermostat come on.

[7] So that your faith... may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- What does “praise, glory and honor” refer to? Things we give to Jesus? Looked at lots of commentaries: this is praise and honor and glory *from* Jesus.
- Peter looks forward to that. Peter had once sought the approval of people. In the Gospels there is this story about the disciples walking along the road having an argument about who is the greatest...
- Now Peter is in a place where he says, “*Your approval is all that matters.*” It’s ok to be despised by everyone because I am looking for approval from you.
 - (I haven’t told this story in a while): **David the fullback**
 - That’s hope in Christ: when your hope: the approval and delight of a God you can’t see right now but whose face you know you’ll stare into in eternity.

[8] **Though you have not seen him, you love *him*.** (You see? That’s Christianity. Love of *Him*) **Though you do not now see him, you believe in *him* and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, [9] obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.** Simultaneously grievous pain and intense joy, through the hope of our salvation: which is delight in God and confidence in His resurrecting work.

So here’s the question: Can you believe in a God that is doing that right now in your life? That in the pain and in the disappointment you are going through... that ***He is purifying you for Himself*** and preparing you for an inheritance is that is beyond your comprehension? ***And do you sense the glory of that God and feel the weight of His love*** so much that it fills you now, even in the midst of the deepest and darkest pain, with an inexpressible joy, because it is so valuable to you?

So: Where does that kind of faith come from? 2 places

Vs. 4: “Through the resurrection”

- Can I point out something to you? Peter bases everything in his life on the fact that Jesus actually rose from the dead.

- The reason I say that is I often hear people say, “Well, Jesus was a provocative teacher, probably a little ahead of his time, but the whole raising from the dead bit, that’s something the disciples made up.”
 - But think about Peter. What else but resurrection could have caused the transformation of Peter? **Peter went from being a guy who despaired of life;** a guy who denied Jesus at the first sign of danger (remember, after Jesus was betrayed Peter denied Jesus 3x in the space of about an hour; the reason he did that was because he thought Jesus had failed); **he went from that to one who would face the gravest trials with joy; crucified upside down.** “Remember Christ.” Whether or not that particular story is true, certainly we see him here rejoicing in trials, all based off the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. Peter went from being a coward to one who could laugh in death’s face and risk everything for Jesus.
 - What could have caused that kind of transformation, and given him that kind of power? One thing! Seeing Jesus resurrected.
- If Jesus was not really resurrected, this is all useless. He’s not following Jesus because Jesus completes his life, or provides a better moral framework, or because this is his culture. He’s basing all his hope and all his joy on the fact that Jesus resurrected.
- You see, one thing is certain; Peter believed that Jesus rose from the dead. And he said he believed that because he saw it with his eyes.
- You can say it’s because he’s self-deluded, he got somebody else confused with a resurrected Jesus, but don’t believe the lie that Jesus’ apostles didn’t really believe Jesus had risen and that was something made up by later Christians... their whole hope was based on the fact that he was resurrected and they saw Him with their own eyes.
- Which leads me to one other reflection: The reason we follow Christianity is not because it’s a better moral system; it’s a way

to balance and complete our families; or even that all our questions are answered. We believe it because it was revealed by Jesus as true. It was verified through an empty tomb.

- If Jesus was raised from the dead, this changes everything.

[10] Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, [11] inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. [12] It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- Here's the second reason we believe: **the glory of the gospel**
- The gospel to me is so mysterious:
 - Here I am looking at a God who apparently loved me so much that not even death could stand in His way; He took the penalty of my sin into Himself so He could rescue me.
 - But then I have had over the years so many questions about faith. Why people suffer? Why so few people seem to know about Jesus? Why is there a hell? **Sam Harris' invective**
 - Certain things I just don't know.
 - But when I look at the cross my mouth is stopped because I know that's what I deserve. The world is under a curse because of sin. The whole race, all of us, has rebelled against God.
 - And I see the tenderness of God
 - And I think about a verse like Deut 29:29
 - Power/love/wisdom
 - What if you based your understanding of God's love on the cross?
 - You say, 'But what about my situation?' What if God's wisdom was so great that you couldn't understand it... and you may not see how the

cross on Friday produces the resurrection on Sunday?

- You say, 'But what about the starving children?' What if God's holiness really was so incredibly beyond what you've imagined, that this world really was under the curse... but that God really was making all things new and would take care of the innocent ones in eternity in a way beyond what you could imagine?
 - Faith grows at one place: the cross.
 - Throughout my life I've demanded explanation; what God gave me was revelation.
 - My faith has found...
- So, like Paul and John and every other Bible writer, Peter leaves you gazing at the cross. He tells you stare deeply. There are mysteries there that not even angels understand yet.
- It's not often I can quote Tim Keller and myself at the same time: but he wrote this in the foreword to my new book, *Gospel* (close-up with me and book)

One of the most startling passages in the Bible (to me) connects the magnificence of angels with the mystery of the gospel. Angels are incredibly majestic and powerful beings, living in God's eternal presence. Yet there is something that has happened on earth which is so stupendous that even these immortal beings experience the persistent longing "to look into these things" (1 Peter 1:12). What are "these things" that could possibly and consistently consume the attention of God-fixated creatures? The answer is—the gospel.

The angels never get tired of looking into the gospel. This means that there is no end to gospel exploration. There are depths in the gospel that are always there to be discovered and applied not only to our ministry and daily Christian life, but above all to the worship of the God of the gospel with renewed vision and humility.

The underlying conviction in my preaching, pastoring, and writing is that the gospel—this eternally fascinating message craved by the angels—can change a heart, a community, and the world when it is recovered and applied.

And if you want to know more about that... BOOK

The resurrection and the cross:

My faith has found a resting place; not in device or creed; I trust
the ever living one; His wounds for me shall plead.

Bullpen:

- When the gospel is explored in this way, it produces uncommon properties. Blaise Pascal, writing in the 17th century, reveals how this occurs:
 -
 - The gospel alone is able to cure the twin human vices of pride and despair. For the gospel teaches the righteous that they still bear the source of all corruption which exposes them throughout their lives to error, misery, death, and sin; and [yet] it also cries out to the most ungodly that they are desperate for the grace of the Redeemer. The gospel makes those whom it justifies to tremble, yet consoles those whom it condemns. It causes dejection without despair, and exaltation without pride. (*Pensées* 208)
 -
 -
 - (First, let's talk about that word "mercy." That's a really important place to begin our thinking about the world:
 - We tend to approach the questions of the world with this kind of assumption that this bad world is worse than we good people deserve. The Bible has a completely opposite take: This world is under a curse it brought on itself through rebelling against God. We are all under the curse because we all have shared in that sin.
 - You say, "Well, what about the children? They are innocent." Sure, in one sense, and God won't hold them responsible in eternity for other people's choices. But in another sense, they are all part of the race. Every child that grows up rebels against God. There's never, not for all of human history, been an exception to that.

- You say, "Well, what about people who have never heard about God?" Romans says, "Well look at the posture of the human heart. Whatever authority is there, we have a posture of rebellion toward it."
- The point I'm making is that our questions about suffering almost always begin with the assumption of our goodness. Why are such bad things happening to good humans? The Bible rejects the premise of that question. The world is under a rightful judgment. There is none righteous, not even one.
- And Peter reminds them of that. God's work in their life is mercy. In mercy He called out of a church from condemned world, and through His grace they were born again to new life.)

In God's mercy we were **... born again to a living hope,**

Peter wants them to see 2 things: living hope; precious faith.

- Hope makes the difference (Victor Frankl)
- Everyone wants hope. Frankl is saying it must be a hope outside of yourself. Where does hope come from?
 - "Circumstances will change."
 - Simultaneous pain and joy
 - Joy inexpressible and filled with glory
 - Doesn't come from denial of pain
 - Jesus at the cross: Well, praise the Lord
- Living hope comes from something untouchable
 - Long sentence...
 - Vs. 4: an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you
 - Vs. 5: ready to be revealed at the last time
 - Vs. 9: the salvation of your souls
 - Vs. 7: Praise honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus
- That faith is valuable... so valuable, that it is worth the pain
 - A trust in God and a love for God
 - Loving God vs. loving His blessings

- John 11:5
- Like gold (vs. 7)
- Many of you have an untested faith (me in Indo)

Living hope; precious faith

Where does it come from?

- The resurrection: because it is true!
 - Jason Mathis: Sam Harris' reference to Indian guy

[10] Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, [11] inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. [12] It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- Cross:
 - My questions about faith.
 - The cross is central to my faith. Certain things I just don't know. Deut. 29:29
- Keller's foreword
 -
 - One of the ways God is working on our faith is helping us distinguish between loving God and loving His gifts.
 - You see, according to every picture the Bible gives of eternity with God, it is a place where there is fullness of joy; no pain; no crying; every material blessing.
 - We know fallen human nature; many people would follow God not because of the glory of who He is, but to use Him to get something else they really want.
 - God is a piñata and faith is whacking stick
 - God doesn't want people who want to use Him.
 - Imagine if you were really rich, like Bill Gates child or something, and you were single how difficult it

would be to determine if someone really loves you. I don't want them to love me because of my money; I want them to love me because I'm me: because of my charm; my personality; because I'm funny; because of my boyish good looks; my devilish wit and my smokin' hot bod.

- The greatest things about God are not the blessings He can give us, but the beauty of Who He is.
- That's the problem with the prosperity gospel... it teaches you to use God for something else.
 - And here's what happens: Something goes wrong... I know of a guy who grew up in one of those prosperity churches... he was into God. Then, he was disappointed; things went wrong for him. Quit believing altogether. Now, looking for reasons to discredit Christian faith. His love for God was not a love for God; it was love for something else.
 - They didn't love a God they couldn't see; they loved blessings they could see. And if the blessings they could see were taken away; they had no interest in the God they couldn't see yet.
- So God makes us wait... to test us, and to purify us, so that we will love *Him* for *Him*.
- God has set up the world in such a way that those who love and desire Him will follow Him, and others will fall away. God is working on you right now, to prepare you for Him. That's why He saved you. For Himself, so that you would love Him for Him.

That's the essence of my ministry here: reading the Bible with you. Not trying to teach you my new thoughts, but old ones. The word is the life of the church.

Peter happens to be one of my favorite books in the Bible. Peter is so earthy. Raw. Rough. He was a fisherman. He had a big mouth.

He's the kind of guy who probably made beer in his bathtub. He's not exactly clergy material. What he says is so authentic and raw... Sometimes Paul is up here. Peter is almost always down here.

You can tell very quickly that the people Peter is writing to are obviously in the midst of suffering.

He says some amazing things:

- Simultaneous pain and joy
- Joy inexpressible and filled with glory
- Comes through a **living hope** (what does living refer to?)
- 2 things I want you to believe in: a sense of the preciousness of your faith

Hope is something we all long for

- Victor Frankl
- How do you find it?
 - Improved circumstances (some can't have joy in the midst of bad circumstances because your joy is in your circumstances)
 - Doesn't come from denial of pain
 - (Coleman: **Ridiculously long sentence**) Living hope comes from something untouchable
 - Something extremely valuable;

That faith; that relationship to God; is so valuable! Can only come through suffering

- John 11:5
- Loving God vs. loving his blessings. "Having not seen Him, you love Him"
 -
- Like gold
 - You have an untested faith (me in Indo)

Source of faith

- Resurrection: because it is true!
 - Jason Mathis: Sam Harris' reference to Indian guy
- Cross: my questions about faith. The cross is central to my faith
- Keller's foreword

1 Peter 1:3-12

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, [5] who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- Salvation is at "the last time" Now we are in a period of waiting.
- Hold onto the resurrection and the future inheritance. Which leads to one important thought: We follow Christianity because it is true! We don't follow Christianity because it is a better morality (it might be), but because it is true.
- Peter's thought makes sense only if the resurrection really happened. We don't follow Christianity because it is a superior moral code, or because it completes our lives, but because it is true.
- Do you believe it is true?
- The reality of the resurrection forever changed Peter. Scaredy cat Peter to bold preacher of Acts 2

[6] In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, [7] so that the tested genuineness of your **faith—more precious** than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- 4 different ways to suffer
- Gold tested by fire: as gold is heated, dross is removed
- The goal is a salvation, which is our knowing God, loving Him, and being in His presence
- Vs. 6-7 trials prove the genuineness of faith. Many of you have never had your faith tested. (me in Indo; Amber Lehman)
 - John 11:5, he loved them... so he waited and did not come.
 - Vs. 7: to the glory of Jesus. There's also some things happening that are bigger than you are! You are part of a larger story you can't always even see.

[8] Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, [9] obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

- Vs 8: having not seen him you love him; vs. 9: there's something about suffering that enables us to know the real Jesus. If God always rewarded blessing with obedience; if He was always here; we'd obey because of power. God wants us to obey because of *love for Him*. So He hides Himself.

Sermon:

- How to suffer: These are suffering people. 4 ways to suffer: Tim Keller quotes Victor Frankl...
 - Receiving praise, honor and glory from the only one whose opinion matters
- How precious your faith is: Preciousness to your faith: like gold tested by fire
- How to have faith: Faith in what? Character of Jesus as revealed John 11:5. He left heaven for you.

[10] Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, [11] inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in

them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. [12] It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- Angels long to look
- Keller's foreword
- See other notes in Exiles: (see Ryken)

1 Peter deals with

- Why is life so hard? If we are the people of God, why don't we seem to be walking more in the favor of God?
- How come I stay so depressed and why can't I break my addiction to sin?
- Practical questions like, "What are the differences between men and women?" and "what should a Christian's role in politics be?"