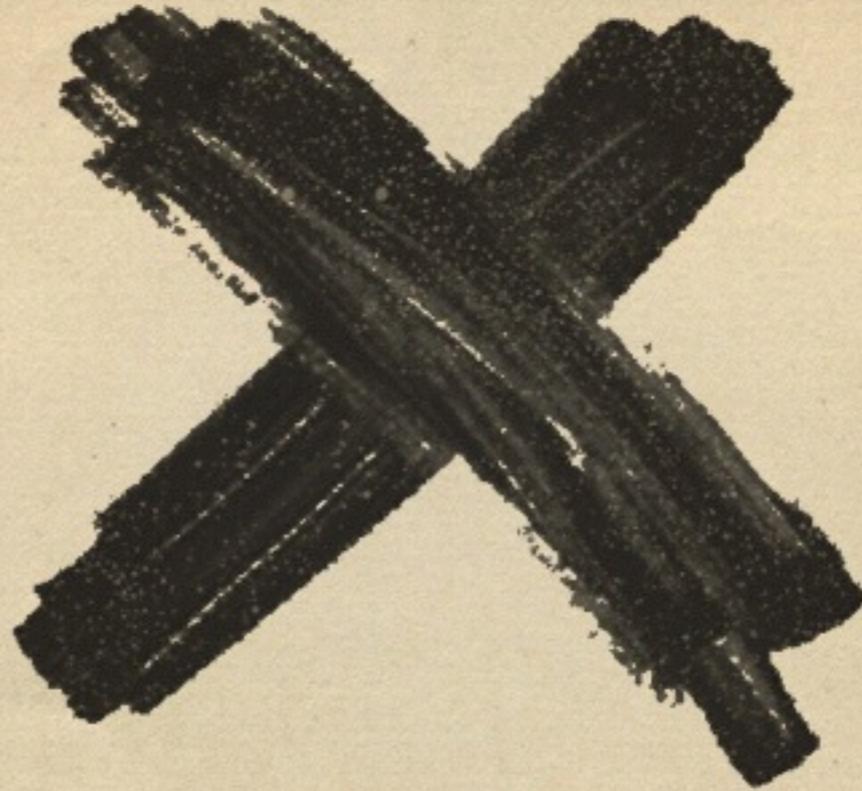


Before God and Society
1 Peter 1:1-2



FOREIGNERS & EXILES

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

Peter maps us, locating where we're at so we know where we're going:

- Geographically- where they are (scattered)
- Socially- who they are before society
- Theologically- who they are before God

“Peter intends his readers to understand who they are before God so that they can be who they are in society.”

Scot McKnight

Location:

- Geographically- where they are (scattered)
- Socially- who they are before society
- Theologically- who they are before God

To God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia...



For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you.

1 Peter 4:3-4

They became strangers in society because they became strange.

Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.

1 Peter 2:11

Question: In what way do followers of Jesus live lives as foreigners and exiles?

Cultural Engagement

Promulgate

- Political or social change, build God's kingdom on earth

Accommodate

- Private faith, spirituality for personal peace, no engagement

Separate

- World against the church, holy huddle, no engagement

The issue facing the Christians in Asia Minor was disturbingly simple: How should we live in this context of social exclusion and persecution? Should we escape into a more sheltered world? Should we withdraw from society? Should we turn a cold shoulder to our world? Should we denounce society in poetic and prophetic tones? How then should we live? Peter's letter is a window into a situation that even throws light on our world; his letter is one of the first struggles in the church with society. It formed some of the conversation that continues to this day, and in our examination of it, we will reap great reward.

Scot McKnight

Exiles...who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood

1 Peter 1:2

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:9-10

The basic reality [is] that, as a whole, we resist the possibility that this letter is addressed to us, that we might be cast as "nobodies in the world." The problem is theological. What separates us from 1 Peter is not "the strange world of the Bible" as much as its unhandy, inconvenient claims on our lives.

Joel B. Green

For Christians are no different from other people in terms of their country, language or customs. Nowhere do they inhabit cities of their own, use a strange dialect, or live life out of the ordinary... They live in their respective countries, but only as exiles; they participate in all things as citizens, and they endure all things as foreigners... They share their meals but not their sexual partners. They are found in the flesh but do not live according to the flesh.

They live on earth but participate in the life of heaven. They are obedient to the laws that have been made, and by their own lives they supersede the laws. They love everyone and are persecuted by all. They are not understood and they are condemned. They are put to death and made alive. They are impoverished and make many rich. They lack all things and abound in everything. They are dishonored and they are exalted in their dishonors. (5:1-14 [LCL])

Epistle to Diognetus