First Peter
An Overview

The Apostle Paul had diligently established churches throughout the regions of Peter's audience (see 1 Peter 1:1). The churches, however, were not immune to temptation, false doctrines, and persecution to the point of apostasy (see Galatians 1:6; 3:1; and 5:4). Peter's epistles reveal that through time many of the saints had lost their way in righteousness. Some were clinging by a thread to their faith as they were being dispersed throughout the country because of their lifestyles and relationship with God (1 Peter 4:4, 12). Peter's admonition is that they hold on to their holiness because God is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).

The dispersed Christians were facing many obstacles that stood in their way of salvation. Peter tells us of their temptation to return to their old ways of living due to the sin all around them (1 Peter 1:14 and 2:11). Secondly, they were being persecuted for their faith (1 Peter 2:18-20 and 4:13-14). Thirdly, the Christians were suffering grief at the hands of God by way of fiery test for their perfection (1 Peter 1:6-7). Later, the Apostle Peter will also reveal that the saints were falling prey to false doctrines and teachers of error (2 Peter 2:1ff). Many had fallen prey to these issues of grief just as Zechariah had foretold (see Zechariah 13:8-9). The Apostle John speaks of the flood of wickedness brought upon the world of men by Satan to cause them to loose their souls to hell (see Revelation 12:15-17 and 1 Peter 5:8). This is the world that we are born into (Psalms 51:5).
Peter's objective is to cause the saints to see what was at stake. Those that rise above the various grieving ordeals of this life shall be crowned eternally as royalty with God (see 1 Peter 5:4-6 and Revelation 2:10). Those; however, who fall to temptation, persecution, and or false doctrines having nothing but judgment (1 Peter 4:17-18).

The secret to success against the devil's flood of wickedness is to have the mind of Christ (1 Peter 4:1). Christ was committed to serving and submitting to the will of God (1 Peter 2:23). The Christian, though wrongfully treated, must also learn subjection. We are to be subject to the laws of God in obedience just as Jesus was (see 1 Peter 1:1, 14, and 22). Christians are admonished to be subject to the higher powers of government (1 Peter 2:13), masters (1 Peter 2:18), husbands (1 Peter 3:1), and elders in the body of Christ (1 Peter 5:5). Voluntary subjection to those in positions of authority leads to a mind of obedience rather than rebellion. The meek are just like Christ in that they are committed to being compliant with all God's will and those in authority over them.

We too live in a world of ungodliness where we are tempted by fleshly lust. We are bombarded with a flood of wickedness all around us. Peter reminds God's saints that they are his elect people and he will guard them through all life's troubles (see 1 Peter 1:1, 5; 2:9, and 10). The Lord is our rock and shield today. He provides us shelter and sustenance through his divine revelation. We will not fail so long as we remain faithful to him and trust in his promises (see Romans 8:31ff). If others, who have suffered the same things, have succeeded then certainly we can with the help of God (1 Peter 5:9).

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Parental Responsibility

Most young adults dream about a day when they will have a child of their own. It is entertaining to listen to them speak about what they plan on naming their child and what the child will accomplish in this life. Those who now have children, or have had children, are living the reality and facing many challenges. The child you now have has been born into a world of sin (Psalms 51:5 and Revelation 12:15-16). Parents bear a weighty responsibility to train up their children to be spiritually minded in a very unspiritual minded world (1 John 2:15-16). Let's review a few principles on parenting as revealed in the Bible to assure that we are remaining steadfast in raising our children.

I. Parental Responsibility (Proverbs 22:6)
   A. Love your Children - don't exasperate (Proverbs 4:3; 15:17; Ephesians 6:1-4).
   B. Teach your Children (Proverbs 23:15-25)
   C. Discipline your Children (equals loving your child) (Proverbs 13:24).

II. Children's Responsibility in the Home (Ephesians 6:1-2)
   A. Respect and Obedience (Proverbs 30:17 and 2 Timothy 3:1-2).
   B. Influences (Proverbs 28:7; 29:3).
   C. Learn to value your parents instruction (Proverbs 15:22).

III. A Formula for Happiness in the Home (Proverbs 10:1 and 19:13)
   A. A happy home begins with a father who is the true head of the household (Ephesians 5:22ff).
   B. All members of home must know and keep their God ordained place (Ephesians 5:22ff).
   C. When the father, mother, or children are out of line trouble comes to the home (Proverbs 19:26-27).

Conclusion

No one ever said parenting was easy. Enjoy the years of your toddler and preteen children. Don't let these years pass without grounding them in truth with a spirit of love. When the difficult teenage years come they will make mistakes but when they do they will feel the sting of guilt and shame and so shall they be saved.