

## 1 PETER: UNDERCOVER PRIESTS TREADING CAUTIOUSLY

It's just my opinion, of course, but this is the best book of the Bible to preach your way through at the moment. Christians today are horrified by news of massacres and atrocities targeting their fellow believers. Even in our own Western democracies we feel under pressure and threatened with the denial of the liberties we have long enjoyed. We struggle to assimilate that we are a minority and no longer a privileged majority. It is painful. The Epistle of Peter speaks straight into such core anxieties. You are undercover priests, living under God's grace in a potentially hostile world, so tread cautiously. That was Peter's message to the early Christians and it resonates with us today.

From the point of view of a theologian also this is a good book to get stuck into. There have been major shifts in how it is treated by theologians over the last few decades, so be careful when reading old commentaries and works written about it. I will look at some of these changes here, but I am aware that there are large numbers of questions I am neglecting. Studies of this book have benefitted greatly from sociological analysis of the first and early second century churches, and these have thrown much new light on what it means to be 'foreigners and exiles'.

A question at the heart of all this is 'What is the fiery trial that Peter is referring to in 4:12?' It leads us into a wider consideration of what kind of pressure the early Christians were under. So this is what I am going to start with.

### 1. The Fiery Trials

Let's begin by listing the main passages from the book which refer to this.

1 Peter 1:6

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

1 Peter 3:13-17

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 4:12-19

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time

for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

1 Peter 5:9

Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings

The ancient world did not eagerly accept the emergence of a new superstition practiced by people known as Christians. Where it was noticed at all this new cult was often dealt with in ignorance of its content and beliefs, and sometimes was treated with brutal repression. And yet the church grew. By 112AD when Pliny the Elder was sent to the region of Bithynia and Pontus he found the Roman temples in a bad state of repair. He chose to blame the expansion of the Christian Faith, emptying the state cult of followers. It sounds suspiciously like a lame excuse put out by bureaucrats guilty of misappropriating official funds, but the Christian community would have proved as convenient a scapegoat to him as they had to the Emperor Nero half a century earlier. Nevertheless there must have been enough Christians present in the region to make the claim feasible. They did not live in ghettos, separate towns or remote isolated communes. They lived as ordinary citizens among the common people. Pliny felt obliged to take some action against them, but had no stomach for wholesale arrests, and neither did the Emperor Hadrian to whom he wrote for advice. The believers' situation was precarious, but that did not stop their numbers growing. Bithynia and Pontus was within the general area to which Peter had written so we have some indication of the threat the Christians faced, but also of the growth in numbers they experienced.

Commentaries in the early part of last century would often argue that the painful trials of 4:12 were state sponsored attacks. This would limit us to the Neronian persecution of 64AD, the aggression by Domitian in around 90AD or the action taken by Pliny referred to above. However this view is now very much out of favour, not least because we have absolutely no evidence that the persecutions were inflicted across the whole Empire. Certainly, Nero's atrocities were vile, but the state of research at the moment has not uncovered any attempt by him or the authorities to inflict them outside of Rome.

Further to the above we need to consider that there was no police force as such. Any allegations of religious impropriety would have to be made by local people before a magistrate. You can see how this might be attractive if, for example, you were a local stall holder and your commercial competitor was a Christian. You could have him removed on the charge of blasphemy against the state religion. The difficulty was that if you failed to have your complaint upheld the situation could rebound against you. It was an uneasy state of affairs. We have seen in our times how charges of blasphemy can be laid maliciously against Christians in Islamic countries. Perhaps the surprise should be not that it happens, but that it happens relatively infrequently. Way back in 1971 Ernest Best was already warning, "In view of the difficulty of associating the references to persecution in 1 Peter with any of the known periods of persecution it would appear more satisfactory to abandon the attempt at identification. Persecution of Christians in the ancient world was endemic."<sup>i</sup>

Before we delve deeper into the modern debate on the subject I must come clean and point you to the excellent paper written on this very subject by Travis B. Williams, ‘Suffering from a Critical Oversight: The Persecutions of 1 Peter within Modern Scholarship.’<sup>ii</sup> To make life easier, it is not only comprehensive and helpful, but also available freely to you on the internet. What follows is largely my own synopsis of his paper.

He argues that although there has been a large debate on the subject, modern scholarship has reached a consensus, namely that “the persecutions were localized and sporadic hostility consisting of verbal abuse and discrimination (i.e., ‘unofficial’ persecution).” In the past, commentators have tended to divide persecutions into official and unofficial as if they were opposed. Modern scholarship points to a more median position where persecution would have been allowable in the wake of, say, the Neronian persecution, but not necessarily enforced by any decree or edict. It would have been allowable to officials, but they may well not have bothered to do anything. There were more immediate concerns to occupy their attentions.

Leonhard Goppelt argued that the hostility described in 1 Peter was initiated by the local populace: ‘these appearances in court were occasioned by police action initiated not by public officials, but by the verbal hostility of the general population’.<sup>iii</sup> He believed that ‘the destiny of Christians apparently no longer depended only on circumstances conditioned by local and personal factors; for the public officials the Christian religion as such was already considered criminal, but the judgment was not yet followed out in a systematic plan’. This, according to Goppelt, could naturally materialize into court proceedings and negative rulings against Christians. The courts were obliged to deal with the issue as it arose, making the situation volatile.

This view was challenged in 2007 by David Horrell who argues that we are wrong to suggest that the authorities were under any pressure to outlaw Christians.<sup>iv</sup> Until the persecution under Decius (ca. 250AD) the profession of Christianity was only sporadically treated as a crime punishable by death, but one in which trial and punishment depended first and foremost on persons being brought to Roman attention by an accuser and then on the disposition of particular governors.<sup>v</sup> In other words, the difficulties faced by the believers who received Peter’s letter were based on discrimination from the local populace rather than magisterial judgement. Their sufferings were the day to day reality of suspicion, misunderstanding, willful disagreement and ostracism. The authorities could get involved, but this was rare.

Paul Holloway added to the argument from the perspective of social-psychology, focusing on social prejudice from the perspective of its ‘targets’.<sup>vi</sup> He argues that “1 Peter marks one of the earliest attempts, perhaps the earliest attempt, by a Christian author to craft a more or less comprehensive response to anti-Christian prejudice and its outcomes.”<sup>vii</sup> The type of conflict which Holloway envisions is: “the Christian faith at this time was a punishable offence in a Roman court, but rather than being actively sought out by government officials, Christians were only punished as such if a member of the local populace brought official charges against them. However he points out that “actual persecutions may have been local and sporadic . . . but the social prejudice underlying them was constant.”<sup>viii</sup>

To conclude: it seems to me we would do well drop words such as ‘local’ ‘sporadic’ or ‘occasional’ from our explanations of the trials. I Peter suggests that independently of whatever came before the local authorities Christians were regularly stigmatized and were ever likely to become targets of hostility or violence. Living in such social tension then, inevitably leads to an examination of Peter’s expression ‘foreigners and exiles.’

“Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles,  
to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.”  
1 Peter 2:11.

## 2. Foreigners and Exiles

You are too young to belong to the generation which assaulted God’s ears with the song which goes:

This world is not my home  
I'm just a-passing through  
My treasures are laid up  
Somewhere beyond the blue.  
The angels beckon me  
From heaven's open door  
And I can't feel at home  
In this world anymore.<sup>ix</sup>

You spot so many divergences from the New Testament doctrine of Christian Hope that you despair.<sup>x</sup> I suppose you could argue that this disengagement from the world which God loves is a corruption of the ideas Peter expresses of Christians as foreigners and exiles. The Greek words are:

paroikos: usually meaning foreign or alien, and could be used of a resident alien with legal rights.

parepidemoi: usually meaning sojourners or exiles. It is used by James of the Jewish Diaspora (James 1:1)

Tangled up with what Peter means by these words, is the thorny question of whether his book is aimed at Gentile Christians or Jewish Christians. Down the years commentators have lined up their arguments to support one or the other, without the issue ever being truly resolved.<sup>xi</sup> My own feeling is that there are good arguments on both sides, which points to the likelihood that Peter’s letter is targeting both Jewish and Gentile background Christians in the far away provinces to which he is writing. The fact that he describes the followers of Jesus as ‘Christians’ (4:16) indicates not only that he is writing at a time when Christians had their own identity distinct from the Jews, but also that being a follower of the Way was more important than being from a Jewish or Gentile background, at least when a long way from Jerusalem. I am going to take the line that his audience is of mixed Jewish and Gentile background without spending any time defending it. I hope that my reasons will emerge naturally from the wider observations on the social status of Christians in their places of residence. I suspect that the issues facing both groups were the same, and indeed Jews would have faced many similar struggles as Christians.

There would have been varying degrees of conformity to the pagan culture which surrounded them. Some Jews and Christians would have been stricter than others.

Is Peter trying to persuade his readers that they should not feel at home in this world any more, or is he trying to persuade them to keep their heads and get on with their lives in peace as far as they are able? Surely it is the latter.

1 Pet 2:12 we learn that the Christian lives among the *ethnesin* (the nations, usually the Gentile nations). The fact that they are not described as pagans or Gentiles may suggest that he is addressing Jewish Christians, but I feel that more likely it demonstrates Peter's desire to see the Christians settled in their society and ministering to it.<sup>xii</sup> In Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia there were many Jews. Of 4 million people 300,000 were Jewish and perhaps 5, 000 Christians as well.<sup>xiii</sup> In Sardis the synagogue was built next to the gymnasium at the centre of the town abutting a series of shops with Jewish merchants. The Jews did not live in ghettos, and neither did the Christians. Rodney Stark concludes that Many Jews in the Diaspora were indistinguishable from gentiles except in their establishment of the Synagogues and their home life.<sup>xiv</sup> "Many of them chafed at the ethnic barrier their religion placed between them and their full participation in Hellenic society – the Law made it difficult for them even to eat with their Gentile associates . . . When Paul stripped the Jewish prerequisite from Christianity, he not only made the faith open to Gentiles, but offered the Hellenized Jews an attractive religious option, which many of them took."<sup>xv</sup>

So if many Jews were largely favourable to integration in the surrounding culture we may assume that Christians were even more so. It is notable that Peter uses the word *paroikos* which means a resident alien with legal rights, not *xenos* a foreigner with no legal status. The Christians have a perfect right to live in their world, they are just of a different spiritual status. The *paroikoi* were non-landowners, but were treated as having the same benefits in the corn distribution which was such an essential part of the Empire. In Rhodes in 305 BC one in seven of the population were *paroikoi*.<sup>xvi</sup> People were more mobile than we might have imagined, and so the sense of being different but domiciled was common.

Christians did not withdraw from society, but like the Jews had something of a conflict of conscience about some of the activities that occurred. The fact that Peter mentions gold jewelry and fine clothes in 3:3 may suggest that he is addressing the urban class, some of whom are wealthy although commentators do not all agree on this point. In 4:3-4 Peter warns against the excesses of the pagan feasts. High class Jews did attend these feasts, avoiding the religious part and turning up for the food and drink. It was not kosher, but you could always say you were sorry to God and ritually cleanse yourself afterwards. They also often belonged to guilds, as did Christians and perhaps Paul, Priscilla and Aquila too. The whole of society was permeated by religion and you could not easily avoid it. Every town had its special god with the attendant feast day. It was difficult to avoid the town's celebration of its god with the decking of the streets with laurels and flags and there was always good food on offer. Tertullian, the hardest of hard-liners would later berate Christians for joining in their communities' feast days.<sup>xvii</sup>

How far Peter encourages the Christians to withdraw from society is a matter of debate, in which Elliott and Balch feature widely. Once again I will give a brief summary of the

argument here, because the matter is treated at slightly greater length in another paper which is freely available to you on line, by Mark Dubis, a comprehensive review of scholarly literature on the book since 1985<sup>xviii</sup> and in a much longer paper by Horell also available online.<sup>xix</sup> Elliott sees the ‘controlling metaphor’ of the book to be *oikou tou theou*, the household of God. The Christians, homeless because of their attachment to Christ, nevertheless find their home in the church. Elliott argues that the recipients of the letter are the migrants who have settled in the region. Their faith just exacerbates their prior socio-political status as outsiders. Balch argued further,<sup>xx</sup> claiming that Peter is trying to ease tension between the churches and society. Christians were condemned for breaking the Roman household code where all members of the *oikos* were expected to follow the husband’s religion. Christian wives found themselves in a strong tension with society’s norms and Peter addresses the issue in 3:1-7. For Balch, Peter’s solution is an accommodation. Elliott disagreed, saying “nothing in 1 Peter, including its discussion of household duties, indicates an interest in promoting social assimilation. It was precisely a temptation to assimilate so as to avoid further suffering that the letter intended to counteract... The letter affirms the distinctive communal identity and seeks to strengthen the solidarity of the Christian brotherhood so that it might resist external pressure urging cultural conformity and thereby make effective witness to the distinctive features of its communal life, its allegiance and its hope of salvation.”<sup>xxi</sup>

I think the debate how far the Christian community is to go in living peacefully in the world is unresolved. What is clear, however, is that Peter gives advice on how to keep your head down and still be true to your principles. Christians are not to live as other-worldly aliens. Their sense of difference from society is real, and the danger they are in is real. They know they cannot agree with everyone and everything around them. They know that they will be misrepresented and misunderstood. Peter cannot solve that, but he can show them a way to live true to their status as the household of God, while living as part of very different human households. The apostle Paul hints at these tensions in Romans 12:8, “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone,” but it is Peter who makes the first full attempt to address the issue.

### **3. Who Wrote 1 Peter?**

Although the Early Church attributed the book to the Apostle Peter, by the late 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a heavy consensus of opinion that he was not the author. In 1945 F. W. Beare wrote in the introduction to his commentary “The English reader is here offered for the first time a commentary based upon the thesis, now widely accepted, that First Peter is a pseudonymous work of the post-Apostolic Age.” By the 1970 third edition this had hardened to “there can be no possible doubt that ‘Peter’ is a pseudonym.”<sup>xxii</sup> When a theologian tells you there can be no possible doubt, God gives you permission to laugh loudly.

We can summarise the objections to Petrine authorship as:

1. It is not in Muratorian Fragment, although that document is not necessarily complete.
2. Its polished linguistic style would rule out the Galilean fisherman. It is worth remembering that Peter would have spoken Greek as a Galilean businessman and used it in his conversations with Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem and Antioch etc. The LXX was well known and used. Papias talked about Mark as Peter’s interpreter but does not imply lack of literary ability.<sup>xxiii</sup>

3 It was written to persecuted Christians in the reign of Domitian or Trajan so it is too late for Peter's lifetime. However, as we have seen above, current opinion discounts those persecutions.

4. Doctrinal objections. There are too many affinities to the Pauline epistles.

5. Peter would have included more of his memories of Jesus, although inclusion of these in 2 Peter leads some to believe that the latter was pseudographic. So we cannot really allow this argument.

In reply we need to state as I have done in so many of these articles on my [thenotesfortheologystudents](#) website that the Early Church hated fakes. Pseudographic works were a problem across the ancient world. Bruce Metzger showed how ancient writers were troubled by this. Galen even wrote a book about his own books so that people would be able to identify any forgeries.<sup>xxiv</sup> The churches were aware of the problem, so were cautious about the origin of the books read out in a service on Sundays. Tertullian tells of a letter claiming to be 3 Corinthians written by a bishop in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century who, when called to task, said he had done it out of admiration for Paul. He was fired.<sup>xxv</sup> He also cites the case of an Asiatic presbyter who composed Acts of Paul and Thecla. He was brought to trial and defrocked. Bishop Serapion of Antioch around 200AD first approved the reading of the Gospel of Peter in Rhossus in Syria but when he actually read it himself he was horrified and as some parts were clearly heretical immediately banned it.<sup>xxvi</sup> Indeed, if you were forging a letter you would have to make the addressee fictitious too or else they would object that their church had never received such a correspondence.<sup>xxvii</sup>

There was no need for pseudigraphy unless the author specifically wanted to deceive. Around 135AD Polycarp cited 1 Peter in his Epistle to the Philippians. Irenaeus also attests the Epistle. There may be some references in Clement of Rome (ca 95AD). The earliest attestation to 1 Peter is, of course, 2 Peter 3:1 "This is now my second letter to you." Although 2 Peter is strongly contested as being Petrine, it is, nevertheless, early and clearly refers back to 1 Peter. Men who were leaders but not one of the original apostles of that era were perfectly free to write in their own names if they wished. In conclusion I would say that you must have hard evidence to dismiss 1 Peter as pseudographic and that is in short supply.

The Greek style is an open question. Peter states that he has written with the help of Silvanus ( 5:12). Although this would probably suggest that he was the bearer of the letter, we cannot rule out that he was the scribe. Some scholars have claimed that Silvanus composed it, but we have to ask why he did not sign it in his own name.<sup>xxviii</sup> Karen Jobes argues that Greek is the author's second language and is thinking in one language and writing in another and that the Semitic interference and quality of Greek is comparable with 1 Thessalonians which Silvanus also may have been involved in.<sup>xxix</sup> Even if Silvanus was not the scribe it is natural to assume that Peter had one.<sup>xxx</sup>

The argument from similarity to Paul's writing no longer carries the weight that it did. Admittedly there are similarities in subject, but not in language. And there are wide differences in theological content too. Carl R Holladay writes "For all its Pauline echoes, however, 1 Peter also has close affinities with the synoptic tradition and to a lesser extent with the Gospel of John, Hebrews and James, There are remarkable convergences with Peter's speeches in Acts. Since 1 Peter resonates with such a wide spectrum of early Christian witnesses, some scholars have

suggested, only half jokingly, that its author knew the whole New Testament!”<sup>xxxi</sup> This is treated fully in most of the modern commentaries so I will not argue the case any further.

In his paper ‘Rehabilitation of an exegetical step-child: 1 Peter in recent research’, John Elliott concludes “1 Peter has used diverse older traditions, including dominical material, similar to but independent of the Pauline letters. There is now greater likelihood of its genuine epistolary genre, integrity, and careful literary composition.”<sup>xxxii</sup> I do not think there is any compelling argument to reject the Petrine authorship writing, presumably, shortly before his death in the Neronian persecution.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Despite having doubts about 2 Peter and rejecting the Gospel of Peter, the Acts of Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter the first Epistle of Peter is very well attested.

## Conclusion

1 Peter is a rich seam for both the preacher and the theologian and I have only touched on some of the points of discussion. Mark Dubis’ Survey of Scholarly Literature which I have already mentioned will fill you in on so many other subjects worthy of your attention: exodus, exile, election, covenant, priesthood of all believers, restoration, suffering servant. The Epistle has a significant dependence on the Old Testament which draws the attention of a number of scholars. I think that Peter’s portrayal of the Christian wife is fascinating and deserves more research than I was able to unearth.

I think the importance of the Epistle for us is that our own journey from Christendom to the place of a minority has taken us back to the situ of Peter’s readers. Whereas 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christianity might have majored on the idea that this world is not my own and I am just passing through, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christianity is going to have to major on the more Biblical theme of living out our faith in a hostile or apathetic world.

I close with a quote from Ben Witherington:

“ . . . no one more profoundly reflects on the sufferings of Christ or Christians in the NT than Peter, and no one is likely to be more directly indebted to the teaching and impact of the Christ himself than Peter. As such, he needs to be appreciated as the living link to the Living Stone.”<sup>xxxiv</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Ernest Best, *1 Peter*, New Century Bible (London: Oliphants, 1971), p. 42.

<sup>ii</sup> Travis B. Williams, ‘Suffering from a Critical Oversight: The Persecutions of 1 Peter within Modern Scholarship’ *Currents in Biblical Research* 2012 10: 275.

<sup>iii</sup> L. Goppelt, *A Commentary on 1 Peter*, ed. F. Hahn; trans. and aug. J.E. Alsup (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1993). German original: *Der erste Petrusbrief* (KEK, 12/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978).

<sup>iv</sup> Horrell D. G. ‘The Label Χριστιανός: 1 Pet 4.16 and the Formation of Christian Identity’, *JBL* 2007, 126: 361-81.  
<sup>v</sup> *ibid* p.374.

<sup>vi</sup> Paul A. Holloway, *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-psychological Perspective* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009)

<sup>vii</sup> *ibid* p.2.

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viii *ibid* p.233.

ix Mary Reeves Davis, © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC.

x If in doubt, you might like to read Tom Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (London: SPCK, 2007).

xi Early commentators, Eusebius and Calvin said it was written to Jewish Christians, while Jerome, Augustine, Luther, and Tyndale argued that it was written to Gentile background believers. The list on both sides is endless.

xii Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians, Volume II. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1-2 Peter* (Downers Grove Il: Intervarsity Press, USA; Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), p.45. Although this is by far my favourite commentary on 1 Peter I disagree with Witherington at this point because he sees the destination as purely Jewish background Christians.

xiii John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless, a Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, its Situation and Strategy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p.45. There is a 1990 second edition of this book.

xiv Rodney Stark, *Cities of God, The Real Story of How Christianity became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome* (San Fransisco: Harper Collins, 2006) p. 26.

xv *ibid* p.78.

xvi Elliott, 1981 p.27 and p.29.

xvii “In this place must be handled the subject of holidays and other extraordinary solemnities, which we accord sometimes to our wantonness, sometimes to our timidity, in opposition to the common faith and Discipline. The first point, indeed, on which I shall join issue is this: whether a servant of God ought to share with the very nations themselves in matters of his kind either in dress, or in food, or in any other kind of their gladness.” Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, Chapter 13.

xviii Mark Dubis, ‘Research on 1 Peter: A Survey of Scholarly Literature Since 1985’. *Currents in Biblical Research* 2006 4: 199-241.

xix David G. Horrell, ‘Between Conformity and Resistance: Beyond the Balch-Elliott debate towards a postcolonial reading of I Peter.’ <https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/handle/10036/65773>

xx D.L. Balch, ‘Hellenization-acculturation in 1 Peter’, in C.H. Talbert (ed.), *Perspectives on First Peter* (NABPR Special Studies Series, 9; Macon, GA: Mercer, 1986): 79-101.

xxi John H. Elliott, ‘1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy: A Discussion with David Balch’, in Charles H. Talbert (ed.), *Perspectives on First Peter* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), pp. 61-78.

xxii Francis W. Beare, *The First Epistle of Peter*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970) p.44.

xxiii Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 3rd Ed (London: IVP, 1970) p.778.

xxiv Bruce Metzgar, ‘Literary forgeries and canonical pseudepigrapha’, *Journal of Biblical Literature*. 91 (1): 3–24.

xxv Tertullian *On Baptism* 17.

xxvi Eusebius, *His. Eccl.* 6.12.3-6.

xxvii This point is made on p.26 of the excellent section in Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians, Volume II. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1-2 Peter* (Downers Grove, Il: Intervarsity Press, USA; Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), ‘On Roasting Old Chestnuts: The Issue of Epistolary Pseudepigrapha,’ pp.23-37.

xxviii Bo Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*. The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday& Inc., 1964) p.71, who says “It is natural to believe that it was written with the knowledge and consent, or even at the direct request of the great apostle.”

xxix Karen Jobes, *1 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005) p. 41.

xxx Mark Dubis, *Currents in Biblical Research* 2006 4: 199.

xxxi Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005) p. 485

xxxii John Elliott, ‘Rehabilitation of an exegetical step-child : 1 Peter in recent research.’ *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 no 2 Je 1976, p 243-254.

xxxiii Ben Witherington III, 2007, p.38 concludes “the burden of proof must be on those who want to maintain that this document is an example of such literature. I remind them that they must not only come up with a falsely attributed author but also a falsely attributed audience and presumably one not so close in time to the end of the first century and that they would recognize this as a forgery. There are more problems with accepting that hypothesis than with accepting the traditional ascription of authorship of this document to Peter himself.”

xxxiv Ben Witherington III, 2007, p92.