

1 Peter 5:12-14

¹² Through Silvanus, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and clearly testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.

¹³ The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, as does my son Mark.

¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Berean Study Bible

¹² Through Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother,
I have written to you briefly,
encouraging, and clearly witnessing, this to be the true grace of God
within which you stand.

¹³ Greetings from the co-elected in Babylon,
and Mark, my son.

¹⁴ Greet one another with a family kiss of holy love.

Peace to you all, who are in Christ.

My own translation, Preachers Literal Translation

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Living God's purpose for my life. 1 Peter 5:12-14

My words have God's purpose. 5:12

My words are to bring others in. 12b "encouraging"

My words are to reach out to others. 12b "witnessing"

My relationships have God's purpose. 5:12-13

My relationships are cross-centred. 12a "faithful brother"

My relationships are cross-generational. 13b "my son"

My actions have God's purpose. 5:13-14

My actions reinforce relationships. 13a "Greetings from the co-elected in Babylon"

My actions respect relationships. 14a "Greet... with a family kiss of holy love"

My life has God's purpose. 5:12, 14

My life is based on the flow of grace. 12b "true grace of God in which you stand"

My life is based on the flow of peace. 14b "Peace to you all, who are in Christ"

Famous last words that help. 1 Peter 5:12-14

Last words about the church that help. 5:12-14

My words promote faith. 12, 13 “faithful”

My words promote family. 12, 13, 14 “brother... son... family”

Last words about how I help. 5:12

My words are to build up. 12b “encouraging”

My words are to reach out. 12b “witnessing”

Last words about God helps. 5:12

My words focus on God’s grace. 12b “true grace of God”

My words focus on God’s goodness. 12b “within which you stand”

Last words about you and I help. 13-14

My words highlight us together. 13, 14 “co-elected... family”

My words highlight us in Christ. 14 “peace to all in Christ”

Everything I need is already around me. 1 Peter 5:12-14

I need the people who are around me. 5:12

See people as unique individuals. 12, 13 “Silas... Mark”

See people as works-in-progress. 12 “faithful brother”

See people as part of me. 13 “co-elected”

I need the tasks that are around me. 5:12-14

Do tasks that reach within. 12-14 “written... greetings... greet”

Do tasks that build up. 12b “encouraging”

Do tasks that reach out. 12b “witnessing”

I need the resources that are around me. 5:12-14

My resources are from beyond me. 12c “true grace of God”

My resources are all around me. 12c “within which you stand”

My resources are now within me. 14 “peace... in Christ”

Transplanting / grafting. 1 Peter 5:12-14

Transplanting a Godly heart onto me. 5:12

I have extended relationships. 12, 13 "Silas... Mark"

I have deepening relationships. 12 "faithful brother"

I have eternal relationships. 13 "co-elected"

Transplanting Godly hands onto me. 5:12-14

I have the ability to engage others. 12-14 "written... greetings... greet"

I have the ability to encourage others. 12b "encouraging"

I have the ability to evangelise others. 12b "witnessing"

Transplanting a Godly head onto me. 5:12-14

I have more than facts, I have grace. 12c "true grace of God"

I have more than strength, I have stability. 12c "within which you stand"

I have more than peace, I have Christ. 14 "peace... in Christ"

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Look what I've got. 1 Peter 5:12-14

I have relationships that benefit me. 5:12-14

We are equals. 12 "faithful brother"

We are nurtured. 13 "my son"

We are supportive. 14 "family"

I have responsibilities to benefit others. 5:12

I am to lift up. 12 "encouraging"

I am to reach out. 12 "witnessing"

I am to stand firm. 12 "in which you stand"

I have resources to benefit this world. 5:14

Love for others. 14 "holy love"

Peace in myself. 14 "Peace to you all"

Christ over all. 14 "in Christ"

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You are in for a treat. 1 Peter 5:12-14

We treat each other as family. 5:12-14

We are siblings in the same family. 12 "faithful brother"

We are children in the same family. 13 "my son"

We treat each other responsibly. 5:12

We are to encourage the saints. 12 "encouraging"

We are to witness to sinners. 12 “witnessing”

Treat each other care-fully. 5:13-14

We have problems in the world. 13 “in Babylon”

We have peace in the Lord. 14 “in Christ”

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Seven ticks for your family. 1 Peter 5:12-14

1. Families that tick give mutual honour. 12a “faithful brother”
“honour one another” Romans 12:10
 2. Families that tick give clear communication. 12a “written to you”
“let your yes be yes” Matthew 5:37
 3. Families that tick give warm encouragement. 12b “encouraging”
“encourage and build up one another” 1 Thessalonians 5:11
 4. Families that tick give strengthening grace. 12b “true grace... stand”
“Stand firm with the belt of truth” Ephesians 6:14
 5. Families that tick maintain connections. 13 “in Babylon”
“I am with you always” Matthew 28:20
 6. Families that tick give holy love. 14a “holy love”
“be devoted in brotherly love” Romans 12:9-10
 7. Families that tick give Christian peace. 14b “peace... in Christ”
“peace of God, surpassing all understanding” Philippians 4:7
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What God wants for me. 1 Peter 5:12-14

God wants me to lift up. 5:12a

Encouragement is found in faithful friends. 12a “faithful brother”

Encouragement is found in God’s Word. 12a “written to you”

God wants me to stand up. 5:12b

Stability is found in God’s truth. 12b “to be the true...”

Stability is found in God’s grace. 12b “...grace of God”

God wants me to fill up. 5:13-14

Satisfaction is found in holiness. 14a “a family kiss of holy love”

Satisfaction is found in Christ. 14b “Peace... in Christ”

Do you see what I see? 1 Peter 5:12-14

Who I see when I look around me. 5:12-14

I am surrounded by individuals who teach me faith. 12-13 “a faithful brother”

I am surrounded by a family who teaches me holiness. 14 “a family kiss of holy love”

I am surrounded by a people who teach me Christ. 14 “you all, who are in Christ”

What I see when I look ahead of me. 5:12-14

I see a path, well-worn by disciples ahead of me. 12-14 “encouraging”

I see a future, well-prepared by the Lord to greet me. 12-14 “clearly witnessing”

I see stability, well-expressed in the Bible for me. 12 “written to you briefly”

What I see when I look within me. 5:12-14

I see the gifts of the Spirit to give me faith. 12a “faithful”

I see the love of the Father to give me grace. 12 “true grace of God”

I see the Saviour, Christ, to give me peace. 14 “Peace... in Christ”

All things new. Old things renewed. 1 Peter 5:12-14

I have a new family. 12a “faithful brother”

I have a new guide. 12a “written briefly”

I have a new strength. 12 “true grace of God”

I have a new peace. 14 “peace to all in Christ”

Other possible titles

Family ties.

What makes a functional family tick.

Stand tall.

Look at this!

When all is said and done

Greek commentary

I have written to you briefly, **encouraging** you

παρακαλέω [Strong's 3870] is a verb occurring 109 times in the Greek New Testament. It is a composite word consisting of the preposition παρά [Strong's 3844], a word which occurs 194 times in the Greek New Testament, and means 'beside, by the side of, alongside of, very close by'; plus the verb καλέω [Strong's 2564], a word with 148 occurrences in the Greek New Testament, and meaning 'call, summon, invite'.

The cognate noun, παράκλητος [Strong's 3875] occurs 5 times in the Greek New Testament, and only in the writings of John. John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7, and 1 John 2:1. This is properly the term used to describe a legal advocate, an attorney at law, but extends to include an 'advocate, intercessor, a consoler, comforter, helper, assistant'. In His Upper Room discourse, Jesus used this noun to describe the Holy Spirit.

encouraging you and **clearly testifying** this to be the true grace

ἐπιμαρτυρέω [Strong's 1957] is a verb that occurs only here in the Greek New Testament.

This is a compound word composed of the prefix preposition ἐπι [Strong's 1909] which occurs 896 times in the Greek New Testament, and means 'on, upon' and emphasises or strengthens the verb, μαρτυρέω [Strong's 3140] which occurs 76 times in the Greek New Testament, most often by John. This verb means 'to bear witness, testify, give evidence'.

So, ἐπιμαρτυρέω [Strong's 1957] means a strong, bold, or clear testimony. Or in today's terminology, 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'.

Greetings from the **co-elected** in Babylon

συνεκλεκτός [Strong's 4899] is an adjective which occurs only once, here, in the Greek New Testament. This is a composite word consisting of the prefixed preposition σύν [Strong's 4862], which occurs 129 times in the Greek New Testament, meaning 'identified with, joined together, sharing in common'; plus the adjective ἐκλεκτός [Strong's 1588], which occurs 23 times in the New Testament, including 4 times by Peter, in 1 Peter 1:1, 2:4, 2:6, and 2:9, and means 'chosen, elect, choice, select'.

So, συνεκλεκτός [Strong's 4899] means 'co-chosen, elected together, selected with'.

Theologians often link Election and Predestination together in the one sentence. However, these two Biblical words do not belong together, and are never found together in Scripture. Nor do these two words necessarily have anything to do with salvation. Election emphasises God's part in the selection of the person/s involved in carrying out His plans. And Predestination emphasises the outcome of His plans. (Fuller notes on Election and Predestination can be found in my notes on Salvation.)

Greetings from the co-elected in **Babylon**

Some commentators think “Babylon” is code for Rome. The principle reason for doing this is to place Peter in Rome, in order to maintain the myth that he was the first Bishop of that city. However, there is no linguistic, nor historic, reason why Babylon should mean anything but Babylon.

In 528 BC Judah’s kingdom period ended when the nation was taken captive and exiled in Babylon. After seventy years in exile, in 457 BC, the exiles began to return, but many chose to remain in Babylon. They had built lives and businesses there. Over the centuries, Babylon became a centre of Jewish scholarship with a sizable Jewish population based there. On the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) the first geographical areas mentioned as the homes of the pilgrims were the lands around Babylon, “Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia” (Acts 2:9a). As the “Apostle to the Jews” (Galatians 2:7-8) Peter would naturally visit those locations with large Jewish populations.

Furthermore, the internal evidence of the linguistic content of Peter’s letters show he had spent much time in a Greek speaking (certainly not a Latin speaking) environment. His letters have no Latin phrases which would associate him with Rome, but the language of these two letters is replete with rich and diverse terms which we would expect from the geographical heart of the ancient Greek empire.

Finally, there is no actual historic evidence that Peter ever visited Rome. He had no reason to go there after the Roman Emperor Claudius expelled all Jews from Rome, about 15 years (perhaps up to 20 years) after Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection.

Greet one another with a **family kiss** of holy love

φιλήματι [Strong’s 5370] means, ‘a kiss’. It is a noun based on φιλέω [Strong’s 5368] meaning ‘family-love, friendship-love, regard with affection’. Anglo-Celtic based cultures such as Britain and America greet with a handshake, or perhaps a hug. But European-Middle Eastern cultures are more likely to greet with a kiss, and probably multiple kisses. Kissing one another on the cheeks, or on the lips, is regarded as normal and courteous in polite company. Men exchanging multiple kisses in greeting is standard practice.

Greet one another with a family kiss of **holy love**

ἀγάπη [Strong’s 26] means, ‘Godly love, holy love, pure love, benevolence, good will’.

To “Greet one another with a family kiss of holy love” has no romantic or sexual connotations. Rather, it is the greeting of a respected and close family member who is a highly regarded member of the church with an honour that is a model of Christ-likeness. In

cultures where men do not usually greet each other with lips-to-lips kisses, an appropriate paraphrase would be, “greet one another with genuine warmth.”

Quotes and illustrations

Quotes about spiritual family, “faithful brother”

Evangelism was not a program in the Jerusalem church; it was a way of life. The believers’ lives and behaviours created such favour with the population of Jerusalem that people were drawn to the Lord. David Jeremiah

He created the church to meet your five deepest needs: a purpose to live for, people to live with, principles to live by, a profession to live out, and power to live on. There is no other place on earth where you can find all five of these benefits in one place. Rick Warren

Servants think of ministry as an opportunity, not an obligation. They enjoy helping people, meeting needs, and doing ministry. Rick Warren, *What on Earth Am I Here For?*

Stop looking for the perfect church. It does not exist. Even if it did exist, the moment you or I joined it, it would no longer be perfect. Anonymous

Churches provide a place of gathering for people who share common beliefs, support and encouragement for each other in faith, a place to find insight into and teaching about God’s Word, and they provide a time and place where people can leave the world behind and focus only on their spiritual relationship with God. Mary C. Neal

Do you look forward to going to church, or is it something you do out of obligation? Joyce Meyers

A war fitness conference some time ago declared that the highest form of recreation is to go to church. The word recreation should be written re-creation. More real rest can be gained from an hour and a quarter of worship under these circumstances than by eighteen holes of golf. Norman Vincent Peale

Just as you must eat, drink, and breathe to live, you must read the Bible, pray, and be involved in a church to stay spiritually alive and vital. You never will outgrow these things. Greg Laurie

People are not on a truth quest; they are on a happiness quest. They will continue to attend your church – even if they don’t share your beliefs – as long as they find the content engaging and helpful. Andy Stanley

The Church is the Church only when it exists for others- not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The church is not a religious community of worshippers of Christ but is Christ himself who has taken form among people. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Nobody can do as much damage to the church of God as the man who is within its walls, but not within its life. Charles H. Spurgeon

I encourage you to look for a church that teaches that Jesus is the only way to heaven (because he is) and that the Bible is the Word of God (because it is), that will allow you to get connected with other believers (because you need that), and that you'd feel comfortable inviting your non-believing friends to (because they need that). Vince Antonucci

Those who are willing to do whatever work is necessary to see the Church blessed, whole, and thriving are the ones to whom true honour is due. Paula Casill, *My Brother's Keeper*
Many believe it is possible to be a "good Christian" without joining (or even attending) a local church, but God would strongly disagree. Rick Warren

I yearn for the day when we as the church are known for what we are for instead of what we are against. I pray that the long list of "what the church is for" includes remarkable Christ-centred care for the least, the last, and the lost. Kara Powell

If the envious, the defamers and the backbiters were taken out of the average church, there would be revival overnight. A. W. Tozer

He is preeminent in creation because He is the Creator. He is preeminent in redemption for He is the Redeemer. He is preeminent in the church because He is the One who gave Himself for the church. J. Vernon McGee

It can be helpful to see our relationship to the church as being like a lifelong relationship to a spouse or even a parent, child, or sibling; to view it as a relationship that will include both "for better" and "for worse," and expect to stay committed anyway. Sarah Cunningham, *Beyond the Broken Church*

The church seeks to help form people who can risk being peaceful in a violent world, risk being kind in a competitive world, risk being faithful in an age of cynicism, risk being gentle among those who admire the tough, risk love when it may not be returned, because we have the confidence that in Christ we have been reborn into a new reality. John Yoder

Music and songs

Songs about spiritual family, "faithful brother"

Brother, sister, let me serve you (Servant song), SiS 256

Songs about the "grace of God"

Amazing grace (traditional), 401

Amazing grace (My chains are gone), 1067

Be gracious unto me

For by grace (Ralph Carmichael), Ot 93

Living in the rhythm of grace, Ot 73

Only by grace, 408

We rejoice in the grace of God

Songs about “within which you stand”

I stand amazed... My Saviour's love, CH 378
Stand and bless the Lord (Fettke), Ot 91
Stand up and bless the Lord, Ot 71
Stand up, stand up for Jesus.
Standing on the promises.
We stand and lift up our hands... Holy Holy, Ot 9

Songs about “peace”

Go in peace (Benediction)
Master the tempest is raging... Peace be still. H 722
Peace in Christ

Songs about “in Christ”

I can do all things in Christ
In Christ alone, Ot 4

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion

1. What sort of people do you like to have around you? What sort of people do you not like to be around?
 2. Read Ephesians 1:3. What have we already got; and not got? Be specific; write a list.
 3. Silas was a success as a missionary. Mark was a failure (Acts 15:36-41) Why do I need both of these sorts of people in my life?
 4. Tasks in the Scripture include: writing, encouraging, witnessing, and greeting. Which of these do you find easiest; and why? Which of them do you find hardest; and why?
 5. We stand in the true grace of God (v12). In what ways does this differ from a false grace?
 6. This letter ends with the words, “in Christ” (v14). Briefly explain how those two words summarise the whole Gospel.
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