Prelude:

I. By preaching through Bible Books
   A. the Holy Spirit chooses the topics,
   B. the Holy Spirit makes the argument,
   C. the Holy Spirit meets people’s needs as He sees them, and
   D. we examine the thoughts of the Holy Spirit.

II. Could a fisherman write a couple of letters
   A. that would change the world forever?
   B. Acts 4 shows that some people did not think a fisherman could,

   13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus (Acts 4.13).

   1. When people have been with Jesus,
   2. no one knows how much they can do!

III. Listen to Peter begin his first letter,

   1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

   To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied (1Pe 1.1, 2).

Persuasion:
I. An Apostle of Jesus Christ

A. What do you think of Peter?

1. Most Christians I know relate to Peter more than the other apostles,
   a) perhaps because his mouth often got him into trouble, but
   b) with his mouth he also did wonderful things, and
      (1) we want to be like that.

2. Yes, Peter did and said things rashly,
   a) getting him into trouble, but
   b) the Lord loved Peter and worked with him.

3. Peter was rash, but
   a) he was the one who spoke the truth before dangerous crowds.
   b) We quote Peter from Acts 2.
      (1) not the other apostles,
      (2) although they also spoke that day.

4. John 1 shows that Jesus loved Peter and
   a) that love showed up the name he gave to Peter,
   b) whom his parents had named Simon.
      (1) Jesus called Simon Cephas (Hebrew) or Peter (Greek),

        42 And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone [or Peter]) (John 1.42).

5. Compare the difference between
   a) Peter’s bold assurance of loyalty to Jesus
      (1) even in the face of imprisonment and death,
b) Peter’s bold preaching in the opening chapters of the Book of Acts.

(1) Twice in Acts 2
   
   (a) he told the very people who less than two months earlier
   (b) had been yelling for the blood of Christ
      
      i) that they were guilty of killing the Son of God.
      
      ii) Would you have done that?

(2) You heard what he said in Acts 3.

(3) He also spoke boldly in
   
   (a) Acts 4
   (b) Acts 5
   (c) Acts 10 and 11
   (d) Acts 15.7–11

B. Jesus chose Peter to be an apostle.

1. Jesus selected just a few men to be apostles,
   
   a) His personal representatives on the earth,
   b) known also as ambassadors,
      
      (1) so that whatever an apostle spoke,
      
      (2) that was likewise the word of Jesus Christ.
         
         (a) Therefore, to reject the words of Peter in First Peter
         (b) is to reject the words of Jesus Christ.

2. To be an apostle also meant
   
   a) that Jesus had sent the Holy Spirit to these men
   b) to remind them of what Jesus had already taught them, and
c) to reveal new truth.

II. The Pilgrims

A. Pilgrims do not have a permanent home.

B. For that reason, the Bible calls Christians pilgrims or sojourners,

1. concerning their time on earth.

2. Philippians 3 speaks of the enemies of the cross of Christ,

   a) some of whom are members of the church, and

   b) as Paul said in verse 19 they, “set their mind on earthly things,” whereas,

   20 …our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Phi 3.20).

C. We need to hear Hebrews 11 during this presidential election year, because

1. our focus is more upon our earthly home

2. than our spiritual home, and

   a) many believe our president holds the key to our happiness or misery.

   b) Remember the words of the Hebrew writer,

      (1) as he reminded us of the great patriarchs and

      (2) what made them great,

   13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
   14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (Heb 11.13–16).
14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come (Heb 13.14).

III. The Dispersion

A. They were dispersed from their earthly homes, but
   1. truly, even in their old homes,
   2. they were pilgrims and sojourners.

B. Peter designated a particular part of the Roman Empire,
   1. Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, all in modern Turkey.
   2. At one time, Turkey was a heavily Christian-populated nation.
      a) Now, Muslims totally dominate that area.
      b) What happened?
         (1) The New Testament Books of Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, First Timothy, perhaps Second Timothy, possibly James, First Peter, Second Peter, and Revelation
         (2) were all written to churches in modern-day Turkey.
            (a) Nine of the twenty-seven Books of the New Testament,
            (b) Books that we quote all the time, and
               i) that we use to direct our lives,
               ii) were all written to churches in a now Muslim nation.

3. Yet, before Jerusalem had been the center.

C. The Jews in Jerusalem persecuted the church badly, and
   1. so the center of Christianity moved to Turkey.
   2. The Roman Empire persecuted the church in Turkey, but
      a) the church became part of the dominate church of the Middle Ages.
b) Then the church moved to Europe.
   (1) The church in Europe let itself be dominated by politics, and
   (2) now the church is almost non-existent there and
      (a) Islam is starting to take over there.
      (b) Then the church moved to America.
         i) What has happened to the church in America?
         ii) How is your Christianity doing?

3. The Roman Empire soon would kill millions of Christians, but
   a) with First Peter, the apostle had prepared the hearts of our early brethren
   b) to remain faithful to God.

D. What happened that the country there lost its Christian influence?
   1. Revelation 2 and 3 reveals that the problem was the church,
   2. not politics or other things.

IV. The Elect
A. This is not Calvinistic election.
   1. Calvinistic election teaches
      a) that God elected everyone whom He was going to save
      b) before the foundation of the world.
   2. They teach that those elected cannot do anything to change their election.
      a) Why then does the Bible urge people to repent and obey the Gospel?
      b) Why does the Bible warn the saints not to fall away?
   3. The elect or the chosen responded to the invitation of Jesus,

      13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren be-
through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2Th 2.13, 14).

“For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt 22.14).

a) Everyone is invited and called, but

b) not everyone accepts the invitation.

(1) At the end of the Bible God again invites people,

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely (Rev 22.17).

(2) John stated explicitly that atonement is for everyone,

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world (1Jo 2.1, 2).

B. We are chosen according to the Foreknowledge of the God the Father.

1. God did not reveal Christianity as an afterthought, but

2. had the whole thing in His mind before the creation of the world.

4 …just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love (Eph 1.4).

C. In Sanctification of the Spirit

1. He chose us that He might sanctify us, because

2. that qualifies us to live with Him in heaven above.
D. For Obedience
   1. The Lord elects,
   2. the Spirit sanctifies, and
   3. we obey.

E. For Sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ
   1. Without the shedding of the blood of the Son of God,
   2. none of this would be possible.

F. Notice that in verse 2, Peter mentions,
   1. the Father, the Spirit, and the Christ,
   2. along with us working with them for our salvation.

V. Grace and Peace

A. This is the way Christians spoke in the first century.
   1. They saluted one another with these words.
   2. Speaking this way is not speaking formally,
      a) it is speaking biblically and spiritually.
      b) It is wishing upon one another the highest good.

B. Because of what Peter said in verse 2 and
   1. because of God’s grace,
   2. we have peace multiplied.

C. We need to understand that we have unlimited peace through the grace of God.
   1. The source of peace is not the United States Government.
   2. It is not all the benefits we have living here.
      a) Remember Peter wrote this idea of unlimited peace
      b) to our brethren who had already been persecuted by the Jews, and
(1) as Peter shows, and
   (a) as John shows in Revelation 2 and 3,
   (b) they were about to suffer beyond imagination by the Romans.

(2) That might be headed our way.
   (a) Yet, if we hear and accept what Peter said,
   (b) we can still have peace multiplied.

**Exhortation:**

I. First Peter 1.1, 2 states what God wants for every person in this auditorium:
   A. He wants us to recognize that we are only pilgrims, that He wants us home.
   B. He wants to select us.
   C. He wants to sanctify us in the Spirit.
   D. He wants us to obey Him.
   E. He wants to sprinkle us with the blood of Jesus Christ.
   F. He wants to give grace to us.
   G. He wants us to have peace that multiplies.

II. These things do not happen automatically or against our wishes.
   A. If we do not want the life He prescribes for us,
   B. He will not force it upon us.
      1. We will not be able to have the good things
      2. that these opening verses and much more in First Peter reveal, but
         a) He will discard us at the Judgment,
         b) if we insist on discarding Him until the day we die.

III. However, Satan does not want you to go to God.
   A. Therefore, Satan will
1. do anything he can,
2. use anything he can,
3. use anyone he can,
   a) to move you away from God our heavenly Father.
   b) Satan attempts to use suffering for that purpose.

B. Satan uses suffering to the max!
   1. Remember what he did to Job.
   2. Remember the Parable of the Sower, in particular the stony ground.
   3. Remember that the possibility of suffering caused Peter to deny Christ.

IV. Peter will show us what we need to know about suffering, but
   A. if it has already torn you down,
   B. let us lift you up by fervent prayer to our heavenly Father,
      1. who will hear such a prayer, because
      2. He wants you restored.
         a) He gave His blessed Son Jesus Christ to suffer horrendously
         b) that we might avoid eternal suffering.

V. At one time, the Jews were the elect, pilgrims, and of the dispersion, but
   A. truly back then it referred to those of the Spirit,
   B. not simply the natural born of Israel.
      1. Now, Peter, a Jew, uses these terms to designate people of the Spirit, but
      2. shows that it is not limited to the people of the flesh.
         a) Do you want to be chosen and elect?
         b) Do you want to be a pilgrim with a better country awaiting you?
   C. The world sees you as a pilgrim, but God has chosen you.