



COMPLETE STUDY GUIDE · LETTER · 5 CHAPTERS · 7 SESSIONS

1 Peter

Living Hope and Steadfast Grace for God's Scattered People

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"

1 PETER 1:3



Seven sessions

Leader's guide

Answer guide

Full text of 1 Peter (WEB)

SIMPLE. ACCESSIBLE. TRANSFORMATIONAL.



CLEAR PATH BIBLE STUDIES

1 Peter

Complete Study Guide

Living Hope and Steadfast Grace for God's Scattered People

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- 1** **Seven sessions** with every discussion and reflection question from the online study, and room to write.
- 2** **Reference pages:** the flow of the letter, the dispersion, the people, suffering and glory, themes, and who you are in Christ, and all five chapters with their study questions.
- 3** **Leader's guide** with the group leader notes, a timed plan, and an answer guide for every discussion question.
- 4** **The full text of 1 Peter** in the World English Bible, so nothing else is needed to do the study.

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The online study, free and with no sign-in: clearpathbiblestudies.com/studies/1peter

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START HERE

How to use this guide

A complete, seven-session walk through 1 Peter — built for small groups, Sunday school, and personal study. Read together, observe, interpret, and leave each session with one clear thing to live out.

EVERY SESSION FOLLOWS ONE RHYTHM

1

Read together

The session's passage,
read aloud together.
The text is in Part Four.

2

Observe

What happened?

3

Interpret

What does it mean?

4

Apply this week

How should I respond?

On your own

Each session gives you a 5-day reading plan, reflection questions, a memory verse, and one action step to live out.

- Write your answers. Thinking on paper is slower, and it lasts.
- Finish each session with the closing page: the one thing to live out, a prayer, and the memory verse from memory.

In a group

Each session has a 60-minute plan for 5–12 people — read together, discuss, and apply, with leader notes built in.

- The leader uses Part Three: leader notes, a timed plan, and an answer guide.
- Participants need Parts One, Two, and Four. Of Part Five, pages 94 and 97–102 are for everyone, and pages 95–96 are for leaders.

PRINTING FOR A GROUP

Participant pages (sessions and reference): pages 8–57. Leader's guide: pages 58–85. The text of 1 Peter: pages 86–91. Page 92, Seven verses to carry, is for everyone. Part Five: pages 93–102.

My progress

☐ 1 A Living Hope

☐ 3 Living Stones, a Chosen People

☐ 5 Doing Good & Giving a Defense

☐ 7 Humility, Grace & Standing Firm

☐ 2 Called to Be Holy

☐ 4 Following in His Steps

☐ 6 Living for God's Will & Sharing Christ's Sufferings

WHY STUDY 1 PETER?

Hope that holds under pressure

Walk through all five chapters of Peter's letter — written to believers scattered and suffering across Asia Minor. Observe what Peter says, interpret what it means, apply it to your life, and learn to teach it to others.

01 Find a living hope

Discover the hope that anchored suffering believers — and still anchors us — in the risen Christ.

02 Know who you are

See your identity in Christ: chosen, royal, holy, and God's own possession.

03 Face suffering with Christ

Learn to meet trials the way Peter teaches — as sharing in Christ's own path to glory.

04 Stand firm in grace

Grow in holiness, humility, and steadfastness in the true grace of God.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

1 PETER 1:3 • WEB

ABOUT THE BOOK

A letter of hope under fire

1 Peter is a letter in the apostle Peter's name to Christians scattered across Asia Minor and suffering for their faith. Before a single instruction on how to live, Peter grounds them in who they are and what they have in the risen Christ.

Its golden thread is suffering and glory — Christ suffered, then entered glory, and those who are His follow the same path, sustained by a living hope and 'the true grace of God' in which they stand.

AUTHOR	Named as the apostle Peter (1:1; 5:1), 'through Silvanus' (5:12); some propose a later disciple
DATE WRITTEN	The 60s AD (exact date debated); written from 'Babylon' (5:13), commonly taken as Rome
SETTING	To believers scattered across five regions of Asia Minor
AUDIENCE	Elect exiles — Christians suffering for their faith
PURPOSE	To anchor suffering believers in a living hope and steadfast grace
MAJOR THEMES	Living hope · Identity in Christ · Holiness · Suffering & glory · Grace

THE LEARNING JOURNEY

Five movements through the letter: five chapters, seven sessions

Born Again to a Living Hope 1 Peter 1	A Chosen People 1 Peter 2	Doing Good 1 Peter 3	Sharing Christ's Sufferings 1 Peter 4	Standing Firm 1 Peter 5
1	2	3	4	5
Sessions 1 · 2	Sessions 2 · 3 · 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7

1 Peter 1	Born Again to a Living Hope A living hope and an unfading inheritance through the resurrection of Christ.
1 Peter 2	Living Stones, a Chosen People Built on Christ the cornerstone — a chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation.
1 Peter 3	Doing Good Before a Watching World Bless rather than retaliate, and be ready to explain your hope with humility and fear.
1 Peter 4	Living for God's Will, Sharing Christ's Sufferings Love, serve, and rejoice to share in Christ's sufferings as the end draws near.
1 Peter 5	Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace Humble yourselves, cast your cares on God, and stand in His true grace.

THE SEVEN SESSIONS

Your study plan

EITHER WAY

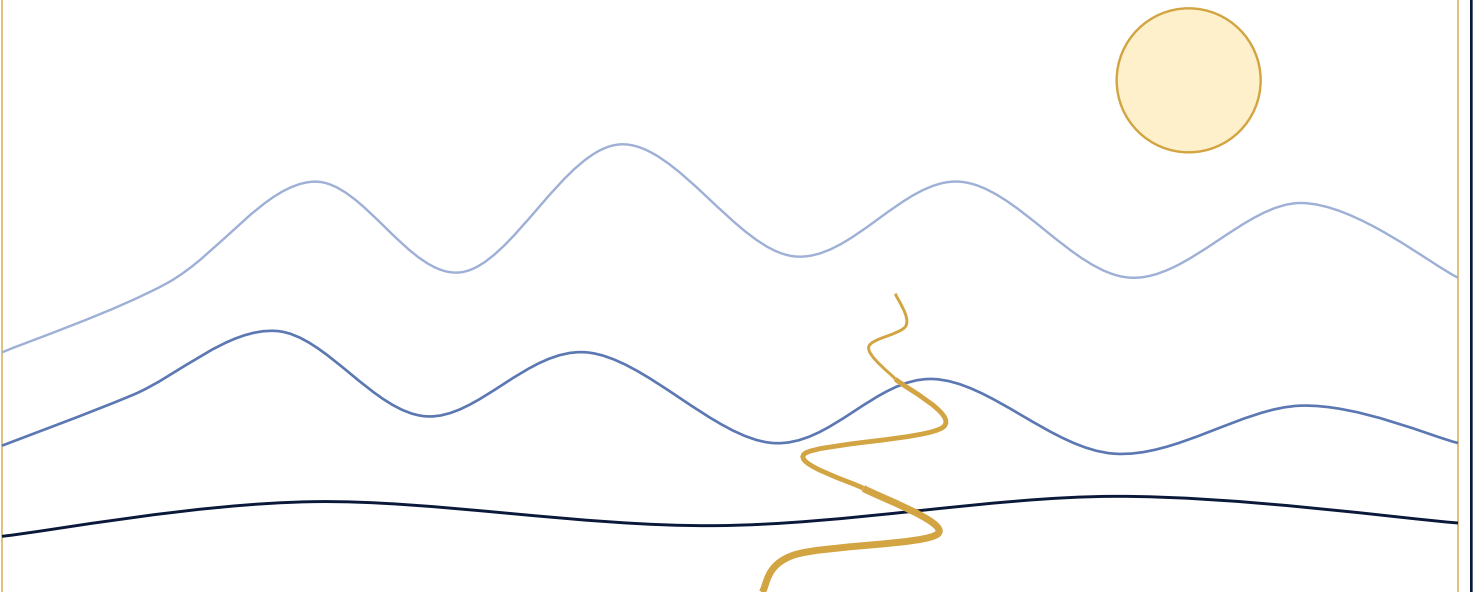
Seven sessions carry you through all five chapters of 1 Peter — from a living hope to standing firm in the true grace of God.

	SESSION	READ 1 PETER	MEMORY VERSE	SESSION PAGE	LEADER PAGE	TEXT PAGE
1	A Living Hope Born again through the resurrection into a hope and inheritance that can never fade.	1:1–12	1:3	9	60	87
2	Called to Be Holy Ransomed by Christ's blood and born again through the living word, we set our hope fully on grace and pursue holy love.	1:13–2:3	1:15–16	13	64	87
3	Living Stones, a Chosen People Built on Christ the living Stone, believers are a chosen race and royal priesthood, called to shine before a watching world.	2:4–12	2:9	17	67	88
4	Following in His Steps Submitting and enduring even unjust treatment, believers follow the example of Christ, who suffered for us and healed us by His wounds.	2:13–25	2:24	21	70	89
5	Doing Good & Giving a Defense In marriage and community, believers bless rather than retaliate and stand ready to explain their hope with humility and fear — as Christ suffered to bring us to God.	3:1–22	3:15	25	74	89
6	Living for God's Will & Sharing Christ's Sufferings Armed with Christ's mindset, believers love, serve, and even rejoice as they share in Christ's sufferings.	4:1–19	4:10	29	78	90
7	Humility, Grace & Standing Firm Shepherds lead humbly, all clothe themselves with humility, cast their cares on God, withstand the devil, and stand firm in true grace.	5:1–14	5:7	33	82	91

PART ONE

The Seven Sessions

Read, discuss, reflect, and close the session. One session a week carries you through all five chapters.



SESSION 1 OF 7

A Living Hope

Read 1 Peter 1:1–12 · text begins on page 87

1

Born again through the resurrection into a hope and inheritance that can never fade.

Before Peter tells suffering believers how to live, he reminds them what they have: a living hope, an unfading inheritance, and a faith being refined – not wasted – through trials.

MEMORY VERSE

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 PETER 1:3 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

☐ Day 1 **1:1–2** Notice the three-Person work of God in choosing and sanctifying you.

☐ Day 2 **1:3–5** Sit with the phrase 'a living hope.' What makes it living?

☐ Day 3 **1:6–9** How does Peter reframe trials? Where do you need that reframe?

☐ Day 4 **1:10–12** The prophets longed to see what you now have. Let that stir wonder.

☐ Day 5 **1:3** Memorize the verse. Pray it back to God each morning.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 1:1–12 aloud together.

- 1** What words or images in this passage stand out as especially hopeful — and why?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** To whom is Peter writing, and how does he describe them (1:1–2)?

- 3** What does God’s mercy accomplish, and what is the inheritance like (1:3–5)?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** Why does Peter call the believers’ hope ‘living’?

- 5** How does Peter say trials relate to the genuineness of faith (1:6–7)?

- 6** Peter addresses ‘the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion’ (1:1). What does it do to a suffering people to be told their displacement is not an accident but an identity with a long biblical history?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

7 Where are you tempted to anchor your hope in something that can fade?

8 How might seeing a current trial as 'refining' rather than 'ruining' change how you carry it?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

1 What would change this week if you believed you are 'guarded' (1:5)?

2 When has a hard season refined your faith in hindsight?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Write out 1 Peter 1:3 and place it somewhere you'll see each morning this week.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Thank God for the living hope and unfading inheritance you have in the risen Christ.



Without looking back, write 1 Peter 1:3.

NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 60.

SESSION 2 OF 7

Called to Be Holy

Read 1 Peter 1:13–2:3 · text begins on page 87

2

Ransomed by Christ's blood and born again through the living word, we set our hope fully on grace and pursue holy love.

Holiness is not earning God's favor — it is living out the new identity of people who have been ransomed at great cost and born again to last forever.

MEMORY VERSE

but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy; for I am holy."

1 PETER 1:15–16 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

☐ Day 1 **1:13–16** What does it mean to 'set your hope fully' on grace?

☐ Day 2 **1:17–21** Consider the cost of your ransom. How does it shape reverence?

☐ Day 3 **1:22–25** Sincere love flows from the living, abiding word.

☐ Day 4 **2:1–3** What attitudes is Peter telling you to put away (2:1)?

☐ Day 5 **1:15–16** Memorize and pray these verses over your week.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 1:13–2:3 aloud together.

- 1** What reasons does Peter give for pursuing holiness — and how are they rooted in the gospel?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** What commands does Peter give in 1:13–16, and on what basis?

- 3** What does Peter say ransomed us, and what is the word of God ‘which lives and remains forever’ (1:18–25)?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** Why does Peter root holiness in God’s character (‘You shall be holy; for I am holy’)?

- 5** How does being ‘born again’ through the imperishable word shape how we live?

- 6** Some readers hear echoes of the exodus in 1:13–2:3: a ransom by a lamb’s blood (1:18–19), minds made ready for action (1:13), a call to the holiness of the God who called them (1:15–16). What does each of these ask of people who are redeemed but not yet home?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

- 7** Where is God inviting you to 'set your hope fully' on His grace rather than on yourself?

- 8** What would sincere, earnest love for another believer look like for you this week (1:22)?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

- 1** Where have you thought of holiness as a burden rather than the freedom of your true identity?

- 2** What would longing for 'the pure milk of the Word' (2:2) look like this week?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Name one pattern from 2:1 — wickedness, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, or evil speaking — to put away this week, and one act of sincere love to put on.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Ask God to make you holy as He is holy, and to fuel that holiness with gratitude for your ransom.

M Without looking back, write 1 Peter 1:15–16.

NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 64.

SESSION 3 OF 7

Living Stones, a Chosen People

Read 1 Peter 2:4–12 · text begins on page 88

3

Built on Christ the living Stone, believers are a chosen race and royal priesthood, called to shine before a watching world.

You are not a spiritual nobody. In Christ you are a living stone in God's house and part of a chosen, royal, holy people – and that identity is meant to be seen.

MEMORY VERSE

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 PETER 2:9 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **2:4–6** Come to Jesus, the living Stone. What does 'coming' look like today?

- ☐ Day 2 **2:7–8** The cornerstone is either a foundation or a stumbling block. Which for you?

- ☐ Day 3 **2:9** Read your identities slowly. Say each one over yourself.

- ☐ Day 4 **2:10** 'you were not a people, but now are God's people.' Thank Him for mercy received.

- ☐ Day 5 **2:11–12** How does identity shape honorable conduct among outsiders?

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 2:4–12 aloud together.

- 1** Which image in 2:4–10 stands out to you most — and why?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** How is Jesus described in 2:4–8?

- 3** What five or more identities does Peter give believers in 2:9–10?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** What does it mean that the stone ‘rejected’ became the cornerstone?

- 5** Why does Peter pile up so many identity images for a scattered, suffering people?

- 6** Same stone, opposite outcomes: precious to believers, a stumbling block to those who are disobedient (2:7–8). What does Peter say marks the difference — and how does Exodus 19:5–6, which Peter applies to his readers in 2:9, shape their calling toward the people around them (2:9, 12)?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

7 Which identity in 2:9 do you most need to believe today — and why?

8 How could your honorable conduct (2:12) help outsiders 'glorify God'?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

1 Where has someone's verdict on you outweighed God's choice of you (2:4)?

2 What 'spiritual sacrifices' (2:5) could you offer quietly this week?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Pick one identity from 2:9 and write it where you'll see it; return to it whenever you feel small this week.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Thank God for making you part of His chosen, royal, holy people, and ask Him to help you live it out visibly.

M Without looking back, write 1 Peter 2:9.

NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 67.

SESSION 4 OF 7

Following in His Steps

Read 1 Peter 2:13–25 · text begins on page 89

4

Submitting and enduring even unjust treatment, believers follow the example of Christ, who suffered for us and healed us by His wounds.

When Peter calls us to honor, submit, and endure — even unfairly — he is not calling injustice good; he is calling us to follow the footsteps of the Christ who suffered to save us. If any of this describes being hurt or afraid at home or work, Peter’s words are not a call to stay in danger; talk to someone you trust or a local support line.

MEMORY VERSE

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness. You were healed by his wounds.

1 PETER 2:24 · WEB

THIS SESSION’S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **2:13–17** Honor, submission, freedom — how do they fit together?
- ☐ Day 2 **2:18–20** What is ‘commendable with God’ in unjust suffering?
- ☐ Day 3 **2:21–23** Trace how Christ responded when He suffered.
- ☐ Day 4 **2:24** ‘He himself bore our sins.’ Rest in what Christ accomplished.
- ☐ Day 5 **2:25** You have returned to the Shepherd of your soul. Give thanks.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 2:13–25 aloud together.

- 1** How does Peter describe the way Christ responded to unjust suffering?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** What kinds of submission does Peter address (2:13–20)?

- 3** How is Christ's example described in 2:21–25?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** How is honorable submission different from approving of injustice?

- 5** What does Christ entrusting Himself 'to him who judges righteously' model for us?

- 6** Read Isaiah 53:4–9 beside 2:21–25. Peter says Christ suffered 'for us' (2:21) and 'bore our sins' (2:24), and also left 'an example, that you should follow his steps' (2:21). Why does Peter hold both together — and what happens to discipleship if either is dropped?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

- 7** Where are you carrying an unfair situation, and what would it look like to entrust it to God?

- 8** How does 'You were healed by his wounds' change the way you face suffering?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

- 1** Where is it hard to call something wrong and still leave the judging to God (2:23)?

- 2** How does Christ's example reshape your response this week?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Identify one unjust or frustrating situation and, as Christ 'committed himself to him who judges righteously,' entrust it to God in prayer.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Thank Christ for bearing your sins and healing you, and ask for grace to follow in His steps.

M Without looking back, write 1 Peter 2:24.

NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 70.

SESSION 5 OF 7

Doing Good & Giving a Defense

Read 1 Peter 3:1–22 · text begins on page 89

5

In marriage and community, believers bless rather than retaliate and stand ready to explain their hope with humility and fear — as Christ suffered to bring us to God.

A watching, sometimes hostile world is most powerfully answered not by argument alone but by humble, hopeful, do-good lives that echo the Christ who suffered to bring us to God. If any of this describes being hurt or afraid at home or work, Peter's words are not a call to stay in danger; talk to someone you trust or a local support line.

MEMORY VERSE

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear,

1 PETER 3:15 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

☐ Day 1 **3:1–7** What does Peter ask of wives and of husbands, and how does it become a witness?

☐ Day 2 **3:8–12** Which of these community attitudes is God growing in you?

☐ Day 3 **3:13–17** Reflect on 'always be ready' — with humility and fear (3:15).

☐ Day 4 **3:18–22** 'The righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God.' Worship.

☐ Day 5 **3:15** Memorize the verse. Prepare, in a sentence, the reason for your hope.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 3:1–22 aloud together.

- 1** What attitudes does Peter say should mark believers toward one another and toward outsiders?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** What does Peter urge for the whole community in 3:8–12?

- 3** What does Peter say about suffering for righteousness and giving a defense (3:13–17)?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** Why does Peter pair readiness to give a defense with ‘humility and fear’ (3:15)?

- 5** What does Christ’s suffering, that ‘he might bring you to God,’ accomplish (3:18)?

- 6** Isaiah 8 told a threatened prophet not to fear what the people feared, but to regard the LORD as holy. Peter takes that up in 3:14–15: ‘Don’t fear what they fear’ and ‘sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,’ followed by readiness to ‘give an answer... with humility and fear’ (3:15). How does sanctifying the Lord in your heart displace fear — and set the tone for witness?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

- 7** How ready are you to give a reason for your hope — and how is your tone?

- 8** Where are you tempted to repay evil for evil rather than bless (3:9)?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

- 1** Which word in 3:8 — ‘compassionate,’ ‘tenderhearted,’ or ‘courteous’ — do you most need to grow in?

- 2** Whose fear (3:14) most often silences you, or sharpens your tone?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Write one or two sentences that honestly explain the hope you have in Christ — and be ready to share them gently.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Ask God for a humble, ready witness and gratitude that Christ suffered to bring you to God.

M Without looking back, write 1 Peter 3:15.

NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 74.

SESSION 6 OF 7

Living for God's Will & Sharing Christ's Sufferings

6

Read 1 Peter 4:1–19 · text begins on page 90

Armed with Christ's mindset, believers love, serve, and even rejoice as they share in Christ's sufferings.

Suffering as a Christian is not a sign that something has gone wrong; it is a share in Christ's own path — and it is met with love, service, and worship, not surprise.

MEMORY VERSE

As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms.

1 PETER 4:10 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **4:1–6** What does 'ceased from sin' (4:1) mean, and how does it shape living for God's will?
- ☐ Day 2 **4:7–8** 'Above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves.' Where can love cover this week?
- ☐ Day 3 **4:9–11** Steward your gift for others, so God is glorified.
- ☐ Day 4 **4:12–16** Don't be astonished at the fiery trial — rejoice as a partaker of Christ's sufferings.
- ☐ Day 5 **4:17–19** Entrust your soul to your faithful Creator while doing good.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 4:1–19 aloud together.

- 1** Peter says 'the end of all things is near' (4:7). What practices does he urge?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** How are believers to live differently from their former way of life (4:1–6)?

- 3** What does Peter urge in 4:7–11, and how are we to view the 'fiery trial' (4:12–19)?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** What does it mean that love 'covers a multitude of sins' (4:8)?

- 5** Why can sharing in Christ's sufferings be a reason to rejoice (4:13)?

- 6** What does Peter mean that judgment begins with the household of God (4:17; compare Ezekiel 9:6)? What does Peter say the fiery trial is for (4:12; compare 1:6–7) — and how does 4:19 turn suffering into an act of trust rather than defeat?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

7 What gift could you use this week to serve as a steward of God's grace?

8 Where do people 'think it is strange' (4:4) that you follow Christ, and how does 4:13 reframe it?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

1 Where could you show hospitality 'without grumbling' (4:9) this month?

2 If your trial comes because of your faith, how does 4:13–16 change how you carry it? If it comes from other causes, where do 4:19 and 5:7 meet you?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Use one specific gift to serve one specific person this week, as a steward of God's grace.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Ask God for love that covers, a servant's heart, and joy in sharing Christ's sufferings.



Without looking back, write 1 Peter 4:10.

NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 78.

SESSION 7 OF 7

Humility, Grace & Standing Firm

Read 1 Peter 5:1–14 · text begins on page 91

7

Shepherds lead humbly, all clothe themselves with humility, cast their cares on God, withstand the devil, and stand firm in true grace.

The letter ends where the Christian life steadies: humble ourselves under God's mighty hand, cast our anxiety on the God who cares, and stand firm in His true grace.

MEMORY VERSE

casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you.

1 PETER 5:7 · WEB

THIS SESSION'S READING PLAN

- ☐ Day 1 **5:1–4** Shepherd — don't domineer. Where do you lead, and how?

- ☐ Day 2 **5:5–7** Clothe yourself with humility; cast your anxiety on Him.

- ☐ Day 3 **5:8–9** Be sober and watchful; withstand the devil, firm in faith.

- ☐ Day 4 **5:10–11** May the God of all grace 'perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you' (5:10). Rest in this.

- ☐ Day 5 **5:12–14** 'this is the true grace of God in which you stand' (5:12). Review the whole letter.

DISCUSS

Discussion questions

READ TOGETHER

Read 1 Peter 5:1–14 aloud together.

- 1** What does Peter want leaders — and the whole church — to look like as the letter closes?

OBSERVE — WHAT HAPPENED?

- 2** How are elders to shepherd, and what awaits them (5:1–4)?

- 3** What does Peter say about humility, anxiety, and the devil (5:5–9)?

INTERPRET — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- 4** How are humbling ourselves and casting our anxiety on God connected (5:6–7)?

- 5** Why does Peter end the whole letter on ‘the true grace of God’ (5:10–14)?

- 6** The letter opens with exiles in the Dispersion (1:1) and closes with a greeting from ‘she who is in Babylon’ (5:13). Now that the group has walked all five chapters, what does 1 Peter say faithful exile actually looks like — in identity, in suffering, in household life, and in hope?

APPLY — THIS WEEK

- 7** What specific anxiety will you cast on God this week, trusting that He cares for you?

- 8** Where is God calling you to 'clothe yourselves with humility' (5:5)?

REFLECT

Two reflection questions

- 1** Where do you find it hardest to believe God 'cares for you' (5:7)?

- 2** Looking back over 1 Peter, what one truth do you most want to carry forward?

LIVE IT

Close the session

ONE THING TO LIVE OUT

Write down your top anxiety, then pray 1 Peter 5:7 over it and consciously hand it to God each day this week.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Humble yourself before God, cast your cares on Him, and ask the God of all grace to establish you.

M Without looking back, write 1 Peter 5:7.

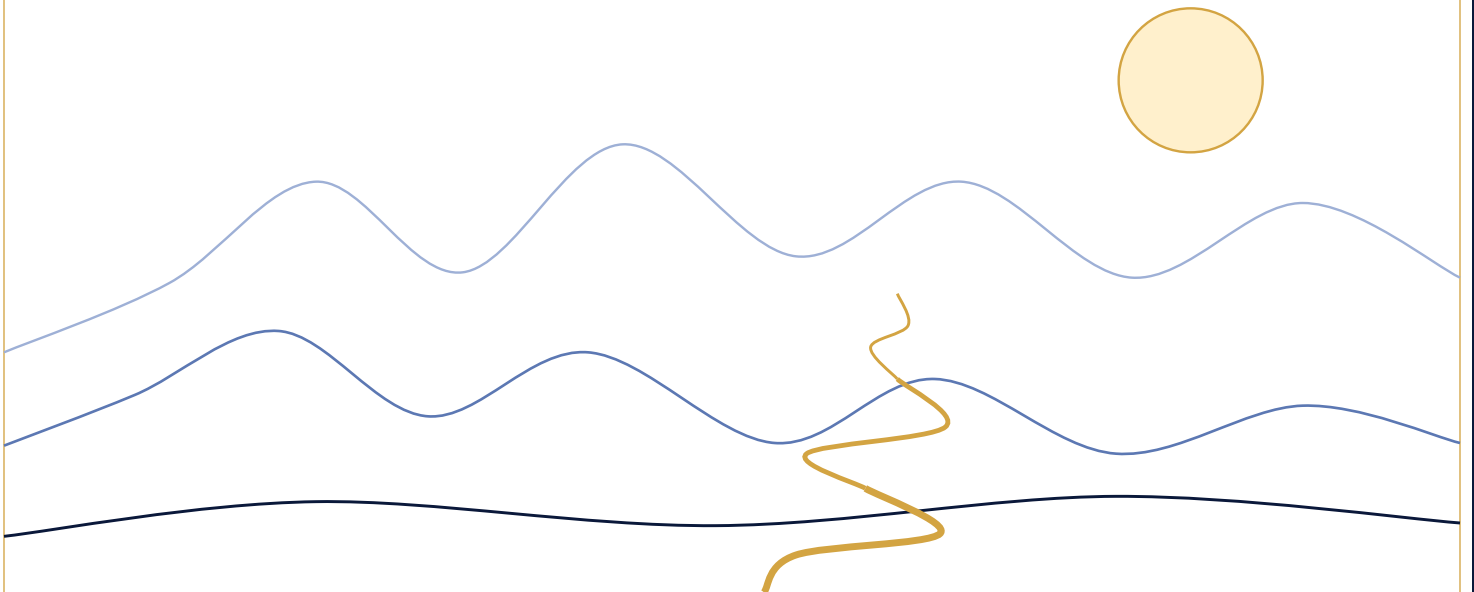
NOTES, AND QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE GROUP

Answers and leader notes are in the leader's guide, page 82.

PART TWO

Reference

The flow of the letter, the dispersion, the people, suffering and glory, the themes, who you are in Christ, and every chapter with its study questions.



ELEVEN MOVEMENTS THROUGH THE LETTER

The Flow of the Letter

Eleven movements through Peter's letter, in order.

1:1–2	To the Elect Exiles Peter greets scattered believers as chosen by the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Asia Minor
1:3–12	A Living Hope Praise for the new birth into a living hope and an unfading inheritance — joy that outlasts refining trials. The new birth
1:13–2:3	Be Holy Ransomed by Christ's blood and born again through the living word, set your hope fully on grace and love one another earnestly. The ransomed life
2:4–12	Living Stones, a Chosen People Built on Christ the cornerstone, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own possession. God's spiritual house
2:13–25	Following in His Steps Live honorably and endure even unjust suffering, following Christ, who bore our sins and healed us by His wounds. A hostile society
3:1–12	Life Together Wives and husbands (3:1–7), then unity, compassion, and blessing in the community — repaying evil with blessing. Home and community
3:13–22	Ready to Give a Defense Suffer for doing good with a good conscience, always ready to explain your hope with humility and fear — as Christ suffered to bring us to God. Before a watching world
4:1–11	Living for God's Will Armed with Christ's mindset, love earnestly, show hospitality, and steward God's grace so that He is glorified. The believing community

4:12–19**The Fiery Trial**

Don't be astonished at the fiery trial; rejoice as a partaker of Christ's sufferings and entrust your soul to a faithful Creator.

A suffering church

5:1–11

Humble Shepherds

Elders shepherd humbly; all clothe themselves with humility, cast their cares on God, and withstand the devil, firm in faith.

The flock of God

5:12–14

The True Grace of God

Closing greetings from 'she who is in Babylon' and Mark, and the letter's closing testimony: this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

'Babylon' and the churches

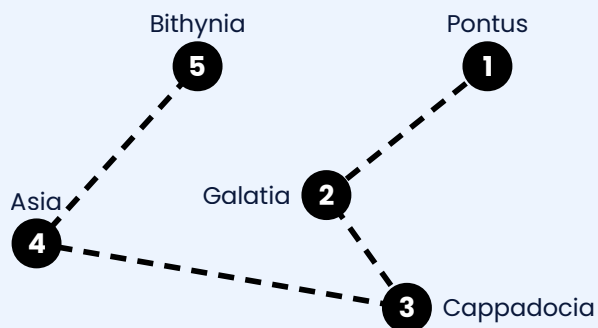
SCATTERED ACROSS ASIA MINOR

The Dispersion

Peter writes to believers scattered across five regions of Asia Minor. Below: the regions, who these exiles were, and what Peter calls them to.

ASIA MINOR · TRADITIONALLY THE 60S AD · 1 PETER 1:1

Peter addresses believers 'living as foreigners in the Dispersion' across five regions of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), named in the order Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia (1:1).



Numbers follow the order Peter lists the regions (1:1); a travel route is only a suggestion · stylized schematic, not to geographic scale

THE FIVE REGIONS

- Pontus — the northern coast of Asia Minor, on the Black Sea
- Galatia — the central highlands
- Cappadocia — the east-central interior
- Asia — the western coast, home to many cities
- Bithynia — the northwest, near the Black Sea

WHO THESE EXILES ARE

- Chosen by the foreknowledge of God the Father
- Sanctified by the Spirit
- Called to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood
- Foreigners and pilgrims — at home in Christ, strangers in the culture

FOR US TODAY

- Peter writes to ordinary believers in far-flung places.
- Scattered and suffering believers are still 'chosen' and held by God.
- A shared identity in Christ unites believers across provinces and pressures.

THE PEOPLE & FIGURES OF 1 PETER

People & Figures

Ten people and figures at the heart of Peter's letter. Each entry says who they are, where they appear, and what they teach.

Simon Peter

The apostle named as the letter's author · 1 Peter 1:1; 5:1

Simon Peter, 'an apostle of Jesus Christ' (1:1), writes as 'a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ' (5:1). He writes to Christ's scattered flock with a letter of living hope and steadfast grace.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 1:1 (greeting) · 1 Peter 5:1 (a fellow elder) · 1 Peter 5:12–13 (closing)

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Writes to strengthen suffering believers across Asia Minor
- Grounds them in a living hope and a holy identity
- Calls the whole church to humility and steadfast grace

WHAT IT TEACHES

- A witness of Christ's sufferings writes to encourage others who suffer.
- Authority in the church is exercised as a fellow elder, not as a lord (5:1–3).

WHY IT MATTERS

Peter writes as a witness of Christ's sufferings to steady others who are suffering; the same Christ is our hope today.

Jesus Christ

The living Stone, the one who bore our sins, and the chief Shepherd · 1 Peter 1–3; 5

Jesus is at the center of 1 Peter: the spotless Lamb foreknown before creation, the living Stone rejected by people but chosen by God, the one who bore our sins in His body on the tree, and the chief Shepherd who will appear in glory. His path of suffering-then-glory is the pattern for every believer.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 1:18–21 (the spotless Lamb) · 1 Peter 2:4–8 (the living Stone) · 1 Peter 2:21–25 (the one who bore our sins) · 1 Peter 5:4 (the chief Shepherd)

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Redeems His people with His precious blood
- Bears our sins and heals us by His wounds
- Leaves us an example and will appear in glory

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Christ's suffering both saves us and shows us the way.
- Glory follows suffering — for Christ, and for those who are His.

WHY IT MATTERS

Every call to endure in 1 Peter rests on Jesus, who suffered to save us and reigns to keep us.

Silvanus (Silas)

The 'faithful brother' named at the letter's close · 1 Peter 5:12

Peter writes 'through Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him' (5:12). The verse does not say whether Silvanus wrote down, carried or helped shape the letter; he is a trusted co-worker, commonly identified with Silas of Acts.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 5:12

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Is the one through whom Peter writes, and whom he calls a faithful brother
- Is named at the close of the letter, beside the testimony that this is 'the true grace of God' (5:12)

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Faithful, often unseen helpers make ministry possible.
- The gospel travels through trustworthy partnerships.

WHY IT MATTERS

Behind most fruitful ministry stand faithful 'Silvanuses' whose quiet reliability carries the work forward.

The Elect Exiles

The scattered believers who received the letter · 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11

The letter is addressed to 'the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion' across five regions of Asia Minor — believers who are suffering and spoken against for their faith. Peter calls them 'foreigners and pilgrims' (2:11): at home in Christ, strangers in a hostile culture.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 1:1 · 1 Peter 2:11 · 1 Peter 4:12

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Endure suffering and slander for the name of Christ
- Live honorable lives that commend the gospel to outsiders

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Belonging to Christ can mean feeling like a stranger in the world.
- Chosen by God and exiled in culture are held together in Christ.

WHY IT MATTERS

Believers today who feel out of step with their culture share the identity Peter gives: chosen by God, foreigners and pilgrims here.

Mark

Peter's 'son' (likely spiritual) · 1 Peter 5:13

Peter sends greetings from 'Mark, my son' (5:13). Tradition identifies him with John Mark, but the verse does not say so; his presence shows a bond of mentoring and family within the mission.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 5:13

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Stands with Peter as a 'son' in the faith
- Represents the next generation carrying the message forward

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Spiritual mentoring builds lasting family in the faith.
- Faith is passed on through close, family-like relationships.

WHY IT MATTERS

Investing in a spiritual 'son' or 'daughter' multiplies the gospel beyond our own lifetime.

The Prophets

Those who searched and foretold this salvation · 1 Peter 1:10–12

The Old Testament prophets 'sought and searched diligently' about the salvation now revealed in Christ — predicting the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories to follow. What they longed to see, the believers now have in part, with its fullness still ahead (1:5, 1:13).

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 1:10–12

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Foretold the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow
- Served a salvation they would not see fulfilled in their day

WHAT IT TEACHES

- God's plan of salvation spans the ages and centers on Christ.
- We hold a privilege the prophets longed for.

WHY IT MATTERS

The hope we sometimes take for granted was the object of centuries of longing — a reason for fresh wonder.

Sarah & the Holy Women

Examples of hope placed in God · 1 Peter 3:5–6

Peter points to ‘the holy women’ of old who hoped in God, and names Sarah, who obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (3:5–6). He tells the wives he addresses that they are her children ‘if you do well, and are not put in fear by any terror’ (3:6) — a picture of quiet trust in God.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 3:5–6

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Model hope placed in God rather than in circumstances
- Peter tells wives they are her children if they do well and are not put in fear (3:6)

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Hope in God is the ground for doing well without being put in fear (3:5–6).
- Faithfulness in ordinary life is honored by God.

WHY IT MATTERS

Peter holds up women who hoped in God and calls readers to do well without terror (3:5–6); it is never a call to endure abuse. If afraid at home, seek help.

The Elders (Shepherds)

Leaders charged to shepherd God’s flock · 1 Peter 5:1–4

Peter charges the elders to shepherd God’s flock — willingly and eagerly, not for gain and not domineering, but as examples — with the promise that when the chief Shepherd appears, they will receive the unfading crown of glory.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 5:1–4

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Care for the flock of God, as Peter charges (5:2)
- Lead by example rather than by domination

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Christian leadership is shepherding, not lording.
- Faithful, humble service is crowned by the chief Shepherd.

WHY IT MATTERS

Every leader in the church is accountable to the chief Shepherd (5:4), who will reward faithful shepherds; it never shields leaders who abuse.

Noah

Saved through water — a picture of salvation · 1 Peter 3:20–21

Peter recalls Noah and his family, ‘saved through water,’ as a picture Peter links to baptism — ‘not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God’ — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (3:21).

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 3:20–21

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Illustrates God’s patient rescue of eight souls through water (3:20)
- Is set beside baptism, which Peter says ‘now saves’ — as ‘the answer of a good conscience’ through Christ’s resurrection (3:21); traditions differ on this

WHAT IT TEACHES

- God waited patiently while the ark was built, yet only eight were saved (3:20).
- Salvation rests on Christ’s work and resurrection (3:21).

WHY IT MATTERS

Peter sets Noah’s rescue beside baptism and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (3:21): our hope rests on Christ, not on our circumstances.

The Adversary

The devil, a roaring lion to be withstood · 1 Peter 5:8–9

Peter warns that the devil — the believers’ adversary — prowls like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Yet he is to be withstood, firm in faith, by a church strengthened by grace and united with suffering believers worldwide.

KEY PASSAGES

1 Peter 5:8–9

ROLE IN THE LETTER

- Prowls, ‘seeking whom he may devour’ (5:8)
- Is withstood by believers standing firm in faith

WHAT IT TEACHES

- Spiritual vigilance is part of faithful endurance.
- The devil is real but can be withstood — through steadfast faith and grace.

WHY IT MATTERS

Sober watchfulness and firm faith, not fear, are the believer’s response to an adversary who ‘walks around like a roaring lion’ (5:8).

THE GOLDEN THREAD OF 1 PETER

Suffering & Glory

The heart of 1 Peter is the pattern of suffering, then glory — Christ's, and ours.

CHRIST'S PATTERN

1:11	The sufferings and the glories The prophets foretold 'the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them' — the pattern that shapes the whole letter. <i>Suffering first, then glory: Christ's path and ours.</i>
2:19–21	Called to follow His steps Enduring sorrow unjustly is commendable with God, for Christ suffered for us, leaving an example to follow. <i>Christ's unjust suffering is our model; it never means endure abuse — seek safety.</i>
2:24	By His wounds you were healed Christ bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness — by His wounds we are healed. <i>His suffering is first of all our salvation. Healing here is set beside bearing our sins (2:24); Peter does not promise that every hardship or illness will be removed.</i>
3:18	To bring us to God Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God. <i>The purpose of His suffering: reconciliation.</i>

PRESENT TRIALS

1:6–7	Faith refined like gold Grief in various trials tests faith — more precious than gold — so it may result in praise and glory when Christ is revealed. <i>Peter says that 'if need be' trials test faith, so that it may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:6–7).</i>
3:14	Blessed for righteousness' sake Even if you suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed — do not fear what they fear, nor be troubled. <i>Suffering for doing right is a blessing, not a defeat.</i>
4:12–13	Share in Christ's sufferings Don't be astonished at the fiery trial; rejoice, because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that at the revelation of His glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. <i>Present trial, coming gladness — held together.</i>

COMING GLORY

4:14

The Spirit of glory rests on you

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

The Spirit of glory rests on the insulted believer now; the glory to be revealed is still ahead (4:13).

5:1

A partaker of the glory to come

Peter writes as a witness of Christ's sufferings and a partaker of the glory that is to be revealed.

Witness of suffering, partaker of glory.

5:4

The unfading crown of glory

When the chief Shepherd appears, faithful shepherds will receive the crown of glory that doesn't fade away.

Glory is the sure end of faithful endurance.

GRACE TO ENDURE

5:10

The God of all grace

After you have suffered a little while, may the God of all grace perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

Grace carries us through, and grace has the last word.

TRACE A THREAD THROUGH THE BOOK

Themes

Eight of the great themes of 1 Peter. Each shows how it weaves through the letter and names every chapter where it appears.

01 Living Hope

1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 3

Through the resurrection, believers are born again to a hope and inheritance that can never fade.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Born Again to a Living Hope · Doing Good Before a Watching World

03 Holiness

1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 2, 1 Peter 4

Ransomed and reborn, believers are called to be holy as God is holy, and to love one another earnestly.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Born Again to a Living Hope · Living Stones, a Chosen People · Living for God's Will, Sharing Christ's Sufferings

05 Suffering & Glory

1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 2, 1 Peter 3, 1 Peter 4, 1 Peter 5

The golden thread of 1 Peter: Christ suffered then was glorified, and so it will be for those who are His.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Born Again to a Living Hope · Living Stones, a Chosen People · Doing Good Before a Watching World · Living for God's Will, Sharing Christ's Sufferings · Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace

07 Grace

1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 3, 1 Peter 4, 1 Peter 5

The letter begins and ends with grace — the true grace of God in which believers stand.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Born Again to a Living Hope · Doing Good Before a Watching World · Living for God's Will, Sharing Christ's Sufferings · Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace

02 Identity in Christ

1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 2

Chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation, living stones, God's own possession — who believers truly are.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Born Again to a Living Hope · Living Stones, a Chosen People

04 Doing Good

1 Peter 2, 1 Peter 3, 1 Peter 4

Honorable conduct and blessing — even toward opponents — make the gospel credible before a watching world.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Living Stones, a Chosen People · Doing Good Before a Watching World · Living for God's Will, Sharing Christ's Sufferings

06 Submission & Humility

1 Peter 2, 1 Peter 3, 1 Peter 5

Following Christ's example, believers submit within their relationships and clothe themselves with humility.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Living Stones, a Chosen People · Doing Good Before a Watching World · Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace

08 The Shepherd

1 Peter 2, 1 Peter 5

Jesus is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls and the chief Shepherd who will appear in glory.

WHERE IT APPEARS: Living Stones, a Chosen People · Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace

WHO PETER SAYS YOU ARE

Who You Are in Christ

Before Peter asks the scattered churches to do anything, he tells them who they are. These are the God-given identities every believer holds in Christ.

CIRCLES OF IDENTITY · IN CHRIST

1:1–2	Chosen by God Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.
1:3	Born Again Given new birth into a living hope through the resurrection.
2:5	Living Stones Built into a spiritual house on Christ the cornerstone.
2:9	A Royal Priesthood A chosen race and royal priesthood, to proclaim His excellence.
2:9	A Holy Nation Set apart as a holy nation, distinct in the world.
2:9–10	God's Own Possession 'Not a people,' but now God's people, who have 'obtained mercy.'

'In the past, you were not a people, but now are God's people.' (2:10)

KEY IDENTITY DECLARATIONS

1:3	Born again to a living hope New birth into an inheritance that can never fade.
2:9	A chosen race, royal priesthood The letter's keynote of identity.
2:10	Now the people of God From 'not a people' to God's own people, by mercy.
2:11	Foreigners and pilgrims At home in Christ, strangers in the culture.
2:25	Returned to the Shepherd Straying sheep now home with the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.
4:10	Good managers of God's grace Each gifted to serve the others with God's varied grace.

THE 5 CHAPTERS · A VERSE-BY-VERSE JOURNEY

The Library

Each chapter follows the same path — Observe, Interpret, Apply, Disciple — with key events, people, places, themes, and verses.

1 Born Again to a Living Hope

1 Peter 1 · text on page 87

Through Christ's resurrection, God gives scattered, suffering believers a living hope and an inheritance that can never fade.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Peter writes to believers scattered as exiles across Asia Minor. He begins with praise: by His great mercy God has caused them to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus, into an inheritance kept in heaven. Though grieved by trials, they rejoice — for trials refine faith like gold. This is the salvation the prophets searched for and angels longed to see. So they are to prepare their minds for action, be holy as God is holy, live in reverent fear as ransomed people, and love one another earnestly from the heart, having been born again through the living and abiding word of God.

KEY EVENTS

- Greeting to the elect exiles of the dispersion
- Praise for the new birth into a living hope
- Rejoicing through trials that refine faith
- The call to be holy and to love one another earnestly

KEY PEOPLE

- Peter
- God the Father, Son, and Spirit
- The elect exiles

KEY LOCATIONS

- Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia

KEY THEMES

- Living hope
- New birth
- Refining trials
- Holiness
- The living word

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1 Peter is a letter, not a story — traditionally dated to the 60s AD (the exact date is debated) to Christians facing social hostility for their faith. Peter's aim is to anchor them in who they are and what they have in Christ before he tells them how to live.

THE CLEAR PATH FRAMEWORK · STUDY QUESTIONS

Read the chapter in Part Four, then work through these four movements alone or with a group. There are no wrong answers — only honest engagement with the text.

STEP 01 · WHAT HAPPENED? · OBSERVE

1. What does Peter praise God for in 1:3–5, and how is the believers' hope described?
2. How does Peter frame the believers' trials (1:6–7)?
3. What commands flow out of this hope (1:13–22)?

STEP 02 · WHAT DOES IT MEAN? · INTERPRET

1. Why does Peter call their hope 'living' — and what makes it living?
2. How can trials be a cause for rejoicing rather than despair?
3. Why does holiness follow from being 'redeemed' and 'born again'?

STEP 03 · HOW SHOULD I RESPOND? · APPLY

1. Where do you need a 'living hope' that outlasts your present circumstances?
 2. What would it look like to let your identity as a ransomed, reborn child of God shape one relationship this week?
-

STEP 04 · HOW CAN I TEACH OTHERS? · DISCIPLE

1. How would you explain a 'living hope' to someone whose hope feels fragile or fading?
2. Whom could you sit with this week, and what in 1:3–5 could you read to them if they ask for hope?

KEY VERSES

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **1 Peter 1:3**

whom, not having known, you love. In him, though now you don't see him, yet believing, you rejoice greatly with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. **1 Peter 1:8–9**

but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy; for I am holy." **1 Peter 1:15–16**

PRAYER FOCUS

Thank God for the living hope and unfading inheritance you have in the risen Christ, and ask Him to make you holy and loving.

2 Living Stones, a Chosen People

1 Peter 2 • text on page 88

Believers are living stones built on Christ the cornerstone — a chosen people whose honorable lives, even under unjust suffering, follow the pattern of Christ.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Having been born again, believers are to crave the pure milk of the word and come to Jesus, the living Stone rejected by people but chosen by God. They themselves are living stones built into a spiritual house, and — in one of Scripture's richest identity statements — a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own possession, called to proclaim His excellence. As foreigners and pilgrims they are to live such honorable lives that even accusers glorify God. Peter then calls for submission within a hostile society — to authorities and, for servants, not only to the good and gentle but also to the wicked (never a call to endure abuse) — pointing to Christ, who suffered unjustly, entrusted Himself to God, bore our sins on the tree, and by whose wounds we are healed. We were straying sheep, now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.

KEY EVENTS

- Christ the living Stone — rejected by people, chosen by God
- The believers' identity: a chosen race and royal priesthood
- The call to honorable living and submission as foreigners and pilgrims
- Christ's example of unjust suffering; the Shepherd of our souls

KEY PEOPLE

- Jesus, the living Stone and Shepherd
- The chosen people
- Servants and masters

KEY LOCATIONS

- A watching, often hostile society

KEY THEMES

- Identity in Christ
- The cornerstone
- Honorable conduct
- Submission
- Christ's example in suffering

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Peter weaves together Old Testament stones-and-people imagery (Isaiah, Psalms, Exodus, Hosea) to tell a scattered, suffering people who they truly are — then shows how that identity reshapes their conduct before outsiders.

THE CLEAR PATH FRAMEWORK • STUDY QUESTIONS

Read the chapter in Part Four, then work through these four movements alone or with a group. There are no wrong answers — only honest engagement with the text.

STEP 01 • WHAT HAPPENED? • OBSERVE

1. How is Jesus described in 2:4–8, and how are believers described in 2:9–10?
2. What kind of conduct does Peter urge among outsiders (2:11–17)?
3. How is Christ presented as the pattern for suffering (2:21–25)?

STEP 02 • WHAT DOES IT MEAN? • INTERPRET

1. What does it mean that believers are a 'royal priesthood' and 'holy nation'?
2. Why does Peter ground honorable living in the believers' identity?
3. How does Christ's response to unjust suffering set the pattern for ours?

STEP 03 • HOW SHOULD I RESPOND? • APPLY

1. Which identity in 2:9 do you most need to believe about yourself right now?
2. Where is God calling you to honorable conduct or Christlike patience in a hard relationship or setting?

STEP 04 · HOW CAN I TEACH OTHERS? · DISCIPLE

1. How would you help a discouraged believer see themselves as part of God's 'chosen race' and 'royal priesthood'?
2. Who needs to hear that Christ bore their sins and is the Shepherd who welcomes wandering sheep home?

KEY VERSES

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [1 Peter 2:9](#)

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness. You were healed by his wounds. [1 Peter 2:24](#)

For you were going astray like sheep; but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. [1 Peter 2:25](#)

PRAYER FOCUS

Praise Christ the cornerstone, receive your identity as part of God's chosen people, and ask for grace to live honorably before a watching world.

3 Doing Good Before a Watching World

1 Peter 3 · text on page 89

In every relationship, believers answer evil with blessing, ready to explain their hope with humility and fear — following Christ, who suffered for sins to bring us to God.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Peter addresses life together: wives are to be in subjection to their own husbands (not a call to stay in danger), so that even those who don't obey the Word may be won by their conduct, and husbands are to live with their wives according to knowledge, giving honor, so that their prayers are not hindered. Then, to all: be like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous; do not repay evil for evil but bless, for you were called to inherit a blessing. Even if you suffer for righteousness, you are blessed — so sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear, having a good conscience. It is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil, because Christ Himself suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God — and Peter links the water of Noah's ship to baptism, 'the answer of a good conscience toward God' through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

KEY EVENTS

- Instructions for wives and husbands
- The call to unity, blessing, and not repaying evil
- Being ready to give a defense of your hope with humility and fear
- Christ suffered once for sins to bring us to God

KEY PEOPLE

- Wives and husbands
- The whole community
- Christ, the righteous who suffered for the unrighteous
- Noah

KEY LOCATIONS

- The home and the community
- A society ready to accuse

KEY THEMES

- Doing good
- Blessing instead of retaliation
- Giving a defense (apologia)
- Christ's redeeming suffering

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Peter's counsel on marriage and community is aimed at witness in a suspicious culture: honorable, humble, hope-filled lives that make the gospel credible — and that echo Christ's own path of suffering for the sake of others.

THE CLEAR PATH FRAMEWORK · STUDY QUESTIONS

Read the chapter in Part Four, then work through these four movements alone or with a group. There are no wrong answers — only honest engagement with the text.

STEP 01 · WHAT HAPPENED? · OBSERVE

1. What attitudes does Peter call for in relationships and the community (3:1–12)?
2. What does Peter say about suffering for doing good (3:13–17)?
3. What does Christ's suffering accomplish, and how is it pictured (3:18–22)?

STEP 02 · WHAT DOES IT MEAN? · INTERPRET

1. Why does Peter tie a believer's witness to humility and a good conscience?
2. How does 'not rendering evil for evil' reflect the gospel?
3. What does it mean that Christ suffered so that, in Peter's words, 'he might bring you to God'?

STEP 03 · HOW SHOULD I RESPOND? · APPLY

1. How ready are you to explain your hope — with humility and fear — to someone who asks?
2. Where are you tempted to repay evil for evil, and how could you bless instead this week?

STEP 04 · HOW CAN I TEACH OTHERS? · DISCIPLE

1. How would you coach a believer to give a humble, reverent answer about the hope they have?
2. Who in your life needs to hear that Christ suffered, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring them to God?

KEY VERSES

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear, [1 Peter 3:15](#)

Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, [1 Peter 3:18](#)

PRAYER FOCUS

Ask God for a humble, ready witness, for grace to bless instead of retaliate, and gratitude that Christ suffered to bring you to God.

4 Living for God's Will, Sharing Christ's Sufferings

1 Peter 4 · text on page 90

Since Christ suffered, and with the end near, believers arm themselves with His mindset, love and serve one another, and rejoice to share in His sufferings.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Since Christ suffered in the flesh, believers are to arm themselves with the same resolve — for whoever suffers in the flesh has ‘ceased from sin’ (4:1; often read as a break with sin’s rule, not sinlessness), living no longer for human passions but for the will of God, even when others think it strange and speak evil of them. The end of all things is near, so they must be clear-minded and prayerful; above all, keep loving one another earnestly, for love covers a multitude of sins; show hospitality without grumbling; and use whatever gift each has received to serve as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms, so that God is glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. They should not be astonished at the fiery trial, as though something strange were happening, but rejoice because they are partakers of Christ’s sufferings — and if they suffer for being a Christian, they are not to be ashamed but to glorify God in this matter and entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

KEY EVENTS

- Arming ourselves with Christ’s mindset toward suffering
- The end is near: love, hospitality, and stewardship of grace
- Rejoicing in the fiery trial as sharing Christ’s sufferings
- Glorifying God when suffering as a Christian

KEY PEOPLE

- Christ, who suffered in the flesh
- Good managers of God’s grace
- Those who suffer as Christians

KEY LOCATIONS

- A community under pressure and slander

KEY THEMES

- Living for God’s will
- Love that covers sins
- Stewardship of grace
- Sharing Christ’s sufferings

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Peter turns from Christ’s example to the believers’ present ordeal: real, painful, unjust suffering. His counsel is not stoic endurance but hopeful, loving, worship-filled participation in the pattern of Christ — suffering now, glory to come.

THE CLEAR PATH FRAMEWORK · STUDY QUESTIONS

Read the chapter in Part Four, then work through these four movements alone or with a group. There are no wrong answers — only honest engagement with the text.

STEP 01 · WHAT HAPPENED? · OBSERVE

1. How are believers to live differently from their former way of life (4:1–6)?
2. What practices does Peter urge because ‘the end of all things is near’ (4:7–11)?
3. How should believers regard their fiery trial (4:12–19)?

STEP 02 · WHAT DOES IT MEAN? · INTERPRET

1. How do interpreters read ‘ceased from sin’ (4:1), and what does living for the will of God look like?
2. Why does Peter say love ‘covers a multitude of sins’?
3. Why can sharing in Christ’s sufferings be a cause for rejoicing?

STEP 03 · HOW SHOULD I RESPOND? · APPLY

1. What gift has God given you to steward for others — and how could you use it this week?
2. If your trial comes because of your faith, how does 4:13–16 change how you carry it? If it comes from other causes, where do 4:19 and 5:7 meet you?

STEP 04 · HOW CAN I TEACH OTHERS? · DISCIPLE

1. How would you help a believer who is suffering for their faith see that it is not a sign of God’s absence (4:12–16)?

2. Whom could you serve this week with your gift, as a steward of God's grace?

KEY VERSES

And above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins. [1 Peter 4:8](#)

As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms.

[1 Peter 4:10](#)

Beloved, don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. But because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice, that at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. [1 Peter 4:12-13](#)

PRAYER FOCUS

Ask God for love that covers, a heart to serve, and joy to share in Christ's sufferings, entrusting your soul to your faithful Creator.

5 Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace

1 Peter 5 · text on page 91

Leaders shepherd God's flock humbly, all clothe themselves with humility, cast their cares on God, withstand the devil, and stand in the true grace of God.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Peter appeals to the elders as a fellow elder and witness of Christ's sufferings: shepherd God's flock willingly and eagerly, not for gain and not domineering, but as examples — and when the chief Shepherd appears, they will receive an unfading crown of glory. Younger ones are to submit to elders, and all are to clothe themselves with humility toward one another, for God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. So they humble themselves under God's mighty hand, casting all their anxiety on Him because He cares for them. They must be sober and watchful, for the devil prowls like a roaring lion — withstand him, firm in faith, knowing the worldwide family of believers is enduring the same sufferings. And Peter prays that the God of all grace, who called them to His eternal glory in Christ, will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle them after they have suffered. Peter closes with greetings from 'she who is in Babylon' and from Mark, and testifies that 'this is the true grace of God in which you stand.'

KEY EVENTS

- The charge to elders to shepherd God's flock humbly
- The chief Shepherd and the unfading crown of glory
- Clothing ourselves with humility; casting our anxiety on God
- Withstanding the devil; the God of all grace who calls and strengthens
- Final greetings, and the testimony that this is the true grace of God in which they stand

KEY PEOPLE

- The elders / shepherds
- The chief Shepherd (5:4)
- Peter, Silvanus, and Mark
- The whole family of believers

KEY LOCATIONS

- 'Babylon' (where Peter writes; commonly taken as a code name for Rome)
- Churches enduring suffering worldwide

KEY THEMES

- Humble leadership
- Humility
- Casting anxiety on God
- Spiritual vigilance
- The God of all grace

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Peter ends where shepherds should — with care for the flock, humility, and grace. He charges the elders to 'Shepherd the flock of God' (5:2), as one who is himself 'a fellow elder' (5:1), and his witness of Christ's sufferings stands behind every word. The closing keynote of the whole letter is grace: God's true grace, in which they must stand.

THE CLEAR PATH FRAMEWORK · STUDY QUESTIONS

Read the chapter in Part Four, then work through these four movements alone or with a group. There are no wrong answers — only honest engagement with the text.

STEP 01 · WHAT HAPPENED? · OBSERVE

1. How are elders to shepherd the flock, and what awaits them (5:1–4)?
2. What does Peter urge about humility and anxiety (5:5–7)?
3. How are believers to face the devil, and what does Peter pray for them (5:8–11)?

STEP 02 · WHAT DOES IT MEAN? · INTERPRET

1. What separates shepherding the flock of God from 'lording it over those entrusted to you' (5:2–3)?
2. How are humility and casting your cares on God connected (5:6–7)?
3. Why does Peter end the whole letter with 'the true grace of God'?

STEP 03 · HOW SHOULD I RESPOND? · APPLY

1. What anxiety do you need to cast on God this week, trusting that He cares for you?
 2. Where could you 'clothe yourselves with humility' in a relationship or responsibility?
-

STEP 04 · HOW CAN I TEACH OTHERS? · DISCIPLE

1. How would you encourage a weary leader to shepherd willingly and humbly, looking to the chief Shepherd?
2. Who needs to hear Peter's prayer that the God of all grace will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle them after they have suffered?

KEY VERSES

casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you. [1 Peter 5:7](#)

Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. [1 Peter 5:8](#)

But may the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. [1 Peter 5:10](#)

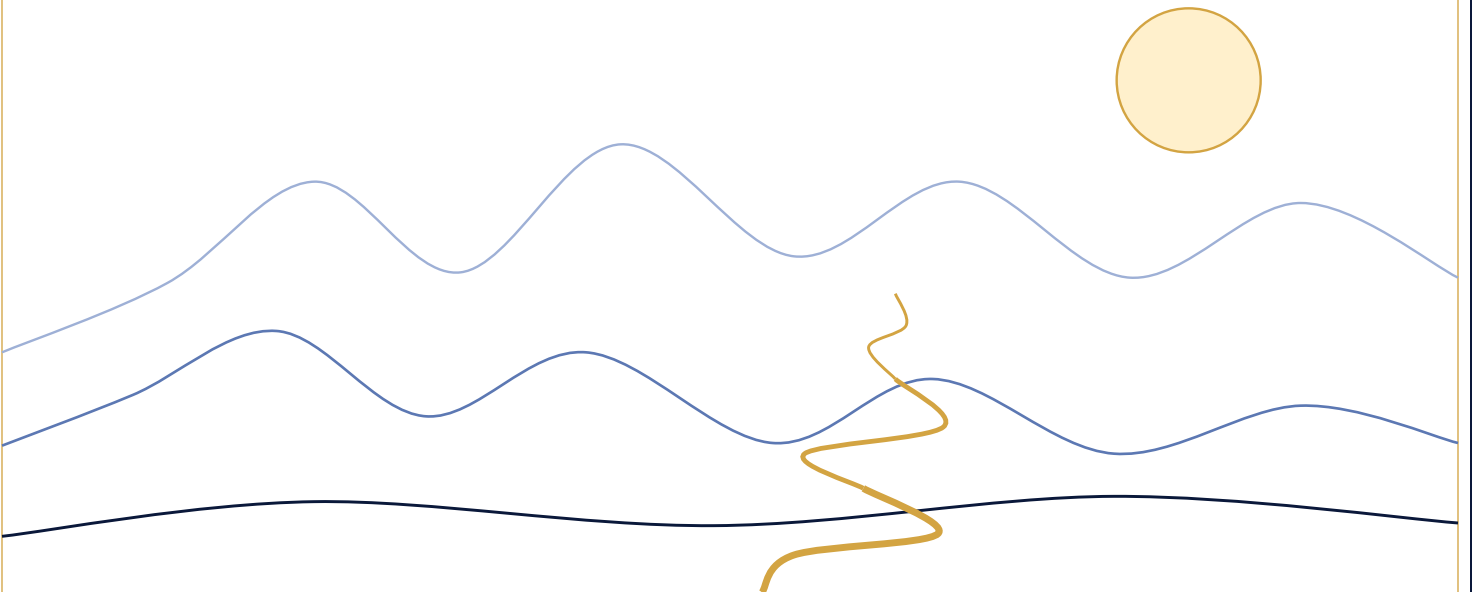
PRAYER FOCUS

Humble yourself under God's mighty hand, cast your anxieties on Him, and ask the God of all grace to establish and strengthen you.

PART THREE

Leader's Guide and Answer Guide

Group leader notes, a timed plan, and an answer guide for every session.



LEADER'S GUIDE

Leading this study

You do not need to be a Bible teacher to lead this study. You need to have read the passage, to ask the questions, and to leave room for people to answer them.

Before you meet

- Read the session's passage twice, once straight through and once slowly.
- Read that session's leader page, including the notes on the Old Testament and the setting.
- Decide which questions matter most for your group. You will rarely finish all of them, and that is fine.
- Pray for the people who will be in the room, by name.

In the room

- Read Scripture aloud before discussing it. Let the text speak first.
- Ask the question, then wait. Silence usually means people are thinking.
- When an answer drifts, ask, "Where do you see that in the passage?"
- Keep to the time plan loosely. Protect the closing minutes for reflection and prayer.

How to read a leader page

Group leader notes	How to open the session, the Old Testament connections, and the historical note, as the online study gives them.
Timed plan	A suggested use of the hour, drawn to scale. These timings are the guide's own suggestion: the online study gives only a five-minute gather.
Answer guide	What the passage supports for each discussion question, with verse references, and a follow-up question to use if the group stalls.
Reflection notes	Reflection questions are personal and have no answer to check. Each has a short note on what it is for and how to lead it.

USING THE ANSWER GUIDE

The answer guide is there so you can lead with confidence. It is not a script to read aloud. Let the group do the finding; use the guide to confirm, to fill a gap, or to bring the conversation back to the text. Questions marked **PERSONAL** have no single right answer. For those, the guide gives what the passage offers and what a good answer tends to include.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 1 OF 7

A Living Hope

1 Peter 1:1–12 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 9–12 · memory verse 1 Peter 1:3

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

You don't need to solve anyone's hardship tonight. The goal is simply to help the group re-anchor their hope in the risen Christ and the inheritance He secures. Keep the tone warm and hopeful — that is Peter's own tone.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Peter writes to 'the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion' (1:1) — language that echoes Israel's exile, given to believers scattered across Asia Minor. 'Be sprinkled with his blood' (1:2) recalls the covenant sealing of Exodus 24:8, and 'They prophesied of the grace that would come to you' (1:10) shows the prophets looking ahead to Christ's sufferings and glories (1:11). HISTORICAL NOTE: The five regions named in 1:1 — Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia — cover much of Asia Minor; many interpreters think the letter circulated among several churches there.

GATHER (5 MIN)

Invite everyone to share, in a sentence, something they are genuinely hoping for right now. Then note: Peter writes to people whose earthly hopes were under real pressure — and points them to a hope that cannot be taken away.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Father, thank You that in Your great mercy You have given us a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus. When our earthly hopes are shaken, hold our hearts on the inheritance that can never fade. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

- 1** **READ TOGETHER** What words or images in this passage stand out as especially hopeful — and why? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Common choices are “a living hope” (1:3), “an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance” (1:4), being “guarded through faith” (1:5), and the picture of faith as gold tested by fire (1:7). Ask each person why they chose it. People tend to pick what answers a loss they are carrying, and that is how Peter writes: to people under pressure (1:6), not to people at ease.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Look at 1:3–5. Which words describe what is waiting for you, and which describe who is keeping you for it?

- 2** **OBSERVE** To whom is Peter writing, and how does he describe them (1:1–2)?

He calls them “the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion” (1:1), scattered across five named regions. Verse 2 describes their calling in three parts: God the Father’s foreknowledge, the Spirit’s sanctification, and obedience to Jesus Christ with His blood sprinkled on them. Peter introduces himself only as an apostle, and the readers are people God has chosen, not people who have chosen well.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:1 slowly. Which word is God’s verdict on them, and which word is the world’s?

- 3** **OBSERVE** What does God’s mercy accomplish, and what is the inheritance like (1:3–5)?

Mercy accomplishes new birth: God “caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1:3). The inheritance is “incorruptible” (1:4), “undefiled,” and it “doesn’t fade away”; it is also “reserved in Heaven for you.” The believers are kept too, since they are “guarded through faith” (1:5) by God’s power. The inheritance is kept for them, and they are kept for it.

IF THE GROUP STALLS List the descriptions of the inheritance in 1:4. Where is it kept, and who is it kept for?

- 4** **INTERPRET** Why does Peter call the believers’ hope ‘living’?

The hope is living because it rests on a living person: it comes “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1:3). A wish depends on how things turn out. This hope depends on what has already happened. It also leads somewhere, to an inheritance that cannot fade (1:4), so it is not only comfort for today.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:3. What is the hope tied to: a feeling, or an event?

5 INTERPRET How does Peter say trials relate to the genuineness of faith (1:6–7)?

Peter says trials last “for a little while” (1:6) and are real: “you have been grieved in various trials.” Their purpose is to prove faith, “more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire” (1:7). Fire reveals what is genuine, and the result is “praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Peter does not say suffering earns anything. He says it shows the faith is real.

IF THE GROUP STALLS What is being tested in 1:7, and what does the fire do to gold? What does Peter say the result will be?

6 INTERPRET Peter addresses ‘the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion’ (1:1). What does it do to a suffering people to be told their displacement is not an accident but an identity with a long biblical history?

Peter’s language echoes Israel’s exile (many read it that way; the leader notes give the background) and is given to people the world regards as outsiders. Being told you are “chosen” (1:1) and also “foreigners” in one sentence turns displacement from a verdict into an identity: you are where you are as God’s people, not because God has lost you. Verse 2 sets their scattering inside God’s purpose, not chance: they are chosen “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1:2); traditions differ on how foreknowledge and election relate. It gives a small, pressured group a story older than their trouble. It does not remove the grief (1:6); it gives the grief a setting.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 1:1 again. Which word describes how God sees them and which describes how their neighbors see them? Which one is Peter putting first?

7 APPLY Where are you tempted to anchor your hope in something that can fade? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter sets what fades against what does not: gold that “perishes” (1:7), and an inheritance that “doesn’t fade away.” Good answers name something specific, such as health, money, reputation, or a person’s approval, and say why it cannot carry the weight. This is an honest inventory, not a confession to be corrected. Peter has already pointed to what holds (1:3–5).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Compare 1:4 and 1:7. What does Peter say fades or perishes, and what does he say does not?

8 APPLY How might seeing a current trial as ‘refining’ rather than ‘ruining’ change how you carry it? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter does not deny the pain: “you have been grieved in various trials” (1:6). What he adds is a purpose and an end (1:7). Good answers hold both: the trial is still hard, and it is not wasted. Do not hurry anyone past grief in this question. Someone in the middle of a hard season may only be able to say that they want this to be true.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Peter says “grieved” in 1:6. Is he denying the pain? What is he adding to it?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 What would change this week if you believed you are 'guarded' (1:5)?**

Peter says believers are "guarded through faith" by "the power of God" (1:5), the same God who keeps their inheritance (1:4). Let people take their time and name one ordinary situation where they would carry less. Anyone may pass, and no one needs to explain what they are afraid of.
- 2 When has a hard season refined your faith in hindsight?**

This looks back over 1:6–7 from the safe side of a past trial. Some people will name a season that did refine them. Others have nothing to say yet, and that is fine: do not ask anyone to find a silver lining in what they are in the middle of.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 1:6–7. Peter names grief honestly (1:6). Do not use “refining” to hurry anyone through loss, illness, or abuse. If anyone says they want to die, stay with them and see page 101.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 2 OF 7

Called to Be Holy

1 Peter 1:13–2:3 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 13–16 · memory verse 1 Peter 1:15–16

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Guard against turning this into a guilt session. Peter motivates holiness by grace and identity, not shame. Keep pointing the group back to what Christ has done as the fuel for how they live.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

'You shall be holy; for I am holy' quotes Leviticus 11:44–45 and 19:2 (1:16); 'prepare your minds for action' (1:13) may echo the readiness of Exodus 12:11 — ransomed people ready to move; the ransom with 'precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish or spot' (1:19) recalls Exodus 12 and Isaiah 52:3; 'All flesh is like grass... but the Lord's word endures forever' quotes Isaiah 40:6–8 (1:24–25); and 'you have tasted that the Lord is gracious' (2:3) echoes Psalm 34:8 — a psalm Peter will quote again.

GATHER (5 MIN)

Ask: when you hear the word 'holy,' what comes to mind? Note how Peter ties holiness not to rule-keeping but to being God's ransomed, reborn children.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Holy Father, thank You that You ransomed us not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ. Make us holy as You are holy, and knit us together in sincere love. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

1 READ TOGETHER What reasons does Peter give for pursuing holiness — and how are they rooted in the gospel?

Each command rests on something God has done. Holiness follows the character of the one who called: "just as he who called you is holy" (1:15). It follows redemption: "you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold" (1:18). It follows new birth: "born again, not of corruptible seed" (1:23). And it follows tasting that the Lord is gracious (2:3). Holiness is the response to the gospel, not a way of earning it.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Find "because" in 1:16 and "knowing" in 1:18. What reason follows each?

2 OBSERVE What commands does Peter give in 1:13–16, and on what basis?

Peter gives four commands: “prepare your minds for action” (1:13), be sober, “set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you,” and be holy. They are for “children of obedience” (1:14), not conforming to former desires. The basis is God’s own character: “he who called you is holy” (1:15). The earlier commands prepare for the last one.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Which command in 1:15 do the others in 1:13–14 prepare for? What reason does 1:15 give?

3 OBSERVE What does Peter say ransomed us, and what is the word of God ‘which lives and remains forever’ (1:18–25)?

Not silver or gold, but “precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish or spot, the blood of Christ” (1:19). The living word is “the word of God, which lives and remains forever” (1:23), and Peter names it: “the word of Good News which was preached to you.” The word that gave them new life is the gospel they heard, and unlike grass, it does not wither (1:24–25).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read the last sentence of 1:25. What does Peter say the enduring word is?

4 INTERPRET Why does Peter root holiness in God’s character (‘You shall be holy; for I am holy’)?

Because holiness is a resemblance, not a list. Peter speaks to children (1:14) who have a Father (1:17), and the command is to be like Him: “You shall be holy; for I am holy” (1:16). God’s character is what makes it possible, since He is the one who called them. It also puts the standard in His character, not in how other people are doing.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 1:14–15, what are the children told not to be shaped by, and whom are they told to resemble?

5 INTERPRET How does being ‘born again’ through the imperishable word shape how we live?

New birth is a new source of life: “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God” (1:23). Peter does not set this against effort: he commands effort in 1:13–16 and 1:22. The life comes first, and the way of living grows out of it: love from the heart (1:22), putting away what is false (2:1), and longing for the pure milk of the Word like newborns (2:2).

IF THE GROUP STALLS What does 1:22 say follows from having purified your souls? What do newborns do in 2:2?

6 INTERPRET Some readers hear echoes of the exodus in 1:13–2:3: a ransom by a lamb’s blood (1:18–19), minds made ready for action (1:13), a call to the holiness of the God who called them (1:15–16). What does each of these ask of people who are redeemed but not yet home?

Peter does not name the exodus here. The echoes are the lamb’s blood (1:19), the readiness to move (1:13, which the leader notes connect to Exodus 12:11), and a ransomed people called to holiness (1:15–16). Each element asks something of people who are redeemed but not yet home. The ransom is

finished, so they must not return to the old way (1:14, 1:18). They are on a journey, so they are to “pass the time of your living as foreigners here in reverent fear” (1:17), with minds ready and hope fixed on the arrival of grace (1:13).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Which verse says they are still traveling? What posture does 1:13 describe for travelers?

7 **APPLY** **Where is God inviting you to ‘set your hope fully’ on His grace rather than on yourself?** **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Peter says to set your hope “fully” (1:13) on grace, and he says the grace is something “that will be brought to you,” not something you produce. Good answers name where hope has been resting on self: willpower, record, usefulness, or being thought well of. Keep this on grace. Peter motivates holiness by what Christ has done, not by guilt (1:18–19).

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 1:13, is the grace something you produce or something that is brought to you?

8 **APPLY** **What would sincere, earnest love for another believer look like for you this week (1:22)?** **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Peter describes the love as “sincere brotherly affection” and says to “love one another from the heart fervently.” Good answers name a particular person, one specific act, and what “from the heart” would add to what they already do. Peter gives the love as the fruit of obedience to the truth (1:22), not a condition for belonging.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Name one person in your church or group (or pass). What would “from the heart” add to what you already do for them?

NOTES

Reflection questions

1 **Where have you thought of holiness as a burden rather than the freedom of your true identity?**

This asks where holiness has felt like weight. Peter’s picture is of children who resemble their Father (1:14–16), ransomed at great cost (1:18–19). Let people say honestly that it has felt like a burden, then read 1:14–19 together and ask what changes if holiness is a family likeness.

2 **What would longing for ‘the pure milk of the Word’ (2:2) look like this week?**

Peter pictures newborns who “long for the pure milk of the Word” (2:2), because they “have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (2:3). Invite one small, realistic habit rather than a plan. Some have little time or energy this season; let anyone pass, and do not turn this into a test of devotion.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 3 OF 7

Living Stones, a Chosen People

1 Peter 2:4–12 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 17–20 · memory verse 1 Peter 2:9

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

This is one of the most encouraging identity passages in Scripture. Slow down on verse 9 and let people actually receive it. Consider having the group read verse 9 aloud in unison.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The living-stone section is a three-text catena: the chosen cornerstone of Isaiah 28:16 (2:6), the rejected stone of Psalm 118:22 (2:7), and the stumbling stone of Isaiah 8:14 (2:8). Then Peter applies language used of Israel at Sinai (Exodus 19:5–6; Isaiah 43:20–21) to his readers (extending, not revoking, Israel's calling): 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation' (2:9). Hosea's reversal (Hosea 1:9–10; 2:23) is echoed in 2:10: 'you were not a people, but now are God's people.'

GATHER (5 MIN)

Ask: how do you tend to describe yourself when someone asks 'who are you?' Note how Peter answers that question for every believer in verse 9.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You are the living Stone, chosen and precious. Thank You for making us living stones in Your house and a people for Your own possession. Help us proclaim Your excellence by our lives. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

1 READ TOGETHER Which image in 2:4–10 stands out to you most — and why? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter gives a pile of images: "living stones," a "spiritual house," and a "holy priesthood" (2:5); "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (2:9); and people who "now are God's people" (2:10). Ask each person why they chose it. People often pick the image that answers what they feel they lack, such as belonging, worth, or purpose.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Go through 2:5, 2:9, and 2:10 one verse at a time. List each new name you hear.

2 OBSERVE How is Jesus described in 2:4–8?

He is “a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious.” In 2:6 He is “a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious,” and for those who believe there is honor (2:7). For those who are disobedient He is “a stumbling stone and a rock of offense” (2:8). The same pair of verdicts runs through 2:4 and 2:6–7: men reject, God chooses.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Find the two verdicts in 2:4. Who gives each one?

3 OBSERVE What five or more identities does Peter give believers in 2:9–10?

Peter gives four names in 2:9: “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession.” Verse 10 gives two more: they are now “God’s people” (2:10), and they have “obtained mercy.” Together they are given a purpose: “that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS 2:9 holds four names and 2:10 adds two. What is the “that” clause in 2:9, and what does it say they are for?

4 INTERPRET What does it mean that the stone ‘rejected’ became the cornerstone?

It means the verdict of the builders is not the final verdict: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone” (2:7). The one men threw out is the one the whole building rests on. For believers who are being rejected, this is a reassurance: their Lord was rejected too (2:4), and God’s choice of Him decides what the building is. Their standing is on the cornerstone, not on the opinion of the builders.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 2:4, who rejects the stone and who chooses it? Which verdict does the building stand on?

5 INTERPRET Why does Peter pile up so many identity images for a scattered, suffering people?

Because a people treated as nobodies need to be told who they are before they are told how to live. The strongest line is the turn in 2:10: “you were not a people, but now are God’s people.” The “now” rests on mercy received, not on achievement. The identity then leads to a mission (2:9, proclaim) and to conduct (2:11–12). Peter gives identity first and instruction second.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 2:10, what were they “in the past” and what are they now? What does the “now” rest on?

6 INTERPRET Same stone, opposite outcomes: precious to believers, a stumbling block to those who are disobedient (2:7–8). What does Peter say marks the difference — and how does Exodus 19:5–6, which Peter applies to his readers in 2:9, shape their calling toward the people around them (2:9, 12)?

The difference is the response: “For you who believe therefore is the honor” (2:7), but “for those who are disobedient” the same stone is a stumbling stone, and “they stumble at the word, being disobedient.” Peter also says they were appointed to it (2:8); readings differ, so do not settle

it here, and stay with the pairing of believing and disobeying. The Sinai call (Exodus 19:5–6, in the leader notes) made Israel a kingdom of priests, who stand between God and the nations. Peter extends that role, without revoking Israel's, to a scattered people: they are chosen “that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you” (2:9), and their good works are seen so that outsiders “glorify God” (2:12). A priesthood exists for others.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 2:9, what is the purpose of being chosen? In 2:12, who sees their good works, and what do they do?

7 APPLY Which identity in 2:9 do you most need to believe today – and why? (PERSONAL)

There is no single right answer. Good answers name the identity they find hardest to believe, often because it sounds too large for how they feel; some will say why, and no one has to. Peter speaks to a pressured minority, and the names are not earned: they follow mercy (2:10). Let people say the name aloud.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read the four names in 2:9 aloud. Which one makes you hesitate, and why?

8 APPLY How could your honorable conduct (2:12) help outsiders ‘glorify God’? (PERSONAL)

There is no single right answer. Peter pictures neighbors who “speak against you as evildoers” (2:12) and still “by your good works, which they see, glorify God in the day of visitation.” The conduct is ordinary and visible, and the result is God’s glory, not the believer’s reputation. “The day of visitation” is God’s timing, so there may be no quick response. Good answers are specific: a way of treating a neighbor, a coworker, or a family member.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 2:12, what do outsiders say about believers and what do they see? Who gets the glory?

NOTES

Reflection questions

1 Where has someone’s verdict on you outweighed God’s choice of you (2:4)?

Jesus was “rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious” (2:4), and believers come to Him as living stones (2:5). Give the group a quiet moment before anyone speaks. No one needs to tell the story or name the person; it is enough to notice whose verdict has been loudest. Anyone may pass.

2 What ‘spiritual sacrifices’ (2:5) could you offer quietly this week?

Peter says believers are “a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (2:5). Keep it small and ordinary: time, a kindness, a prayer, a word of thanks. They are acceptable through Christ, not because of their size. No one has to share, and anyone may pass.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 4 OF 7

Following in His Steps

1 Peter 2:13–25 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 21–24 · memory verse 1 Peter 2:24

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Handle this passage pastorally. Peter's words to servants (2:18–20) have been used to keep people in harm's way. This is not a command to stay in danger, and it must not be used to ask anyone to tolerate abuse; be ready to point anyone in danger toward safety and help. Peter's focus is Christlike endurance of unjust hostility, and above all Christ's saving work in verse 24.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

1 Peter 2:22–25 draws heavily on Isaiah 53: 'who didn't sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth' (2:22) echoes Isaiah 53:9; the silent sufferer who didn't retaliate (2:23) echoes 53:7; 'You were healed by his wounds' (2:24) echoes 53:5; and 'you were going astray like sheep' (2:25) echoes 53:6 — returned now to 'the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls' (2:25); compare God's promise to shepherd His flock in Ezekiel 34.

HISTORICAL NOTE: The household instructions address real Roman social structures — including enslaved household servants under masters both 'good and gentle' and 'wicked' (2:18). Peter does not endorse slavery or call for revolt; he tells servants that following Christ's own pattern (2:21) is commendable with God (2:20).

GATHER (5 MIN)

Ask: when has doing the right thing cost you something unfairly? Acknowledge that Peter writes to people suffering exactly that — and points them to Jesus.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You committed no sin, yet You suffered for us, entrusting Yourself to the Father. By Your wounds we are healed. Give us grace to follow in Your steps and to entrust our wrongs to the God who judges rightly. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

1 READ TOGETHER How does Peter describe the way Christ responded to unjust suffering?

Peter lists what He did not do and what He did. He “didn’t sin” (2:22). “When he was cursed, he didn’t curse back” (2:23). “When he suffered, he didn’t threaten.” Instead He “committed himself to him who judges righteously.” And He “bore our sins in his body on the tree” (2:24). His response to injustice was not revenge: He left it with God.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:23. List what Christ did not do, then what He did do.

2 OBSERVE What kinds of submission does Peter address (2:13–20)?

Peter addresses submission to the king and governors (2:13–14) and servants to masters (2:18), and sums it up in 2:17: honor all, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. His main reasons are about God: “for the Lord’s sake” (2:13), “the will of God” (2:15), and “conscience toward God” (2:19). He also notes the governors’ role (2:14). He says to submit “not only to the good and gentle, but also to the wicked,” so the servant’s honorable conduct does not depend on the master’s behavior; Peter is not saying that harm must be accepted.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Find the relationships in 2:13–14 and 2:18. What reason does Peter give in 2:13 and in 2:19?

3 OBSERVE How is Christ’s example described in 2:21–25?

Divide it into what Christ did for us and what He left as a pattern. For us: “Christ also suffered for us” (2:21) and “bore our sins in his body on the tree” (2:24), so that we might “live to righteousness” and be “healed by his wounds.” As an example: “leaving you an example, that you should follow his steps,” with no sin and no retaliation (2:22–23). The final verse brings the scattered back to “the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls” (2:25).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:21–25. Which phrases say what Christ did that only He could do, and which say what we are to follow?

4 INTERPRET How is honorable submission different from approving of injustice?

Peter does not call injustice good. He names it: “suffering unjustly.” Submission here is a chosen conduct “because of conscience toward God,” by people who are “free” (2:16) and “bondservants of God,” not a verdict that the other person is right. Peter does not say here what to do when a person is in danger, and his words to servants (2:18–20) have been used to keep people in harm’s way. This is a pastoral boundary, not Peter’s text: this passage must not be used to ask anyone to stay in an abusive situation, and a leader should help anyone in danger find safety and support.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 2:19, does Peter call the suffering fair or unjust? Whose approval is the believer seeking?

5 INTERPRET What does Christ entrusting Himself 'to him who judges righteously' model for us?

It shows what to do with justice: not abandon it, but hand it over. Christ "committed himself to him who judges righteously" (2:23). Because the case is in God's hands, He did not need to curse back or threaten. For us, it means retaliation is not the only way to treat a wrong as real: we can say it is wrong and trust that it will be judged.

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 2:23, to whom did Christ hand over the case? What did that free Him from doing?

6 INTERPRET Read Isaiah 53:4–9 beside 2:21–25. Peter says Christ suffered 'for us' (2:21) and 'bore our sins' (2:24), and also left 'an example, that you should follow his steps' (2:21). Why does Peter hold both together – and what happens to discipleship if either is dropped?

The two answer different needs. What Christ did for us is what only He could do: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree" (2:24) so that we might die to sins and live to righteousness. His example is how we follow: "you should follow his steps." If we keep only the example, Christ becomes a model we cannot match, with no forgiveness to start from. If we keep only what He did for us, grace has no shape: Peter says we were "called to this." Peter puts the cross for us first (2:21, "for us"), and the pattern second. Isaiah 53, which Peter is drawing on, is in the leader notes.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Which words in 2:21 say "example" and which words in 2:24 say Christ did something we could not do?

7 APPLY Where are you carrying an unfair situation, and what would it look like to entrust it to God? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. Good answers describe a particular situation, such as a workplace, a family conflict, or a neighbor, and say what entrusting it would change. Peter models it in 2:23: no cursing back, no threats, and the case handed to God. Entrusting is not passivity, and it does not rule out seeking help or leaving a harmful situation. If anyone describes abuse, do not counsel endurance; offer to help them find safety and support.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Name the situation in a sentence (or pass). What would "entrust" change about what you do on Monday?

8 APPLY How does 'You were healed by his wounds' change the way you face suffering? **PERSONAL**

There is no single right answer. In 2:24, the healing belongs to the same sentence as Christ bearing our sins and our dying to sins: "You were healed by his wounds." It is not a promise that every hardship will be removed. It is a reason the sufferer is not alone: the one who suffered unjustly first (2:21–23) did it for them. Good answers say how that changes the way they face hardship, such as feeling less alone, less consumed by bitterness, or better able to wait.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 2:24 from the start. What is the healing connected to in that sentence?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 **Where is it hard to call something wrong and still leave the judging to God (2:23)?**
Christ is not calling wrong right; He “committed himself to him who judges righteously” (2:23). Leaving the judging to God is not silence about harm, and it never means staying in danger. Let people answer in general terms; no one needs to name a person, and anyone may pass. If someone describes abuse, the right response is safety and help.
- 2 **How does Christ’s example reshape your response this week?**
Keep Christ’s work for us before His example (2:21, 2:24). The aim is not to do better at copying Jesus but to see that the one who suffered for us is the one we are following. One concrete change in a response is enough.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note - 2:18–25. These verses never ask anyone to stay where they are being hurt. If someone describes harm at work or at home, believe them, talk after, and help them reach safety.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 5 OF 7

Doing Good & Giving a Defense

1 Peter 3:1–22 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 25–28 · memory verse 1 Peter 3:15

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

On the marriage instructions (3:1–7), keep the emphasis on honor and witness (Peter addresses wives in 3:1–6 and husbands in 3:7), and be sensitive to varied situations in the room; Christians read these verses in different ways. The heart of the session is verses 15 and 18 — hopeful witness rooted in Christ's saving suffering.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

Sarah, who called Abraham 'lord' (3:6; compare Genesis 18:12), is Peter's example; the long quotation of 3:10–12 is Psalm 34:12–16 — Peter's psalm again — grounding blessing-for-evil; 'don't fear what they fear... sanctify the Lord' takes up Isaiah 8:12–13 (3:14–15), the very passage beside the stumbling-stone text of chapter 2; and Noah's ship through water (Genesis 6–9) is, in Peter's words, 'a symbol of baptism' (3:20–21), 'the answer of a good conscience toward God' (3:21); Christians understand that link in different ways.

GATHER (5 MIN)

Ask: has anyone ever asked you why you believe what you believe? How did it go? Note Peter's call to be 'ready' — with humility and fear (3:15).

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Lord, make us a people who bless instead of curse, who are ready to speak of our hope with humility and fear. Thank You that Christ suffered once for sins to bring us to God. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

- 1 READ TOGETHER** What attitudes does Peter say should mark believers toward one another and toward outsiders?

Toward one another, “like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous” (3:8). Toward those who wrong them, “not rendering evil for evil, or insult for insult; but instead blessing” (3:9). Toward outsiders, humility and reverence, and a good conscience (3:15–16). Peter’s portrait is warm toward each other and unretaliating toward everyone else.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 3:8–9. What are believers to be toward each other, and what are they to do toward people who wrong them?

- 2 OBSERVE** What does Peter urge for the whole community in 3:8–12?

Peter urges one mind and warm affection (3:8), and refusing to repay evil with evil in favor of blessing, because they were “called to this, that you may inherit a blessing” (3:9). Verses 10–12 quote a psalm: whoever wants good days must “keep his tongue from evil” (3:10), “turn away from evil and do good” (3:11), and “seek peace and pursue it.” The reason is that “the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous” (3:12).

IF THE GROUP STALLS What does the person who wants good days do with his tongue, his steps, and his pursuit in 3:10–11?

- 3 OBSERVE** What does Peter say about suffering for righteousness and giving a defense (3:13–17)?

Suffering for righteousness is a blessing, not a disgrace: “you are blessed” (3:14). They are not to fear what others fear. They are to “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (3:15) and “be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you.” Peter wants a “good conscience” (3:16), and says it is “better, if it is God’s will, that you suffer for doing well than for doing evil” (3:17).

IF THE GROUP STALLS What comes first in 3:15, before the readiness to answer?

- 4 INTERPRET** Why does Peter pair readiness to give a defense with ‘humility and fear’ (3:15)?

Because the way you answer is part of the answer. Peter ties the readiness to give an answer to a manner: “with humility and fear,” and 3:16 adds “a good conscience.” Some translations render 3:15 “gentleness and respect”; the point is the same: a defense from a humble person, with reverence, who is not trying to win. The goal is not to be proven right. Peter says that while they are “spoken against as evildoers,” those who “curse your good way of life in Christ” may be disappointed. A hard-edged defense would contradict the hope it was defending.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 3:15–16. What manner does Peter ask for, and what does he want to be true of the person answering?

5 INTERPRET What does Christ's suffering, that 'he might bring you to God,' accomplish (3:18)?

It accomplishes the thing nothing else could: "Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God." "Once" says it was enough. "The righteous for the unrighteous" says it was a substitute. "Bring you to God" says what it opens: access. The verse goes on to resurrection life (3:18) and Christ's rule at God's right hand (3:22). The suffering of the believers is set inside that larger work. If asked about 3:19–20 ("went and preached to the spirits in prison"): Christians have read it in several ways (Christ preaching through Noah, proclaiming to fallen angels, or proclaiming to the dead). Peter's point here is Christ's victory (3:22).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Which phrase in 3:18 says it was enough, and which says what it opens?

6 INTERPRET Isaiah 8 told a threatened prophet not to fear what the people feared, but to regard the LORD as holy. Peter takes that up in 3:14–15: 'Don't fear what they fear' and 'sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,' followed by readiness to 'give an answer... with humility and fear' (3:15). How does sanctifying the Lord in your heart displace fear — and set the tone for witness?

Peter takes the command "Don't fear what they fear" (3:14), which the leader notes trace to Isaiah 8, and answers it with a command to give the Lord the place of honor: "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (3:15). Fear is displaced when something bigger is revered: the one who holds Christ as holy has less room for fear of people. The witness that follows is calm, ready, and humble, not defensive. Readiness comes from reverence, not nerve. Verse 16 gives the tone: a good conscience and a defense that does not need to attack.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Which comes first in 3:14–15, the command not to fear or the command to sanctify the Lord? What replaces the fear?

7 APPLY How ready are you to give a reason for your hope — and how is your tone? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter asks about the reason for the hope, which is a different thing from winning an argument. Good answers admit uncertainty and also say how they would speak: short, honest, and without contempt. This is a good place to try it aloud: have people say their one or two sentences to a neighbor in the group.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Say it in one or two sentences to the person next to you (or pass). What would you leave out?

8 APPLY Where are you tempted to repay evil for evil rather than bless (3:9)? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter's instruction is "not rendering evil for evil, or insult for insult; but instead blessing" (3:9), and the reason is a calling: they were "called to this, that you may inherit a blessing." Good answers name a particular person and the form retaliation takes, such as a sharp reply, silence, or a story told against them. Blessing in this verse starts with what we say. Be honest that it is hard.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Who is hardest for you to bless (or pass)? What would blessing look like in your words to them?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 Which word in 3:8 — ‘compassionate,’ ‘tenderhearted,’ or ‘courteous’ — do you most need to grow in? Peter’s list in 3:8 is for “all of you,” not only the wives and husbands of 3:1–7. Let each person choose one word without explaining why. It may be about home, church, or work, and it is enough to name it quietly; anyone may pass.
- 2 Whose fear (3:14) most often silences you, or sharpens your tone? Peter quotes, “Don’t fear what they fear, neither be troubled” (3:14), and gives the answer in the next verse: “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (3:15). Fear can make us quiet or make us sharp. Give a moment of silence first; no one needs to name the person, and anyone may pass. If anyone describes being hurt or afraid at home, help them find safety and support.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 3:1–7. Peter's words to wives never require anyone to stay in danger. In 3:7, "weaker vessel" comes with honor and "joint heirs," never a license for control. If anyone is afraid at home, the National Domestic Violence Hotline is on page 101.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 6 OF 7

Living for God's Will & Sharing Christ's Sufferings

1 Peter 4:1–19 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 29–32 · memory verse 1 Peter 4:10

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

Some in the room may be in real pain. Don't rush past it. Peter's counsel is not to minimize suffering but to reframe it — as shared with Christ, entrusted to a faithful Creator, and met with love and service.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

'Love covers a multitude of sins' (4:8) echoes Proverbs 10:12; judgment 'to begin with the household of God' (4:17) follows Ezekiel 9:6, where judgment starts at the sanctuary; and 'if it is hard for the righteous to be saved...' (4:18) quotes Proverbs 11:31.

HISTORICAL NOTE: 'Don't be astonished at the fiery trial' (4:12) fits the first readers' world: being spoken against (3:16; 4:4), insulted (4:14), and possibly suffering 'for being a Christian' (4:16). Peter treats insult 'for the name of Christ' (4:14) as a blessing, not a disgrace.

GATHER (5 MIN)

Ask: what 'gift' or strength do you think God has given you to serve others? Note Peter's call to steward those gifts, especially in hard times.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Father, arm us with the mind of Christ. Help us love earnestly, serve faithfully, and — when we suffer — entrust our souls to You, our faithful Creator, while continuing to do good. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

1 READ TOGETHER Peter says 'the end of all things is near' (4:7). What practices does he urge?

Peter gives commands for a people who live with the end in view. Be "of sound mind, self-controlled, and sober in prayer" (4:7). Be "earnest in your love among yourselves" (4:8). "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling" (4:9). Use gifts to serve, and let words and service be God's (4:10–11). The end being near does not lead to withdrawal but to prayer and to love in practice.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 4:7–11 and pick out each command. Which are about prayer and which are about people?

2 OBSERVE How are believers to live differently from their former way of life (4:1–6)?

Believers are to "arm yourselves also with the same mind" (4:1) as Christ, who suffered, and to live no longer "for the lusts of men, but for the will of God" (4:2). Peter says "we have spent enough of our past time" (4:3) on the old life. Their former friends "think it is strange that you don't run with them" (4:4). Verse 6 is read in more than one way ("the dead" as those now dead who once heard the Good News, or as the spiritually dead); the main point is that judgment and life are God's (4:5–6). Do not let the group spend the session on it.

IF THE GROUP STALLS What does 4:2 say they no longer live for, and what do they live for? What reaction does 4:4 expect?

3 OBSERVE What does Peter urge in 4:7–11, and how are we to view the 'fiery trial' (4:12–19)?

In 4:7–11: sound mind, earnest love, hospitality, using gifts, and speaking and serving as God's. For the trial: "don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you" (4:12), rejoice as partakers of Christ's sufferings (4:13), and know you are blessed when insulted for Christ's name (4:14). If one suffers "for being a Christian" (4:16), "let him not be ashamed," and those who suffer are to "entrust their souls to him" (4:19).

IF THE GROUP STALLS In 4:12–16, what does Peter say not to be, and what does he say to do instead?

4 INTERPRET What does it mean that love 'covers a multitude of sins' (4:8)?

Peter does not spell out how love "covers a multitude of sins" (4:8); it is most commonly read as love that forgives and does not keep a record or broadcast failure. Covering is not concealing; it never means hiding abuse or crime from people who can help. The verse is about relationships: it comes right after "earnest in your love among yourselves." It does not mean that love erases sin's penalty. Peter has already said that comes from the blood of Christ (1:19, 2:24). Compare 3:9: a community that does not repay insult for insult can live together without keeping score. The leader notes link it to Proverbs 10:12.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Who is "among yourselves" in 4:8? Compare 4:8 with 3:9: what does earnest love do with another believer's failures?

5 INTERPRET Why can sharing in Christ's sufferings be a reason to rejoice (4:13)?

Because the joy is tied to who they belong to: "because you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice" (4:13). Suffering for Him is a share in what He went through, and glory follows: "at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy." The Spirit of glory rests on those who are insulted for His name (4:14). Peter does not ask them to enjoy pain. This is the pattern he named in 1:11: sufferings first, then glories.

IF THE GROUP STALLS What is the joy in 4:13 connected to, and what joy follows? Compare 1:11.

6 INTERPRET What does Peter mean that judgment begins with the household of God (4:17; compare Ezekiel 9:6)? What does Peter say the fiery trial is for (4:12; compare 1:6–7) – and how does 4:19 turn suffering into an act of trust rather than defeat?

Peter says "the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God." He does not give a reason in the verse; he puts it as the order of events. The household of God is where God's own people are, and the fire of 4:12 is a test, as in 1:6–7, that proves faith genuine. The church is not exempt; it is first. Nothing in the verse says the church is tested in a way that no one else is. Peter then asks what is ahead for those who reject the Good News (4:17–18). That is a sobering line, not a comfortable one, and the leader notes connect it to Ezekiel 9:6. Verse 19 turns it into trust: "let them also who suffer according to the will of God in doing good entrust their souls to him, as to a faithful Creator" (4:19). The sufferer does two things, entrusts and does good, and the God who made them is faithful.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Compare "fiery trial" in 4:12 with "tested by fire" in 1:7. What is the fire for? Then read 4:19: what two things do sufferers do?

7 APPLY What gift could you use this week to serve as a steward of God's grace? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter says "each has received a gift" (4:10) and calls them "good managers of the grace of God in its various forms." The gift is for others, and it is grace. Verse 11 gives two broad kinds, speaking and serving, and says serving is "of the strength which God supplies" (4:11). Good answers name an ordinary gift: hospitality, listening, teaching, practical help. Ask where they have been slow, and what would make the first step small.

IF THE GROUP STALLS 4:11 names two kinds of gift. Which is closer to what people already thank you for?

8 APPLY Where do people 'think it is strange' (4:4) that you follow Christ, and how does 4:13 reframe it? PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Old friends "think it is strange" (4:4) that believers no longer join them, and 4:13 calls suffering for Christ a share in His sufferings, with joy to come "at the revelation of his glory." Good answers name a real place: work, family, or friends. Not every hardship is persecution (4:15–16), but none is outside God's care: 4:19 says to entrust your soul to a faithful Creator, and 5:7 says He cares for you. Do not make anyone prove their pain qualifies.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 4:4 and 4:13. What do old friends think is strange, and what does Peter tell believers to do?

NOTES

Reflection questions

- 1 Where could you show hospitality ‘without grumbling’ (4:9) this month?
Peter says, “Be hospitable to one another without grumbling” (4:9), right after “be earnest in your love” (4:8). Hospitality can be as simple as a meal, a ride, or a phone call. Some homes and schedules are stretched thin, so keep it realistic, and let anyone pass.
- 2 If your trial comes because of your faith, how does 4:13–16 change how you carry it? If it comes from other causes, where do 4:19 and 5:7 meet you?
This may be heavy. Peter ties being a partaker of Christ’s sufferings to suffering for His name (4:13–16): let each person describe the hardship as they see it, and point everyone to 4:19 and 5:7. Someone may only be able to say that they are tired. Offer to pray rather than to explain.

LEADER'S NOTES

Care note: 4:12–19. Peter means suffering “for being a Christian” (4:16). Do not call every hardship a fiery trial sent to test someone, and never call abuse God’s will for them.

LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 7 OF 7

Humility, Grace & Standing Firm

1 Peter 5:1–14 · 60 minutes · 5–12 people · participant pages 33–36 · memory verse 1 Peter 5:7

Read this before you gather — no seminary required.

GROUP LEADER NOTES

This is a fitting session to review the whole letter's arc: living hope, holy identity, doing good, suffering with Christ, and finally humble, grace-anchored steadfastness. End by helping the group actually name and release their anxieties to God.

OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble' quotes Proverbs 3:34 (5:5); 'casting all your worries on him' takes up Psalm 55:22 (5:7); the elders shepherd 'the flock of God' (5:2) under 'the chief Shepherd' (5:4) — compare God's promise to shepherd His flock in Ezekiel 34 — and the greeting from 'she who is in Babylon' (5:13) closes the letter on the theme of exile with which it opened (1:1).

HISTORICAL NOTE: 'Babylon' (5:13) is commonly read as a code name for Rome, though some take it literally. If it is symbolic, the letter's frame is deliberate: addressed to the Dispersion (1:1), sent from 'Babylon' (5:13) — exiles writing to exiles.

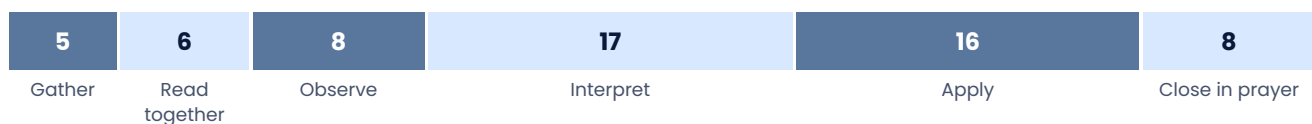
GATHER (5 MIN)

Ask: what anxiety are you carrying into tonight? Invite one-word answers (or pass). Note Peter's invitation in verse 7 — cast it all on God.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

God of all grace, You called us to Your eternal glory in Christ. As we humble ourselves under Your mighty hand, we cast our cares on You, for You care for us. Perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle us. Amen.

A TIMED PLAN drawn to scale · minutes



ANSWER GUIDE

Discussion questions

- 1 READ TOGETHER** What does Peter want leaders — and the whole church — to look like as the letter closes?

Leaders are to shepherd “the flock of God which is among you,” not by compulsion but willingly, and as examples (5:2–3). The whole church is to be humble toward one another (5:5), to cast their worries on God (5:7), to be sober, watchful, and steadfast (5:8–9), and to greet one another “with a kiss of love” (5:14). Peace is Peter’s last word: “Peace be to all of you who are in Christ Jesus.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS Find the “not... but” pairs in 5:2–3. What does each pair contrast?

- 2 OBSERVE** How are elders to shepherd, and what awaits them (5:1–4)?

Peter appeals as “a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ” (5:1). Elders are to shepherd “the flock of God” (5:2), “exercising the oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, not for dishonest gain, but willingly,” and not “lording it over those entrusted to you” (5:3) but “making yourselves examples.” What awaits them: “When the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that doesn’t fade away” (5:4).

IF THE GROUP STALLS Make two lists from 5:2–3: what shepherds must not do and what they must do. What awaits them in 5:4?

- 3 OBSERVE** What does Peter say about humility, anxiety, and the devil (5:5–9)?

Humility toward one another (5:5), and humility under God’s hand: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time” (5:6). Anxiety goes to God: “casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you” (5:7). The devil “walks around like a roaring lion” (5:8), and the answer is to be sober and watchful and to withstand him “steadfast in your faith” (5:9), knowing that other believers “are undergoing the same sufferings.”

IF THE GROUP STALLS List the commands in 5:5–9. What reason does Peter give in 5:7 and in 5:9?

- 4 INTERPRET** How are humbling ourselves and casting our anxiety on God connected (5:6–7)?

In the WEB, “casting all your worries on him” is a continuation of the sentence in 5:6, so casting is how humbling is done. Humbling yourself under God’s hand includes handing Him what you cannot carry, and casting your worries on Him is the act of doing so. The reason is “because he cares for you” (5:7). The promise is that God will “exalt you in due time,” which puts the timing in His hands too.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Look at how 5:7 begins. Is it a new command or the way the previous one is done?

5 INTERPRET Why does Peter end the whole letter on 'the true grace of God' (5:10–14)?

Because grace is what the whole letter has been resting on. Peter ends with a prayer to “the God of all grace,” who called them “to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,” and a summary: “this is the true grace of God in which you stand” (5:12). Compare the greeting, “Grace to you and peace be multiplied” (1:2), and “a little while” in 1:6 and 5:10. People who are suffering need to know the ground under them is grace, not their performance.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Compare 1:2 and 5:10. Which word appears in both? Compare “a little while” in 1:6 and 5:10.

6 INTERPRET The letter opens with exiles in the Dispersion (1:1) and closes with a greeting from 'she who is in Babylon' (5:13). Now that the group has walked all five chapters, what does 1 Peter say faithful exile actually looks like — in identity, in suffering, in household life, and in hope?

Take the four categories one at a time. Identity: chosen foreigners (1:1), living stones, a chosen race (2:9). Suffering: tested like gold (1:7), a share in Christ's sufferings (4:13), entrusted to a faithful Creator (4:19). Household life: doing good, honoring all, and blessing in place of retaliation (2:13–3:9). Hope: a living hope (1:3), a ready answer (3:15), and glory after a little while (5:10). “She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you” (5:13). Many take “Babylon” as a name for Rome and “she” as the church there; the text does not say, so hold it lightly. On either reading, the letter closes by linking the writer's community to the scattered readers.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Take each category in turn. Name one verse from the letter for each.

7 APPLY What specific anxiety will you cast on God this week, trusting that He cares for you?

PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter does not tell them to stop being anxious; he tells them what to do with it: “casting all your worries on him” (5:7), and gives the reason, “because he cares for you.” Good answers name a specific worry and describe what handing it over would look like, such as praying it aloud, saying it to a friend, or returning to it daily. Let people pass. This session ends the study, and people may be carrying heavy things.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:7 aloud. What reason does Peter give for casting?

8 APPLY Where is God calling you to 'clothe yourselves with humility' (5:5)?

PERSONAL

There is no single right answer. Peter says to “clothe yourselves with humility, to subject yourselves to one another.” Humility is something put on, and it is lived with people (5:5) and before God (5:6). The verse also says that God “gives grace to the humble.” Good answers name a specific place where pride or self-protection shows up: a relationship, a role, a habit of needing to be right. Keep it concrete.

IF THE GROUP STALLS Read 5:5–6. Who is humility practiced toward, and who resists the proud?

NOTES

Reflection questions

① Where do you find it hardest to believe God 'cares for you' (5:7)?

Peter does not say to stop being anxious. He says to cast your worries on God, “because he cares for you” (5:7). Some will name a place quickly; others will need silence. Do not argue anyone into feeling cared for. Let anyone pass, and close by reading 5:6–7 aloud together.

2 Looking back over 1 Peter, what one truth do you most want to carry forward?

This is the closing reflection for the whole study. Invite each person to choose one truth from the five chapters, and tie it to their memory verses. End with thanks for what they have been given rather than a list of what is left to do.

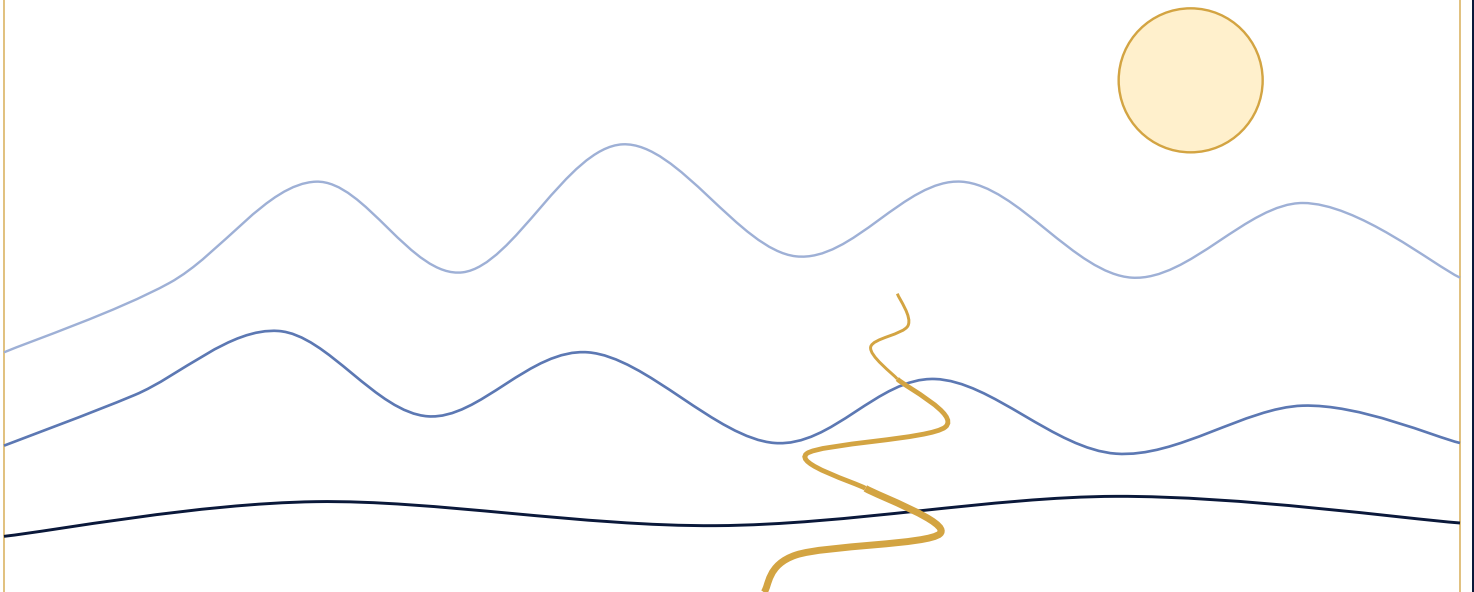
LEADER'S NOTES

Care note · 5:2–5. Being subject to elders never covers leaders who abuse or demand secrecy. If someone discloses harm by a leader, believe them and get help outside that leader.

PART FOUR

1 Peter

The complete text in the World English Bible, arranged by session.



WORLD ENGLISH BIBLE

1 Peter

The complete text, arranged by session. Verse numbers are small and raised; each session's reading begins with a tinted heading.

SESSION 1 READING

1 Peter 1:1–12

A Living Hope · session on page 9

1 PETER 1

Born Again to a Living Hope

¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance that doesn't fade away, reserved in Heaven for you, ⁵who by the power of God are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved in various trials, ⁷that the proof of your faith, which is more

precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ— ⁸whom, not having known, you love. In him, though now you don't see him, yet believing, you rejoice greatly with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, ⁹receiving the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰Concerning this salvation, the prophets sought and searched diligently. They prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹searching for who or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to, when he predicted the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that would follow them. ¹²To them it was revealed, that they served not to themselves, but to you, in these things, which now have been announced to you through those who preached the Good News to you by the Holy Spirit sent out from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.

SESSION 2 READING

1 Peter 1:13–2:3

Called to Be Holy · session on page 13

¹³Therefore prepare your minds for action. Be sober, and set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ— ¹⁴as children of obedience, not conforming yourselves according to your former lusts as in your

ignorance, ¹⁵but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; ¹⁶because it is written, "You shall be holy; for I am holy." ¹⁷If you call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judges according to each man's

work, pass the time of your living as foreigners here in reverent fear, ¹⁸knowing that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from the useless way of life handed down from your fathers, ¹⁹but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish or spot, the blood of Christ, ²⁰who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in this last age for your sake, ²¹who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God.

²²Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth through the Spirit in sincere brotherly affection, love one another from the heart fervently, ²³having been born again, not of

corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and remains forever. ²⁴For,

*“All flesh is like grass,
and all of man’s glory like the flower in the grass.
The grass withers, and its flower falls;
²⁵but the Lord’s word endures forever.”*

This is the word of Good News which was preached to you.

1 PETER 2

Living Stones, a Chosen People

¹Putting away therefore all wickedness, all deceit, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking, ²as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, that with it you may grow, ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious:

SESSION 3 READING

1 Peter 2:4–12

Living Stones, a Chosen People · session on page 17

⁴coming to him, a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious. ⁵You also, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶Because it is contained in Scripture,

*“Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious:
He who believes in him will not be disappointed.”*

⁷For you who believe therefore is the honor, but for those who are disobedient,

*“The stone which the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone,”*

⁸and,

“a stumbling stone and a rock of offense.”

For they stumble at the word, being disobedient, to which also they were appointed. ⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰In the past, you were not a people, but now are God’s people, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

¹¹Beloved, I beg you as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; ¹²having good behavior among the nations, so in that of which they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they see, glorify God in the day of visitation.

SESSION 4 READING

1 Peter 2:13–25 Following in His Steps · session on page 21

¹³Therefore subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; ¹⁴or to governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evildoers and for praise to those who do well. ¹⁵For this is the will of God, that by well-doing you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: ¹⁶as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness, but as bondservants of God.

¹⁷Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

¹⁸Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all respect: not only to the good and gentle, but also to the wicked. ¹⁹For it is commendable if someone endures pain, suffering unjustly, because of conscience toward God. ²⁰For what glory is it if,

when you sin, you patiently endure beating? But if, when you do well, you patiently endure suffering, this is commendable with God. ²¹For you were called to this, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow his steps, ²²who didn't sin, "neither was deceit found in his mouth." ²³When he was cursed, he didn't curse back. When he suffered, he didn't threaten, but committed himself to him who judges righteously. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness. You were healed by his wounds. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep; but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

SESSION 5 READING

1 Peter 3:1–22 Doing Good & Giving a Defense · session on page 251 PETER **3**

Doing Good Before a Watching World

¹In the same way, wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; so that, even if any don't obey the Word, they may be won by the behavior of their wives without a word, ²seeing your pure behavior in fear.

³Let your beauty be not just the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on fine clothing; ⁴but in the hidden person of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. ⁵For this is how in the past, the holy women who hoped in God also adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands. ⁶So Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose children you now are, if you do well, and are not put in fear by any terror.

⁷You husbands, in the same way, live with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor to the woman, as to the weaker vessel, as also being joint heirs of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

⁸Finally, all of you be like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous, ⁹not rendering evil for evil, or insult for insult; but instead blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰For,

*"He who would love life
and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit.*

*¹¹Let him turn away from evil and do good.
Let him seek peace and pursue it.*

*¹²For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears open to their prayer;*

but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

¹³Now who will harm you if you become imitators of that which is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. “Don’t fear what they fear, neither be troubled.” ¹⁵But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear, ¹⁶having a good conscience. Thus, while you are spoken against as evildoers, they may be disappointed who curse your good way of life in Christ. ¹⁷For it is better, if it is God’s will, that you suffer for doing well than for doing evil. ¹⁸Because

Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, ¹⁹in whom he also went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who before were disobedient, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, while the ship was being built. In it, few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ²¹This is a symbol of baptism, which now saves you—not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.

SESSION 6 READING

1 Peter 4:1–19

Living for God’s Will & Sharing Christ’s Sufferings · session on page 29

1 PETER 4

Living for God’s Will, Sharing Christ’s Sufferings

¹Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ²that you no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³For we have spent enough of our past time doing the desire of the Gentiles, and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries. ⁴They think it is strange that you don’t run with them into the same excess of riot, blaspheming. ⁵They will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For to this end the Good News was preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed as men in the flesh, but live as to God in the spirit.

⁷But the end of all things is near. Therefore be of sound mind, self-controlled, and sober in prayer. ⁸And above all things be earnest in your love among yourselves, for love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its

various forms. ¹¹If anyone speaks, let it be as it were the very words of God. If anyone serves, let it be as of the strength which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

¹²Beloved, don’t be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. ¹³But because you are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, rejoice, that at the revelation of his glory you also may rejoice with exceeding joy. ¹⁴If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed; because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified. ¹⁵For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or a meddler in other men’s matters. ¹⁶But if one of you suffers for being a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this matter. ¹⁷For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins first with us, what will happen to those who don’t obey the Good News of God? ¹⁸“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?”

¹⁹Therefore let them also who suffer according to the will of God in doing good entrust their souls to him, as to a faithful Creator.

SESSION 7 READING

1 Peter 5:1–14

Humility, Grace & Standing Firm · session on page 33

1 PETER 5

Humble Shepherds, Standing Firm in Grace

¹Therefore I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and who will also share in the glory that will be revealed.

²Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, not for dishonest gain, but willingly; ³not as lording it over those entrusted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. ⁴When the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that doesn't fade away.

⁵Likewise, you younger ones, be subject to the elder. Yes, all of you clothe yourselves with humility, to subject yourselves to one another; for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." ⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, ⁷casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you.

⁸Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹Withstand him steadfast in your faith, knowing that your brothers who are in the world are undergoing the same sufferings. ¹⁰But may the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. ¹¹To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

¹²Through Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. ¹³She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you. So does Mark, my son. ¹⁴Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace be to all of you who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

AFTER THE LAST SESSION

Seven verses to carry

One verse from each session. Read them aloud once a week and they will stay with you.

1 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
1 PETER 1:3

2 but just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy; for I am holy."
1 PETER 1:15–16

3 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
1 PETER 2:9

4 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness. You were healed by his wounds.
1 PETER 2:24

5 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, with humility and fear,
1 PETER 3:15

6 As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good managers of the grace of God in its various forms.
1 PETER 4:10

7 casting all your worries on him, because he cares for you.
1 PETER 5:7

WHAT COMES NEXT

1 Peter is step 4 of 4 on the **New Believer** path.

1 John → 2 Mark → 3 Romans → 4 1 Peter

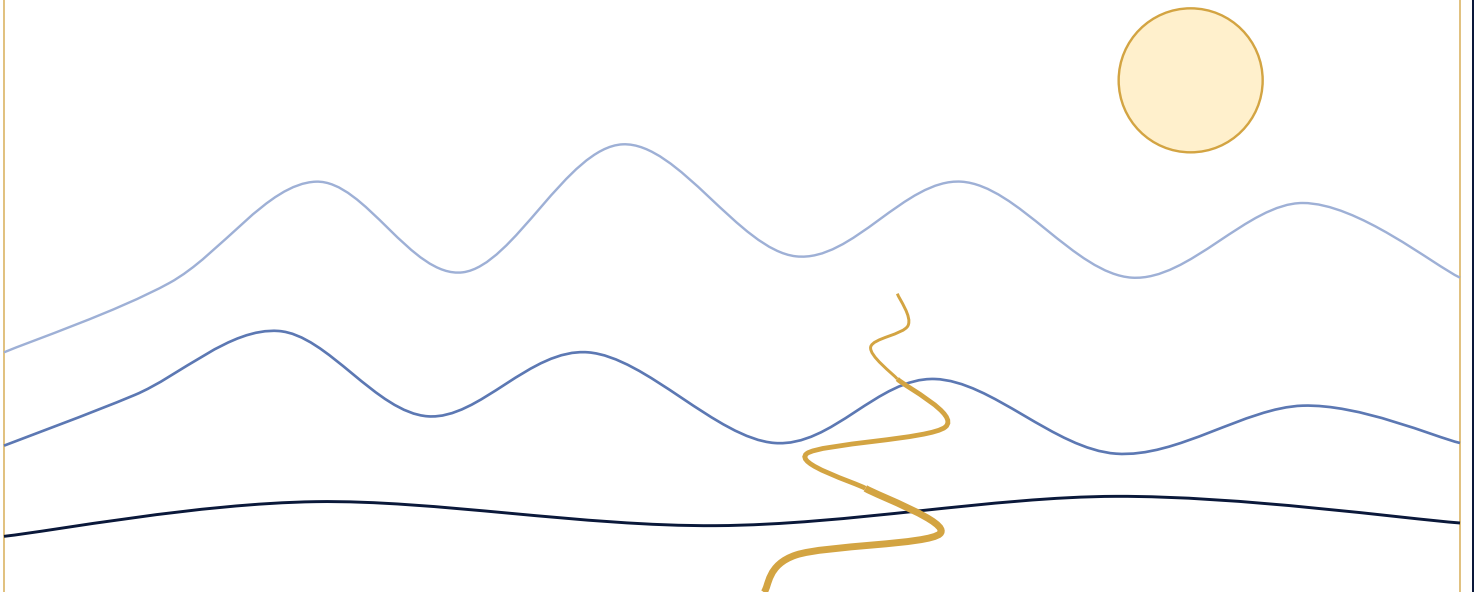
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PART FIVE

Take it with you

A worked example, a harder question for each session, a glossary, a Scripture index, and the pages that connect you to the people behind this study.



PART FIVE · BEFORE YOU BEGIN

What a good answer looks like

Most discussion questions do not have one right answer, but they do have good ones. Here is the sixth question of Session 1, a sample answer written the way a participant might write it, and the note a leader has beside it. Read all three once. That is what “doing the study” looks like.

- 6** Peter addresses ‘the chosen ones who are living as foreigners in the Dispersion’ (1:1). What does it do to a suffering people to be told their displacement is not an accident but an identity with a long biblical history?

A SAMPLE ANSWER · WRITTEN IN THE MARGIN

Peter puts two words side by side in the first verse: “chosen” and “foreigners” (1:1). The first says how God sees them; the second says how the world sees them. Verse 2 says they are chosen “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,” so their scattering is no accident. Peter does not deny the hurt; he says they “have been grieved in various trials” (1:6). So the question I am left with is which word I let speak first when I feel out of place: foreigner, or chosen.

WHY IT IS A GOOD ANSWER

It stays in the passage. It uses Peter’s own words (“chosen,” “foreigners,” “grieved in various trials”) and gives the verse for each.

It notices a pairing. It sees that verse 1 holds two words together and says what each tells the readers.

It ends with the writer, not with a summary. “Which word I let speak first” is the reader’s own question. It does not recap the verses.

THE LEADER’S NOTE FOR THE SAME QUESTION · PAGE 62

Peter’s language echoes Israel’s exile (many read it that way; the leader notes give the background) and is given to people the world regards as outsiders. Being told you are “chosen” (1:1) and also “foreigners” in one sentence turns displacement from a verdict into an identity: you are where you are as God’s people, not because God has lost you. Verse 2 sets their scattering inside God’s purpose, not chance: they are chosen “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1:2); traditions differ on how foreknowledge and election relate. It gives a small, pressured group a story older than their trouble. It does not remove the grief (1:6); it gives the grief a setting.

Getting the most from this guide

- **Write before you talk.** Two minutes of silent writing before the first question gives quieter people time to find their words.
- **Watch for “suffer.”** Peter returns to it in every chapter. Note what he sets beside it: hope, glory, or Christ’s own suffering.
- **Keep the one thing small.** The “One thing to live out” is meant to be done, not admired.

PART FIVE · FOR GROUPS THAT WANT MORE

Go deeper

One extra question for each session, for groups that have walked with 1 Peter before. Each comes with a leader's note. Leaders can use one in the Interpret or Apply minutes of the timed plan if the room has the energy. This section is for leaders.

Session 1 · 1 Peter 1:10–12

- ⊕ The prophets searched for the time “the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed to” (1:11). What does Peter say they were told (1:12)?

LEADER'S NOTE

“They served not to themselves, but to you” (1:12). Peter adds that these are things “angels desire to look into.” The readers stand where the prophets longed to stand.

Session 2 · 1 Peter 1:15–17

- ⊕ Peter quotes, “You shall be holy; for I am holy” (1:16), and then calls God the one who “judges according to each man’s work” (1:17). What does he ask in response?

LEADER'S NOTE

He asks them to live “in reverent fear” (1:17), and grounds it at once in being ransomed “with precious blood” (1:19). Holiness answers redemption; it does not earn it.

Session 3 · 1 Peter 2:9–10

- ⊕ Peter calls the readers “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation” (2:9), words first spoken to Israel (Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 43:20). What does he say the titles are for?

LEADER'S NOTE

“That you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you” (2:9). Verse 10 adds “now are God’s people.” Peter extends Israel’s calling to these believers; he does not say Israel is cast off.

Session 4 · 1 Peter 2:16–17

- ⊕ Peter says to live “as free, and not using your freedom for a cloak of wickedness” (2:16). How does verse 17 fill out what free people do?

LEADER'S NOTE

“Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” (2:17). Fear is kept for God alone. Nothing here asks anyone to stay under abuse; see the leader notes on page 70.

Session 5 • 1 Peter 3:18–22

- Christ “went and preached to the spirits in prison” (3:19), and baptism “now saves you” (3:21). What does Peter clearly say, and what is hard?

LEADER’S NOTE

Clear: Christ “suffered for sins once” to “bring you to God” (3:18). Readers differ on who the spirits are and when He preached. Baptism saves as “the answer of a good conscience toward God” (3:21); traditions differ.

Session 6 • 1 Peter 4:12–19

- Peter says, “don’t be astonished at the fiery trial” (4:12), and to “rejoice” as partakers of Christ’s sufferings (4:13). What kind of suffering is he describing?

LEADER’S NOTE

Suffering “for being a Christian” (4:16) and “in doing good” (4:19), not every hardship. He tells them to “entrust their souls to him, as to a faithful Creator” (4:19). Rejoicing never means pretending pain is good.

Session 7 • 1 Peter 5:1–4

- Peter, “a fellow elder” (5:1), tells elders to shepherd “not as lording it over those entrusted to you” (5:3). What picture of leadership does he give?

LEADER’S NOTE

Willing, not for gain, an example to the flock (5:2–3), under “the chief Shepherd” (5:4). The call to “be subject to the elder” (5:5) never covers leaders who abuse.

PART FIVE · WORDS 1 PETER USES

Glossary

Short definitions of the words a first-time reader of 1 Peter is most likely to stumble on. Chapter and verse point to where 1 Peter uses them.

Babylon

Peter sends greetings from “she who is in Babylon” (5:13), commonly taken as a name for Rome.

Born again

Given new life by God. God “caused us to be born again to a living hope” (1:3), “through the word of God” (1:23).

Chief cornerstone

The stone a building rests on. Peter applies Isaiah 28:16 and Psalm 118:22 to Christ (2:6–7).

Chosen

Called by God for Himself. Peter writes “to the chosen ones” (1:1) and calls them “a chosen race” (2:9).

Dispersion

God’s people scattered outside the land. Peter writes to those “living as foreigners in the Dispersion” (1:1).

Elder

A church leader who shepherds. Peter calls himself “a fellow elder” (5:1).

Foreigners and pilgrims

People living away from home. Peter calls believers “foreigners and pilgrims” (2:11).

Foreknowledge

God’s knowing beforehand. The readers are chosen “according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1:2); Christ was “foreknown” (1:20). Traditions differ on how this relates to election.

Gentiles

Non-Jewish people. In 4:3 the word stands for the surrounding unbelieving world; 2:12 says “the nations.”

Glory

God’s splendor and the honor He gives. Christ’s sufferings are followed by “the glories” (1:11).

Grace

God’s undeserved favor. Peter calls his letter a witness to “the true grace of God in which you stand” (5:12).

Inheritance

What God keeps for His children, “incorruptible and undefiled” and “doesn’t fade away” (1:4).

Living hope

A hope alive because Christ is risen (1:3).

Royal priesthood

Peter’s title for believers (2:9), drawn from Exodus 19:6. They “offer up spiritual sacrifices” (2:5).

Sanctification

Being set apart for God. The readers are chosen “in sanctification of the Spirit” (1:2).

Shepherd

One who cares for a flock. Elders “shepherd the flock of God” (5:2) under “the chief Shepherd” (5:4).

Silvanus

Peter writes “through Silvanus, our faithful brother” (5:12).

Spirits in prison

Those Christ “preached to” (3:19), linked with the days of Noah (3:20). Readers differ on who they are.

PART FIVE • WHERE EACH PASSAGE IS USED

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Every passage cited by chapter and verse in the sessions, the reference pages, the leader's guide, and this Part Five, with the pages where it appears. The full text of 1 Peter is in Part Four, pages 87–91.

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PART FIVE • YOUR TURN

Tell me what helped.

You've just spent some hours in this study. Before you put it on the shelf, I'd like to know how it went: the part that landed, the part that lost you, and the part you'd fix if it were yours.

Three questions. No account needed. Name and email only if you want me to write back.

1 What helped? A session, a question, a line you underlined.

2 What confused you, or slowed you down? Be blunt. If a question didn't make sense, that's my writing, not your reading.

3 What would you add, cut, or change?

What you write helps shape the next edition of this study.

— *Ron Givens*

Founder — Executive Director, Clear Path Bible Studies



SCAN TO ANSWER

clearpathbiblestudies.com/s/1peter/feedback

Opens the three questions with this study already selected.

Jotted your answers above? Type them into the form when you're ready. Nothing on this page is sent anywhere until you do. Hand it to your group leader, too, if you'd rather say it out loud.

PART FIVE · FOR EVERYONE WHO LEADS, AND EVERYONE WHO SHARES

Care in the room

People say real things in a Bible study, and that's the point. These four agreements keep the room safe. The lines at the bottom are for the moments that are bigger than a study.

Four agreements

What's said here stays here. Names, stories, and struggles don't leave the room, not even as prayer requests somewhere else. The one exception is safety: if someone is in danger, or a child is being hurt, you get help.

No one has to speak. Silence is fine. A person who listens for seven sessions has still done the study.

The text comes first. The leader isn't the last word. When we disagree, we go back to the page together.

Disagree, but don't scorn. A question is never a threat. No mocking, no interrupting, no fixing people.

Some passages in 1 Peter land hard on real people: 2:18–25 to servants and 3:1–6 to wives, which have been misused to keep people in harm's way; 4:12–19 on suffering; and 5:5 on elders. None of them asks anyone to stay in danger. The leader pages carry notes on each. Read them ahead of time.

If someone shares something heavy

Thank them. Don't rush to a verse. Say, "That took courage. Can we talk after?" and then do. If what they shared involves danger to them or to someone else, now or at home, the help lines below come first, and, if they want it and it is safe, you stay with them while they call.

If a child is being hurt, call Childhelp, below, any hour, and report to child protective services or the police as your state requires. Reporting laws vary by state, and in some states every adult is required to report. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

If someone says they want to die, ask them plainly, stay with them, and call or text 988 together. If they have a plan or are in immediate danger, call 911.

A study isn't counseling. Before you ever need it, know the name of one counselor, one pastor, and one help line, so you can hand them over without scrambling.

Help lines · United States

Emergency — call 911.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988, any hour. For anyone thinking about ending their life, in a mental-health crisis, or worried about someone who is. Veterans and service members: call 988 and press 1, or text 838255.

National Domestic Violence Hotline — 1-800-799-7233, or text START to 88788. Danger or fear at home.

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline — 1-800-422-4453. A child who is being hurt, or an adult who suspects it.

National Human Trafficking Hotline — 1-888-373-7888, or text 233733. Forced labor or forced sex.

RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline — 1-800-656-4673. Free and confidential.

SAMHSA National Helpline — 1-800-662-4357. A treatment referral and information line for substance use and mental health; it is not a crisis line.

Verified October 2026. The current list, with lines for other situations, is kept at clearpathbiblestudies.com/help. These pages are not a substitute for a doctor, a counselor, or a pastor who knows you.



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