

**NO PLACE LIKE**

**H O M E**

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**1 PETER STUDY GUIDE**

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# INTRODUCTION

No matter what life looks like for you at this moment, this study of 1 Peter is for you. Are you curious to learn more about Jesus and what it means to follow Him? You're in the right place. Perhaps you feel weary, confused, burdened, overwhelmed, even hopeless. If so, take heart! You are about to experience how studying God's Word, looking for His promises, and understanding His character can inspire and strengthen you regardless of your circumstances.

1 Peter, a letter written by the apostle Peter in approximately 62-63 A.D., seeks to encourage followers of Christ to endure and persevere in the midst of suffering. How can we endure? Why should we persevere? You'll gain the answers to both of those questions and more as we study 1 Peter together.

# HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This 8-week study aligns with Pastor Jeff's messages each week, so the verses Jeff speaks from on Sunday will be the same ones you study that week. Since Jeff uses the New Living Translation (NLT) in his messages, this study also uses the NLT throughout.

Before you begin this study, take time to watch the overview video of 1 Peter via [thebibleproject.com](http://thebibleproject.com) (you can also find this video on YouTube). This brief video will give you a solid foundation to start this journey through 1 Peter.

## HOMework

Complete each week's questions before meeting with your group. There are 8-11 questions per week; some questions are quicker to answer than others. To avoid cramming all the work in the day before, or even hours before, your group meets, try to spread out the study over several days, doing more questions on the days you have more time.

## REPETITIVE READING

Aim to read through the entire letter of 1 Peter at least five times a week. Repetitive reading is so effective in experiencing how God's Word is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). Do not feel pressure to take notes or research during this reading time; simply read and let God's Word speak to you. Feel free to read a different translation each time (NIV, ESV, NASB, CSB, even The Message, all of which can be found for free on the YouVersion app or online). You can also listen to 1 Peter via audio recordings on YouVersion.

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Each week, work on memorizing the suggested verse of Scripture (located at the end of the week's questions). Knowing God's Word, really knowing it deep in your heart, makes an incredible difference in the life of a Christ follower. Try writing the verse on an index card or a sticky note and putting it in a strategic spot (on a bathroom mirror, above the sink, in the car, etc.). The goal is not perfection or earning some sort of gold star; rather, the discipline of committing God's Word to memory has great value because His Word's value is beyond compare (see Isaiah 55:11, John 6:63, Luke 11:28, Matthew 4:4).

As a final note, and we say this gently, but firmly: God's Word is not about you. As tempting as it is to open the Bible and look for a sign to make a decision or a prescription for however you feel, **we encourage you to study the Bible in order to know God more**, not understand yourself better. Look for His promises, look for His character (see Appendix A for a helpful resource from Jen Wilkin). When you approach His Word with that mindset, prepare to be amazed: You'll see His beauty and power and goodness, and you'll also find that there is no end to the "depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God" (Romans 11:33). When you see Him, you will rightly see yourself, a sinner saved by amazing grace who can now find joy and contentment in relationship with Jesus.

You can find additional resources for studying 1 Peter (and the Bible in general) in Appendix B.

## WEEK 1: COMING HOME

1. As common in the style of letters written during the first century, Peter establishes himself as the author of this letter in verse 1. What do you know about Peter from the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John?
2. Peter also says he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. What is an apostle? What do you think that means about how Peter views his identity?
3. Who are the recipients of this letter? How does he describe them? Where are they? Feel free to look up these locations on a map for a visual reference.
4. Fill in the blank: "God the Father \_\_\_\_\_ you and \_\_\_\_\_ you long ago, and his Spirit has \_\_\_\_\_ you holy." (1 Peter 1:2)
  - Who is responsible for the actions in that verse? Why is that significant?

5. Why is obedience to God a result of the first part of verse 2?
6. Peter closes verse 2 by praying for his readers, “May God give you more and more grace and peace.”
- Use a dictionary or an online dictionary to define the following terms:  
**grace**  
  
**peace**
  - What do you think it looks like for grace and peace to be multiplied in the lives of those following Christ?
7. How can you find increased confidence in the Lord from these opening verses of 1 Peter?
8. Where in your life do you need to ask God to multiply grace and peace? Consider asking someone in your group to pray for that alongside you.

**“GOD THE FATHER KNEW YOU AND CHOSE YOU LONG AGO, AND HIS SPIRIT HAS MADE YOU HOLY. AS A RESULT, YOU HAVE OBEYED HIM AND HAVE BEEN CLEANSED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST.”**

1 Peter 1:2

## WEEK 2: OUR FOREVER HOME

1. According to 1 Peter 1:3, what is the result of God's great mercy?

- What kind of hope do we have in Christ? Why?
- Using a dictionary or online dictionary, define **mercy**.
- Look at Ephesians 2:1-7 and explain the connection between God's great mercy and our salvation.
- Why is it essential that we understand we contribute nothing to our salvation?

2. In verse 4, Peter says we have a "price inheritance." What is that inheritance? What other words does Peter use to describe that inheritance? How do those additional descriptions enhance our understanding of this inheritance?

3. Look at verse 6.

- How should we respond to the truths of verses 3-5?
- What difference does that make as we face trials?

4. List some examples, maybe even personal ones, of trials we can experience in life.

- According to verse 7, what is the purpose of those trials?
- How has God refined your faith as a result of a trial you have endured?

*The genuine faith which emerges from trials is more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire. Though gold for centuries has been a commonly understood symbol for the most precious and lasting of material possessions, genuine faith is more precious (literally 'much more precious') than either gold, or by implication, any other material possession.*

*Gold perishes even though it is refined or tested...by fire—in fact, gold is one of the most durable of all substances. Yet Peter says that it 'perishes,' because he knows that this entire creation is on its way toward final destruction (see 2 Peter 3:7, 10-12). Genuine faith is more valuable to God than gold because he is a God who delights in being trusted. And since God's evaluation of something is the ultimate standard of meaning in the universe, Peter's readers have a secure basis for a sense of ultimate meaning and importance for their own lives.<sup>1</sup>*

Wayne Grudem, *The First Epistle of Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*

5. Read verses 8-9. How is it possible to love and trust God without seeing him?

- What is the result of trusting God (vs 8)?
- What is the reward of trusting God (vs 9)?

6. In verses 10-12, Peter explains that the prophets (Jeremiah, Nathan, Elijah, Isaiah, Zechariah, etc.) of the Old Testament knew only shadows of the gospel that we now know in full. Consider the experience of these prophets. They suffered significantly due to their calling of pointing people to God and urging them to turn to Him, and so they provide us with an example of persevering through persecution. The prophets were inspired by the Holy Spirit; therefore, God speaks to us through them. They spoke of a future day, that salvation by grace would be accomplished in the future, the coming of Jesus, salvation in terms of suffering followed by glory. To dig deeper on these verses, see Bob Deffinbaugh's "When the Prophets Were at a Loss" on [bible.org](http://bible.org).

- How did Christ's sufferings increase His glory?
  
- In what ways does your suffering identify with Christ's suffering?

7. Why is focusing on our eternal home necessary? How would increasing that focus impact the way you live day-to-day?

8. What are some practical steps you can take to be more eternity-minded? Share your ideas with your group.

**“ ALL PRAISE TO GOD, THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.  
IT IS BY HIS GREAT MERCY THAT WE HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN,  
BECAUSE GOD RAISED JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD.  
NOW WE LIVE WITH GREAT EXPECTATION... ”**

1 Peter 2:3

## WEEK 3: MAKING THE MOST OF THIS HOME

1. At this point in his letter, Peter lays out practical guidelines for living in this world while we await our true home.
  - In verses 13-14, what does Peter tell believers to do?
  
  - What does Peter warn believers not to do?
2. Verse 15 begins with “But,” which indicates a logical transition from the previous statement. In this case, the transition indicates contrast.
  - What does Peter contrast between verse 14 and verse 15?
  
  - Using a dictionary or an online dictionary, define **holy**.
  
  - What is the reason for being holy according to verse 16?
3. The command of verses 15 and 16 might make you feel completely inadequate or overwhelmingly burdened.
  - What picture or words come to mind when you think about being holy?
  
  - Look back at verses 14 and 15. How does Peter describe holiness in these two verses?

4. In order to know what an obedient and holy life looks like, you must turn your eyes upon Jesus Christ because, as Charles Swindoll writes, “Jesus is our unblemished example of godliness.” And remember, verse 15 says that God “chose” you. He did not choose you because you seemed good enough: He chose you to be saved by Jesus, the One who is holy and perfect, not just good enough. Accepting God’s choice of you is a transforming decision—you now belong to the Father, and as a result, you start looking less like the world and more like His child, more like Jesus.

*The Hebrew word for holy (kodesh) means literally “cut away.” You are cut away from the world—separate. Totally different. You are going to seem weird to everyone around you now because you are literally cut from a different cloth.*

*Again I’ll say, if you DON’T seem weird to everyone around you, isn’t it possible you are more like the world than you are God? Isn’t it possible you’re not actually born again, still a member of the world’s family and not God’s?<sup>2</sup>*

J.D. Greear

- Consider areas of your life that are less reflective of Jesus and more reflective of the world (i.e. how you use money, how you regard sex, how you process anger, how you spend time, etc.). Ask God to help you live differently, to live in a way that honors Him and brings glory to Him by pointing to the goodness of Jesus. Write out that prayer below.

5. According to verse 17, why must you live in “reverent fear” of God? What does it mean to fear God, to do so with reverence?

6. In verses 18-20, how does Peter explain why God is worthy of reverent fear?

7. Fill in the blanks:

“Through \_\_\_\_\_ you have come to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.  
And you have placed your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ because he  
raised \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead and gave him great glory.” (1 Peter 1:21)

- According to the verse above, where does faith in God come from? Why does that need to be made absolutely clear?

8. Verse 22 explains that inward transformation of faith in Christ in turn transforms outward behavior. How?

9. What encouragement do you find in verses 23-25?

10. Where in your life do you struggle to believe the wholeness of your salvation, that Christ's work on your behalf is complete? Maybe you doubt because you keep failing in the same way, you just can't seem to get "\_\_\_\_\_" right, or you simply feel unworthy of His grace towards you. Obedience to the command to be holy as He is holy flows from a heart and mind and soul that entrusts itself to the finished work of Christ. Being holy isn't about being perfect as much as it knowing that Jesus is perfect for you, in your place. God values dependence on Him, as David writes in Psalm 51:17: "The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God." Ask the Lord to work on the area(s) of your life that came to mind. Ask Him to increase your confidence in the gospel, in the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Ask Him to give you courage to obey His Word and to freely confess and get back up again in faith when you don't obey.

**“ FOR YOU HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN, BUT NOT TO A LIFE THAT WILL QUICKLY END. YOUR NEW LIFE WILL LAST FOREVER BECAUSE IT COMES FOR THE ETERNAL, LIVING WORD OF GOD. ”**

1 Peter 1:23

# WEEK 4: MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

1. 1 Peter 2:1 begins with serious commands: “get rid of” and “Be done.” There is not any gray area here, so we need to be sure we understand these commands and their significance.

- Give an example of each of the following:

**deceit**

**hypocrisy**

**jealousy**

**unkind speech**

- What is the danger of these attitudes and behaviors for those who follow Christ?

2. Verse 2 and 3 use the imagery of food and the growth that happens as a result. What do you think Peter means by pure spiritual milk (hint: verse 3)? How do we get this milk?

3. 1 Peter 2:4-10 uses language and terms that would be familiar to Peter’s readers, but perhaps we aren’t sure what these references to a temple and cornerstone are all about. Read the following for a brief overview:

*In the book of Exodus, just after giving Moses the Ten Commandments, God instructed Moses to build a tabernacle—a transportable temple or sorts where worship, sacrifice, and offerings were made to God. Exodus 25-40 gives details of the elaborate design of the tabernacle, from the curtains that hung around its exterior to the utensils used in the holy of holies. Every time the Israelites changed locations, the tabernacle would be taken down and put back up again upon arrival to a new place. Later, many years after the Israelites entered the Land which God promised them, King Solomon built a temple out of cedar wood and costly stones quarried and cut by laborers. It took eight years to complete this extraordinary temple of the Lord. It must have been incredible.*

*However, the book of Hebrews tells us that the tabernacle served as ‘copy and shadow of the heavenly things,’ and ‘when Christ appeared as the high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation.’ The book of Hebrews is all about the new and better way to reach God—by grace through faith in His Son Jesus, for even the Law itself was ‘only a shadow of things to come...’*

*In 1 Peter 2:4-5, we learn in more detail what the real temple of God is and what kind of stones are eternal—beginning with the chief cornerstone. This passage is important because it’s a picture of the eternal and supernatural things to come, as well as a call to action to those who belong to the royal priesthood—you, me, and everyone who knows Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.<sup>3</sup>*

Cas Monaco

- This passage can enhance our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. Look carefully through verses 4-10 and record the facts of what you discover about the following people:

**Jesus**

**You/Those who believe**

**Unbelievers/Those who disbelieve**

4. Focusing on 1 Peter 2:4-5, what do you learn about the temple from these verses? Write down all of your observations.
5. A cornerstone is the “key stone” or the foundation on which an entire structure is built (all other stones are set in reference to this stone; thus, the cornerstone determines the position of the entire structure). Explain what it means that Jesus is the chief cornerstone of this spiritual house.

6. According to verse 5, what qualifies us to offer pleasing spiritual sacrifices? What do you think Peter means by spiritual sacrifice? See Romans 12:1 for additional insight.
  
7. In verses 6-8, Peter refers to the Old Testament books of Isaiah and Psalms.
  - Why do you think Peter makes these references?
  
  - What promise of God can you find in verse 6?
  
8. Read verse 8 carefully and answer the following:
  - Why do people stumble?
  
  - What do you think it means to stumble over the stone of Christ, for him to be “the rock that makes them fall”?
  
  - What is their ultimate fate?

*Here he's saying that not believing in Jesus is like rejecting the stone that God has laid as the corner stone. God sends his Son to be the main stone in the building of his church—his people. But some do not trust him; they reject him.*

*But what effect does that have on the purpose of God? This is the point: it does not defeat God's purpose at all. “The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone.” The point is: If you believe on this stone, you can't lose; and if you disbelieve on him, you can't win. Human unbelief does not frustrate or defeat the ultimate purposes of God. If God plans for Jesus to be the chief corner stone, humans can betray him, desert him, deny him, mock him, strike him, spit on him, hit him with rods, crown him with thorns, strip him, crucify him, and bury him—but they cannot stop him from being what God destined him to be, the Living Corner Stone of a great and glorious people.<sup>4</sup>*

John Piper

9. In contrast to those who stumble, how does Peter describe followers of Jesus in verse 9-10?

- What is the result of belonging to God (vs. 9)?

10. Peter concludes this section with strong warnings about how to behave as a Christ follower. How can you practically heed those warnings? What does it look like to “keep away from worldly desires” and “live properly among your unbelieving neighbors”?

11. It’s important to remember while you may not always feel like you belong to God, that through Jesus, He’s made you part of his “holy nation.” How would focusing on your true identity help you navigate the challenges you’re currently facing?

“

**...YOU ARE A CHOSEN PEOPLE. YOU ARE ROYAL PRIESTS,  
A HOLY NATION, GOD’S VERY OWN POSSESSION. AS A RESULT, YOU  
CAN SHOW OTHERS THE GOODNESS OF GOD, FOR HE CALLED YOU  
OUT OF THE DARKNESS INTO HIS WONDERFUL LIGHT.**

”

1 Peter 2:9

# WEEK 5: DONKEY, ELEPHANT, AND DOVE

1. Read 1 Peter 2:13-14 carefully.

- Using a dictionary or online dictionary, define **submit**.
- What are some examples of human authority in your life?
- What reason does Peter provide for submitting to human authority?
- How is that kind of submission possible? What do we need to believe about God in order to submit to those in authority?

2. What should be the effect of living an honorable life (vs. 15)?

- Notice the implication of this verse: Expect “foolish accusations against you” from “ignorant people.” What do you think is the root of those kinds of accusations?
- Have you ever experienced making a choices to honor God that resulted in people making accusations against you? Explain.

3. In verse 16, Peter says that those who follow Christ are free, yet he calls those same people God’s slaves. How can that be true? How can God’s slave be free?

- According to verse 16, it can be tempting to use freedom as an excuse to do evil. Can you explain how that could happen and how it can be avoided?

4. Peter offers clear commands in verse 17: “Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.” Why do you think respecting people, including those in power, loving fellow believers, and fearing God are essential to the life of a Christ follower? How do those actions relate to the “honorable” life mentioned in verse 15?
  
5. Read 1 Peter 2:18-20. Our current understanding of the term slavery may be a challenge to understanding this next section of Peter’s letter. Here are some facts: Historians estimate that one quarter to one third of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. Now of course, the pervasiveness of slavery does not excuse its existence, and Peter’s words in verses 18-20 do not condone the institution of either. Slavery, both that of the first century, the enslavement of Africans in America and the practice of trafficking today are all examples of suffering, and this particular kind of suffering that was assuredly experienced by many of Peter’s readers. Suffering is a common theme throughout this letter, so at this point, Peter’s words serve to give hope to those suffering injustice.
  - Peter uses the word “submit” again here in verse 18, but he adds the words “with all respect.” How is it possible to respect someone who is mistreating you?
  
  - Why would God be “pleased” (a word used in both verse 19 and 20) when we endure unjust treatment?
  
6. Verse 21 echoes the command in 1 Peter 1:15-16. What connection can you make between suffering and holiness?

7. In verses 22-23, Peter explains the example Jesus set for us (an example for us to follow as indicated in verse 21). List the specific ways that Jesus endured suffering.
8. Peter closes this section by explaining the gospel, what Jesus accomplished on our behalf at the cross. You'll notice that the letters of the New Testament return to the gospel over and over and over. That repetition bears repeating because the gospel is not simply the diving board for Christian living, it is the pool. Below, write out and personalize verses 24-25, replacing "our" for "my" and "we" for "I" and so forth. (Feel free to memorize your personalized version.)
- How did personalizing these verses enhance your understanding of them?
9. According to Merriam-Webster, injustice means the "absence of justice: violation of right or the rights of another: unfairness." Injustice tends to be thought of at a larger, communal level. While that is certainly true, injustice can also be experienced at an individual level. Whether it's someone else getting that new position that you've earned, or a friend misunderstanding you and talking to others about you, or maybe your significant other shows you little, if any, love and respect, or the way your child talks back to you with cutting words, we all have experienced something of the reality that "life's not fair." Where in your life are experiencing suffering because of some sort of injustice, unfairness? What encouragement do you find in this section of Peter's letter? How can you practically apply that encouragement to your current situation?

**“ HE PERSONALLY CARRIED OUR SINS IN HIS BODY ON THE CROSS  
SO THAT WE CAN BE DEAD TO SIN AND LIVE FOR WHAT IS RIGHT.  
BY HIS WOUNDS YOU ARE HEALED. ”**

1 Peter 2:24

## WEEK 6: FILLING HOME WITH LOVE

1. Peter's letter now moves from talking about how the Christian is to submit to authority in the world to how submission to authority functions in the context of marriage.
  - Verse 1 opens with "In the same way," which refers to what Peter had just written in 1 Peter 2. What "same way" is he talking about?
  - Why is it so important that wives accept the authority of their husbands? Use the text.
2. According to verse 2, what can win an unbelieving husband over? Why would that be effective? On the contrary, what behaviors should a wife avoid in order to reflect Christ in her marriage? (look at 1 Peter 3:1-2, but also look back to previous verses in 1 Peter).
3. In verse 3, what does Peter tell women to not be concerned about?
  - Are those things inherently wrong? If not, how can they become an issue?
4. Looking at verse 4, what is "the beauty that comes from within"? Why would that be "so precious to God"?

5. The image of clothing/putting on is common throughout Scripture, especially Paul's letters to various churches. Look up the following verses and write down what you learn about how Christ followers should be clothed.

- Romans 13:11-12
- Galatians 3:26-27
- Ephesians 6:10-18
- Colossians 3:12-17
- 1 Peter 5:5
- It's important to note that putting on a piece of clothing is an intentional action, not a passive experience. Of course, we can only put on what has been given to us, and we have all been given pure white robes of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10) because of Jesus' death and resurrection. How can we actively "clothe" ourselves with what Jesus has given us? What does that look like?

6. Read verses 5-6 closely. What enables wives to accept the authority of their husbands? How does that relate to Peter's statement that "You are [Sarah's] daughters when you do what is right without fear of what your husbands might do"?

7. Peter's admonitions now focus on husbands, and just like with the wives, he establishes that the behavior of husbands should flow from the example of Christ. Read verse 7, and then answer the following questions.

- How should a husband regard his wife?
  
- How does God establish equity between husbands and wives?
  
- What is the danger for a husband not treating his wife according to God's design?

8. Complete the following chart for what should characterize a Christ follower according to verses 8-11:

CHRISTIANS SHOULD	CHRISTIANS SHOULD NOT

9. Verse 9 and verse 12, which is a reference to Psalm 34, detail specific promises of God. What are those promises?

10. What from the previous chart challenges you personally? In other words, what behavior(s) do you see most lacking in your life?

- Especially with the current cultural climate, our world desperately needs to see the light of Christ. Take some time and confess to the Lord about where you know you're falling short. Know with all certainty that Jesus covers your failings in full, and God is determined to make you increasingly more like Christ. In fact, just taking the time to talk with God about all of this is making you more Christlike because you are humbling yourself and seeking His will and His glory above your own.
- What practical steps can you take to follow the commands in the verses we've studied today?

**“ FINALLY, ALL OF YOU SHOULD BE OF ONE MIND. SYMPATHIZE WITH EACH OTHER. LOVE EACH OTHER AS BROTHERS AND SISTERS. BE TENDERHEARTED, AND KEEP A HUMBLE ATTITUDE. ”**

1 Peter 3:8

## WEEK 7: WHEN THINGS DON'T GO AS PLANNED

1. Read over 1 Peter 3:14-17 and note all you learn about suffering and how those who follow Christ are to respond to it.
  
2. What does it look like to suffer for doing good? Give an example (personal or otherwise).

*It's just God's will sometimes for you to suffer. You can do everything good and still suffer. We need to get rid of this idea of a "smooth sailing God" who, when you please him, makes everything peachy keen for you. That's not what Jesus's life was like! He did everything right and suffered. And you are called to this, Peter says. We need to teach our kids to expect suffering in life. Otherwise we set them up for a crisis of faith—if you teach them that if they do their part everything will be smooth, then at some point something goes wrong in their lives—they get denied the job, they get taken advantage of, their marriage falls apart, death comes—and they feel like "But I did everything right. God what's wrong with you? Are you even there?" They need to understand in that moment, "I was called to this. And I can have the presence of Jesus in this moment and the promise that he's going to work it all out for good."<sup>5</sup>*

J.D. Greear

3. According to verse 18, how did Christ suffer?
  - What was the purpose of his suffering?
  - Think of a time when you experienced some kind of suffering. How did the Lord work His purposes in your suffering?

4. Look through verses 19-21 and write down anything that you have a question about or is confusing to you.

- If you wrote down a lot, know you're not alone. Many consider this section of Scripture to be one of the most, if not the most, confusing in the New Testament. Let's look at two specific questions:

**What does Peter mean by Jesus "went and preached to the spirits in prison"?**

- According to verse 20, whom did Jesus (via the Holy Spirit) go preach to?
- Look over Genesis 5:28-7:10. Jesus preached through Noah to the disobedient people of his time. What do you think his message was?
- Noah's life and words preached to his generation for over 120 years, and as you see in verse 20, how many were saved from the Flood? What did God prove through the Flood and His sparing of these people?
- In this perspective, you could read verse 19 this way: "In His Spirit, Christ (in the past) proclaimed the gospel through Noah to the spirits (the souls of people) who are now in prison (they are in hell because they didn't believe Noah's message)."<sup>6</sup>

**What does Peter mean by Jesus "went and preached to the spirits in prison"?**

- Scripture clearly establishes what saves sinners. Look at Romans 10:9-10 and Acts 16:31, and note what makes salvation possible.
- Peter's words do not say that baptism alone saves, but rather that baptism is closely related to salvation, like a ring ceremony in a marriage. The vows taken are what actually make the marriage official, and the rings simply serve as an outward symbol of the marriage.
- With that in mind, how does baptism symbolize salvation? How is the Flood a picture of baptism?

- You likely had other questions or other points of confusion from that section, but it's important that when you reach sections of Scripture that don't immediately make sense, do not throw your hands up in frustration or find yourself lost in the determination to understand every bit. Look for the main point, and in this particular section, what is that main point? Even when people see you as foolish, when no one is listening, when the world is coming unraveled and falling apart, Christ wins. He always wins. He brought salvation through Noah, and he's bringing salvation through you. Keep preaching Christ because Christ wins.<sup>7</sup>
- See Steven J. Cole's "Lesson 18: A Difficult Passage Explained and Applied (1 Peter 3:18-22)" on bible.org for more commentary on these challenging verses.

5. How does verse 22 show that Christ wins?

- Where in your life are you feeling defeated? What truths from what we have studied so far in 1 Peter could encourage you?

6. In 1 Peter 4:1-3, Peter draws clear distinctions between those who follow Christ and those who don't. Using the text, note what is different about living for Christ.

- What does Peter tell us to expect from those who do not follow Christ in verse 4?
- How does verse 5 offer perspective to endure that treatment?

7. How can Christians interact with a world that, for the most part, does not seek the honor of God? How can we avoid legalism (thinking that following rules makes us acceptable) and abusing grace (depending on grace and avoiding personal responsibility and the Spirit's efforts to change us)?

*The relationship of Christians to the world is like a boat to water. Boats were made specifically to interact with the water, to be on the water. But while the boat was made to be on the water, it was not made for the water to be in the boat. So it is with we followers of Jesus. We were created, our faith was designed, for us to be in the world, just not of the world.<sup>8</sup>*

Bryan Loritts

8. What necessary and sobering truth does Peter remind us of in verse 7? Why is that reminder important?

- In light of that reality, what does Peter say we should do specifically in response? (vs. 7-9)
- What promise does God make in verse 8?

9. In 1 Peter 4:10-11, Peter emphasizes how important it is to know and use our spiritual gifts. Empowered and sustained by the Holy Spirit, these gifts help us know how we can best love, serve, and care for others in our community. Take some time to explore spiritual gifts by taking the survey on this site: <https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/spiritual-gifts-survey/>. Did the results surprise you or affirm what you already knew about yourself? Share your top three with your group and brainstorm together how those gifts can be utilized in the church.

10. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19.

- According to verses 12-13, why should suffering not surprise us?
- How is suffering actually a blessing? (vs. 14, 16-17)
- What warning does Peter put forth in verses 17-18?

- What does it look like to “trust your lives to the God who created you”?
- Identify God’s promise in verse 19. How does that promise encourage you in your current circumstances?

11. Think of a time when a brother or sister in Christ modeled out 1 Peter 4:8-9 for you. How did that impact you? Even in the midst of our current challenges with COVID-19, how can you care for someone else in the same way? Be creative and share your ideas with your group.

**“ MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, CONTINUE TO SHOW DEEP LOVE FOR EACH OTHER, FOR LOVE COVERS A MULTITUDE OF SINS. ”**

1 Peter 4:8

# WEEK 8: FINDING SUCCESS

## 1. Read 1 Peter 5:1-4.

- Using a dictionary or an online dictionary, define **elder**. Bonus: Can you name the three elders (excluding Pastor Jeff) in our church?
- Write down what you learn about the role of an elder in this passage.
- Regardless of whether you are an official elder in a church, all Christ followers have circles we influence, circles we care for. Be it your children, your co-workers, your siblings, your neighbors, and so forth, you have been intentionally placed in that circle to reflect Jesus. What in these verses challenges you? What steps can you take to meet that challenge?

## 2. In verse 5, Peter connects accepting authority to humility, encouraging all those who follow Christ to “dress” in humility as we “relate to one another.”

- Why is humility the necessary posture of a Christian? Look to the text.
- Pride, the arch enemy of humility, seeks to destroy our relationship with God and with others. This pride leads us to think more of ourselves and thereby less of God. Can you think of a time when you were set on your own way, on your own strength, to handle a situation and/or a relationship? How did that play out? Did you reach a point where you let go of your pride and experienced His grace? Describe, and if willing, share with your group.

## 3. Fill in the blank.

“So humble \_\_\_\_\_ under the mighty \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_,  
and at the \_\_\_\_\_ time, \_\_\_\_\_ will lift \_\_\_\_\_ up in \_\_\_\_\_. (vs. 6)

- What is one character trait of God you see in this verse? How does that trait make personal humility possible?
  - Who determines what the “right time” is? Why can that be difficult to accept? How can we practically live out that trust?
4. Verse 7 is a popular verse from 1 Peter, and for good reason. We all have worries and cares, sometimes buckets full, and as Christ followers, we have a Father who lovingly wants to take those from us. In order to understand this verse in its fullness, let’s take a look at a different translation: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:6-7, ESV
- Use a dictionary or an online dictionary to define **cast**.
  - Look carefully at the text. What makes “casting all your anxieties on him” possible? Why is that connection crucial?
  - According to the text, what gives us confidence to “cast” our cares and anxieties on God? How does Matthew 11:28-30 give additional insight?
  - Consider the state of your mind and heart, where all your current cares and concerns reside. Spend some time in prayer, acknowledging your need of God to handle it all because He is mighty and you are not. Perhaps write down those anxieties, either below or on a separate sheet of paper, and give each of them up to the Lord in prayer, entrusting Him to do the work and give you direction and wisdom when you need it. Know that as verse 7 says, God cares more about you than you’d dare believe, that you’d ever imagine. He cares about all of your cares, and He wants to take the burden of those from you because God alone is trustworthy and capable of shouldering the weight. Feel free to use the model below.

God, I give you \_\_\_\_\_.  
*I cannot carry this weight, but you can. Because you love me, I am giving it to you.*

Please know that this prayer, this “casting,” is part of the lifestyle for a Christ follower. In certain seasons, you may find yourself praying the same prayer multiple times a day, even multiple times a minute. This ongoing practice of giving our cares to the Lord reminds us of our need for God (humility) and grows our faith by increasing our confidence in the God who loves us. No need or care or place of anxiety is too silly or too complex for the Lord. Make praying like this a habit, and know that in doing so, you are becoming more like Christ, which is an amazing thing.

5. The way Peter encourages us to pray leads logically to 1 Peter 5:8-9.

- Who is the enemy? How does Peter describe his tactics and aim?

- How do we fight this enemy according to verse 9? What does it look like to fight like this?

6. What promise of God do you see in verse 10? What encouragement does that offer you right now?

9. In verse 12, Peter clearly states his purpose for the letter: “to encourage you and assure you that what you are experiencing is truly part of God’s grace for you.”
- Considering the whole of the letter, what does Peter mean by “what you are experiencing”?
  - How could that be part of God’s grace to us? Think of how the letter offers an explanation.
8. If you had to summarize 1 Peter in a sentence or two, what would you write? Jot down your brief summary below.
9. Think back over all you have learned throughout this study. What has challenged you? What has encouraged you? Be prepared to share a couple of highlights with your group.
10. Write out a prayer of thanksgiving and commitment to the Lord based on what you have learned and how you want to use that understanding as you move forward in your relationship with Christ.

**“ SO HUMBLE YOURSELVES UNDER THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD, AND AT THE RIGHT TIME, HE WILL LIFT YOU UP IN HONOR. GIVE ALL YOUR WORRIES AND CARES TO GOD, FOR HE CARES ABOUT YOU. ”**

1 Peter 5:6-7

# APPENDIX A: THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**Attentive:** God hears and responds to the needs of His children.

**Compassionate:** God cares for His children and acts on their behalf.

**Creator:** God made everything. He is uncreated.

**Deliverer:** God rescues and saves His children.

**Eternal:** God is not limited by and exists outside of time.

**Faithful:** God always keeps His promises.

**Generous:** God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

**Glorious:** God displays His greatness and worth.

**Good:** God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

**Holy:** God is perfect, pure and without sin.

**Incomprehensible:** God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

**Infinite:** God has no limits in His person or on His power.

**Immutable/Unchanging:** God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

**Jealous:** God will not share His glory with another. All glory rightfully belongs to Him.

**Just:** God is fair in all His actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

**Loving:** God feels and displays infinite unconditional affection toward His children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response or merit.

**Merciful:** God does not give His children the punishment they deserve.

**Omnipotent/Almighty:** God holds all power. Nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.

**Omnipresent:** God is fully present everywhere.

**Omniscient:** God knows everything,, past, present and future, all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

**Patient/Long-suffering:** God is untiring and bears with His children.

**Provider:** God meets the needs of His children.

**Refuge:** God is place of safety and protection for His children.

**Righteous:** God is always good and right.

**Self-existent:** God depends on nothing and no one to give Him life or existence.

**Self-sufficient:** God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

**Sovereign:** God does everything according to His plan and pleasure. He controls all things.

**Transcendent:** God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

**Truthful:** Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

**Wrathful:** God hates all unrighteousness.

**Wise:** God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

**Worthy:** God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

# APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## Websites:

- [bible.org](http://bible.org)
- [bibleproject.com](http://bibleproject.com)
- [biblestudytools.com](http://biblestudytools.com)
- [desiringgod.com](http://desiringgod.com) (esp. the “Look at the Book” section)
- [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org) (search “1 Peter” in the Resource Library)
- *1 Peter For You*, Juan Sanchez (The Good Book Company)
- *Be Hopeful (1 Peter)*, Warren Wiersbe (David C. Cook)
- *Resurrection Life in a World of Suffering: 1 Peter*, various (The Gospel Coalition)

## Messages/Podcasts:

- “John Piper on 1 Peter” TGC Podcast (July 14, 2016)
- “Holiness” Sermon by Tim Keller, Google Podcasts (May 20, 2020—originally October 17, 1993)
- “1 Peter” Sermon Series, Redeemer Church (2015)
- “I Am an Alien” Sermon Series, The Summit Church (2011)
- “Together We Endure: The Book of 1 Peter” Sermon Series, The Summit Church (2020)
- “1 Peter—Southlake” Sermon Series, The Village Church (2020)

## Books/Studies:

- *1 Peter*, Wayne Grudem (IVP Academic)
- *1 Peter: A Living Hope in Christ*, Jen Wilkin (Lifeway)

## Endnotes:

1. Wayne Grudem, *The First Epistle of Peter: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), p. 64.
2. J.D. Greear, “The Exile Commands: 1 Peter 1:13-21.” Sermon, Together We Endure: The Letter of 1 Peter, Raleigh, NC, May 17, 2020.
3. Cas Monaco, *Standing Firm in a World of Opportunities: A Devotional Bible Study on the Book of 1 Peter* (Portland, OR: Entrusting God’s Treasure to the Faithful, 2006), pg. 59.
4. John Piper, “Why God Laid a Stone of Stumbling.” Sermon, 1 Peter: Grow in the Grace & Knowledge of Christ, Minneapolis, MN, February 27, 1994.
5. J.D. Greear, “How to Experience Good Days (in the Midst of Bad Ones): 1 Peter 3:8-22.” Sermon, Together We Endure: The Letter of 1 Peter, Raleigh, NC, July 26, 2020.
6. J.D. Greear, “How to Experience Good Days (in the Midst of Bad Ones): 1 Peter 3:8-22.” Sermon, Together We Endure: The Letter of 1 Peter, Raleigh, NC, July 26, 2020.
7. Ibid.
8. Bryan Loritts, “The Same Kind of Different as He: 1 Peter 4.” Sermon, Together We Endure: The Letter of 1 Peter, Raleigh, NC, August 2, 2020

# APPENDIX C: CREATIVE SPACE

**SOUTH RIDGE CHURCH**  
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