

1 Peter

Bible Study

One of my favorite apostles to study is Peter. I have visited his letters time and time again. Since, I'm attending a woman's bible study on 1 Peter and 2 Peter I've decided to share my notes and thoughts with you!

I have broken down my study by chapters in 1 Peter. This is the first in a 5-part study of 1 Peter. I will give a breakdown of each chapter that includes:

- The Scripture
- Key Words
- Key Concepts

I have paid particular attention to Peter's choice of words. Defining those words have given a more meaningful understanding of the scripture and how it may relate to you on a more personal level. In this study my goal is to take Peter's letter and apply it to life as a Christian in today's world.

All scripture is taken from the NIV Holy Bible and the definitions are from Merriam Webster Dictionary.

I hope you find this study helpful! Without further delay, lets dig in!

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Chapter 1

Who Was Peter:

Peter was a disciple and then an Apostle of Jesus Christ who was instrumental in spreading the gospel. What we know about Peter is he was impulsive, passionate, and had faults, but was a dedicated servant of Christ. Jesus took Peter, an ordinary fisherman and formed him into an extraordinary apostle. In this letter, chockfull of wisdom, instruction Peter carefully explains to the Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor, how they are chosen, elected, and sanctified by Christ.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

*To God's elect, strangers scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been **chosen** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the **sanctifying** work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:*

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1 Peter 1:1-2

Key Words

Strangers: Person whom one does not know. Person entirely unaccustomed to a feeling, experience or situation.

Chosen: Selected as being the best, picked.

Elect: Chosen, singled out.

Now, I know that Peter was talking to the people scattered in the cities he mentions, but I my hope is that you relate to this study on a personal level as well. So how does this greeting relate to us right now in present day? Let's dive into these key concepts from the scripture.

Key Concepts

We Were Strangers:

We have a lot in common with those scattered people. They were strangers before they were Christians, just as we were before coming to Christ. We lived as strangers to God. We didn't know him or his ways and lived in a state of unknowing. We were comfortable in the world, and accustomed to its standards, but unaccustomed to the experience of God. Then God chose us!

We Are Chosen:

We were **picked, selected, set aside, singled** out to be in his family. God looks at us as the best of what he has created even when we were strangers to him he still chose us! Do you know how special you are?

Chosen by the Foreknowledge of God

We were chosen according to the **foreknowledge** of God. Before we ever existed, God was aware of us and knew he would choose us. Shouldn't this give us confidence in God's love for us? When we feel uncertain that God has a purpose for us we need to remember that he has *always* had a plan in mind for us.

We are Sanctified

He took us as sinners...strangers with all our faults and imperfections and instead of tossing us aside he sanctified us through the Holy Spirit. We were made pure, declared holy by God and purified of our sins through the blood of Christ. Once we accepted Christ we are given an abundance of grace (undeserved favor) and peace.

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great **mercy** he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an **inheritance** that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

1 Peter 1:3-5

Key Words

Mercy: Compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm.

Inheritance: Property passing at an owner’s death to the heir or those entitled to succeed; legacy.

Key Concepts

In Jesus’ Mercy he has Given Us a New Birth

Jesus has the authority and power to treat us how we really should be treated according to our sin nature. He could cast us aside, but instead he has shown us mercy and compassion. He could punish us, yet he gave us forgiveness through the ultimate sacrifice of his death and resurrection.

We Experience 2 Births

Peter tells us we are given a new birth, which indicates we have two births:

- 1) *Natural Birth:* Our birth that occurs through our earthly and natural parents. In our natural birth we are born sinful.
- 2) *Spiritual Birth:* This birth is through baptism and the Holy Spirit. We are born again into God’s kingdom. Our sins have been forgiven and we have taken off our old self and put on a new self.

We are Born into a Living Hope and an Inheritance

In our natural birth we lived in the world and of the world. We followed its ways. Those ways left us hopeless and unfulfilled. Our Spiritual/New Birth fills us with a living hope. The hope that is real and lies in the knowledge of our inheritance.

Our owner is Jesus Christ. When he died on the cross for our sins, he passed on an inheritance to us in heaven. We became entitled through his resurrection not through our human lineage, but our spiritual lineage to be heirs in the kingdom. This inheritance will never perish like the inheritance we receive from our natural birth. This is an everlasting inheritance that far outweighs money, property, or anything else the world offers.

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proven genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

1 Peter 1:6-7

Key Words

Suffer: Undergo or feel pain or distress. Sustain injury, disadvantage or loss.

Grief: Cause of sorrow, mental suffering, or distress over affliction.

Trial: Test, experiment, proof.

Faith: Complete trust or confidence in someone or something. belief in the existence of God.

Genuine: Not counterfeit, authentic, real, sincere free from hypocrisy or pure.

Key Concepts

Suffering and Trials Are Inevitable

Peter was persecuted for his faith and belief in Christ, just as many Christians all over the world are facing persecution and even death. Jesus never promised us we wouldn't have trials. In fact, it isn't if we will suffer it is when. Suffering is inevitable. The pain, loss, and distress may seem unbearable. We may even think that God has forgotten us, but that is far from the truth. Through every trial God is right there with us and through our grief there is hope.

Suffering and Trials Refine and Strengthen Our Faith

There is a purpose for our suffering and trials. We can think of trials as our faith growers. Nothing will test your faith in God more than suffering. Not only do our trials matures us, it strengthens and refines our faith and proves it to be genuine. It is easy to say that you have faith, until you're thrown a curve ball that lands you flat on your back. That's when the true test of faith comes.

It isn't counterfeit faith we want as Christians. We should constantly be striving to mature and grow in our faith so that we become an example for others. So that when our brothers and sisters are in a storm they can witness our faith as pure and unfaltering. This genuine faith doesn't happen overnight, it comes after trials, suffering and grief, but with each of those we sharpen our faith just a little more and in the end there is rejoicing because of the mighty power of God that pulls you through!

God will always equip you for the battle ahead. When you become God-reliant the suffering may remain, may even intensify, but you're still at an advantage when you hand it over to God. He is working it out and when he asks you to step aside...listen.

We must never forget to give God all the glory. Sometimes after a trial is over it is easy for us to give ourselves a big pat on the back. We brag about our strength and resilience, but forget that it wasn't from our own strength that we've survived it is through God grace we made it through. It's that thing called pride. But, we know that God hates pride. He wants your gratitude, your praise and your honor and can you think of a reason not to give it to him?

*Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you **believe** in him and are filled with an **inexpressible** and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

1 Peter 1:8-9

Key Terms

Believe: To accept something as true, genuine, or real to have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy, or ability of something.

Inexpressible: Being beyond the power to express; indescribable.

Key Concepts

We Have Not Seen Christ Yet We Believe

None of us have seen Christ yet we believe in him. We believe in his forgiveness, his sacrifice, his goodness, his provision, his promises. We accept Christ as the truth and are convicted by him. This may seem strange to some, but not to us because we stand steadfast in his word.

When We Believe in Christ There is an Inexpressible Joy

When I was first baptized and rose from the water the joy, peace and contentment I felt was indescribable, but it was the most incredible feeling I've ever felt. When our salvation is secure in Christ there is no greater joy. That belief is a gift Christ gives us, an inexpressible, extraordinary beautiful gift that passes all understanding yet gives us the greatest comfort.

*“Concerning this salvation, the **prophets**, who spoke of the **grace** that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.”*

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

1 Peter 1:10-12

Key Terms:

Prophets: One who utters divinely inspired revelations.

Grace: An unmerited divine assistance given to humans for their sanctification. A state of sanctification given through divine grace.

Key Concepts

The Prophets Claims Were True

The prophets spoke of the coming Messiah in the Old Testament. I'm led to believe through Peter's words that the prophets took this divine revelation very seriously and conveyed it with great detail and care.

The prophets told of the divine grace that would come with through Christ, the suffering he would endure and the glories that would follow after his death. It's important for us to remember that God always had a plan and that nothing is by coincidence. We have a very orderly God.

The Prophets Weren't Self Serving

The prophets were divinely told that their purpose was not self-serving, but they were to be an instrument through which the prophecy of the Messiah would be told. We are all here to serve and to remove the focus from self and put it on others.

*"Therefore **prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.**"*

1 Peter 1:13

Key Terms:

Prepare: Make ready for use, activity or purpose.

Mind: Way we think, reason and feel.

Action: An act of will.

Self-Controlled: Control over our feelings and actions, restraint over our own impulses, emotions, desires, feelings, and actions.

Hope: Cherish a desire of anticipation, expect with confidence.

Peter gives us concise and practical advice in this scripture. He gives us three key concepts that will help us carry out the will of our Father and will help us live more fruitful lives.

Key Concepts

Prepare Your Mind

We have to ready our mind for our purpose and the activity that God has planned for us. This can only occur if we have prepared our mind specifically for his use. We have to guard our mind and always train it to think, reason and feel the way God intended. Jesus prepared a place for us, and we must prepare to do the Lord's work. An unprepared mind leaves things unfinished, allows for distractions to take over, and will give way to an unfruitful life.

Be Self-Controlled

How many times has temptation led us down a dangerous and regretful path? When we lack self-control we are inviting Satan into our lives. He loves to see us out of control because that is when he can sliver his way in and wreak all kind of havoc. Self-control happens with practice over time and usually after a lot of painful consequences. When we begin to gain control over our emotions we aren't controlled by them. Unruly emotions lead to unruly actions and a lot of wasted time.

Set Your Hope on Christ

What do you place your hope in? Is it in your job, your family, friends, material things? If it is then it is in the wrong place and is an empty hope. We can fully and confidentially place our hope in Christ Jesus. He gave us our salvation and we can anticipate his coming with 100% certainty. There is nothing in this world that you can rely on 100%. Even, those closest to you, because we are flawed human beings. Christ is that guarantee, the one who never leaves, who we can count on without any doubt. In a world that seems to grow more hopeless every day, Peter reminds us that we can set our hope upon the one true living Christ who is never changing and always reliable.

“As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

1 Peter 1:14-16

Key Terms:

Obedient: Willing to do what someone tells you to do or to follow a law, rule, etc.; willing to obey. Submissive to the restraint or command of authority

Conform: To do what other people do. To behave in a way that is accepted by most people.

Evil: Morally bad. Causing harm or injury.

Desires: To want or wish for (something); to feel desire for (something).

Ignorance: A lack of knowledge, awareness, understanding, or education. The state of being ignorant.

Paul refers to his readers as children. We too are children of God and he is our Father. As our children are to obey us, we too are to obey God. Our obedience should come from a genuine love and desire to do God's will. He also mentions desires. Desires are not necessarily a bad emotion depending on the object of our desire. In these verses Peter warns us not to backtrack to our old lives when we were strangers to God and friends with the world. Instead he tells us to be holy and leave the evil desires buried in the sin that was forgiven.

Key Concepts

Be Obedient

In our society submission has become a bad word. When people hear the word submissive they think of weakness, when in reality being submissive to God gives you strength. It is disobedience that causes you to fall into sin and stumble off of God's perfect path for your life. If you want to live a fruitful life than obedience isn't an option it is a requirement. But, not one that we should dread. Willful obedience is the desire that blossoms from our sincere love for God.

Do Not Conform to Evil Desires

As children of God reborn we are different. We are chosen, set aside and shouldn't behave as the world does. The world's customs and standards are not the same as ours. There is always pressure to conform, to step back for just a moment into your old life, but you'll find out the world isn't as comfortable as it once was for you. Your desires are different. That isn't to say those evil desire and temptations aren't lurking, because they are right where you left them, but they don't fit who you are so don't squeeze into them!

You are No Longer in a State of Ignorance

Once you were blind, but now you see. Once God has lifted the veil of darkness from your eyes and the light is revealed the ignorance you lived in is removed. We have knowledge and with that knowledge our character is being reformed and reshaped. Those old evil desires stemmed from your old character that lacked the wisdom that is now made available to you.

Be Holy in All You Do

This is an intimidating command! In a volatile society it seems impossible and on our own it is. Through the Holy Spirit we are guided to what is holy. Only by faith, prayer and submission to God and our desire to be like him we can dedicate our life to doing his will.

*“Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work **impartially**, live out your time as foreigners here in **reverent** fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the **empty** way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”*

1 Peter 1:17-19

Key Words

Impartially: Treating all people and groups equally; not partial or biased.

Reverent: Showing a lot of respect; very respectful.

Empty: Having no real purpose or value.

Redeemed: To make (something that is bad, unpleasant, etc.) better or more acceptable. To free from what distresses or harms: as to free from captivity by payment of ransom. to release from blame or debt.

Key Concepts

Our Father is Just

We serve a God who is righteous and just. He doesn’t favor one person or group over another, instead his judgment is impartial and fair. There is no favoritism with God!

We Should Have Reverent Fear for God

People are afraid to say they fear God because of what others may think. No one likes to think of an angry God. But, we should have a respectful fear of God. God loves us and deserves our respect. We are living as foreigners in this world and have to be on guard for what God detests and try to live a life that is pleasing to him. After all, Christ paid the ultimate price for your freedom.

We Were Redeemed from an Empty Life

We were redeemed! Christ saved us from an empty life. He bought us back and broke the chains of captivity. He released us from our sin debt and gave us a life full of promise, hope and purpose. Sin held us and Jesus payed the ransom and released us. Our lives can be full if we live in the *fullness* of Christ.

*"He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your **sake**. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God."*

1 Peter 1:20-21

Key Word

Sake: The good, advantage, or enhancement of some entity. Personal or social welfare, safety, or benefit.

Key Concept

Jesus Always Was and Always Is

Peter reminds us of the awesomeness and wonder of God. Jesus was chosen before the creation of the world. He was always part of God's plan for our salvation.

Jesus was Revealed for Our Sake

Jesus was revealed for our benefit, our advantage and enhancement. God gave us his son to redeem us and restore us and finally to save us!

*Now that you have **purified** yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, **love** one another deeply, from the heart.*

1 Peter 1:22

Key Words

Purified: To remove dirty or harmful substances from (something; to free (someone) from guilt or evil thoughts. To free from undesirable elements.

Love: A feeling of strong or constant affection for a person. Unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another: as the fatherly concern of God for humankind; brotherly concern for others.

Heart: one's innermost character, feelings, or inclinations. The central or innermost part; the essential or most vital part of something.

Key Concepts

Purification Through Obeying the Truth

We're back to obedience! So how does purification happen? How are the impurities weeded out? It is through obeying the truth. What is the truth? Jesus! When we act in accordance to the word, when we try to reflect Jesus in our daily lives, we are in obedience with God. There is nothing dark about God! God is pure and good, there is no deceit. Our purification starts by our obedience to God. It is then that all the dirty elements can be removed from our life. Sin can't reside in obedience, it will shrink away and with it will go the impurities that try to rob us from loving God and others.

Love Sincerely and Deeply from the Heart

When I looked up the definition of love and heart it struck a deep cord within me. Love is unselfish, a feeling of strong and constant affection, a concern for another. It is like the love God has for humankind. Wow! Think about that love, that unconditional sacrificial love. We are told to love sincerely from our heart, the innermost central and vital place. In our heart lies our character, our deepest feelings. If the heart is not pure we cannot love sincerely or deeply. That is why the purification of our heart has to be ongoing. We have to guard our heart from anger, bitterness and envy that threatens to eat away at it and destroy our love for others.

"For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For,

*"All men are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of the Lord endures forever."
And this is the word that was preached to you.*

1 Peter 1:23-25

Peter ends chapter 1, reminding us that the word of God is living and enduring. It is breathing and long lasting. We will wither and pass away, but the word of God will stand for eternity. But, although we shall pass from this world, we were reborn, from a

seed that is imperishable. We can put our faith firmly in God because he was before everything and will remain. We have an everlasting promise that can never be broken.