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Since the fall in the Garden of Eden, suffering has plagued the world. While many people claim that God doesn’t want his children to suffer, the Bible tells a different story. As a child of God, we are not immune to hardship. The question is, can God take a believer’s suffering and use it for positive reasons? The book of 1st Peter confirms that the answer is yes.

This book is a hope-filled letter, written to scattered Jewish Christians in Asia Minor who were suffering harassment, persecution, and backlash for their faith. Peter wanted to encourage them to *stand firm in God’s grace* in a culture that was hostile to Christianity.

In this letter, we discover that God uses trials to accomplish something beautiful in us and through us, and that God’s grace is sufficient for every hardship we face. We discover that the trials of life have a way of burning away any false hope we might rely on, focusing our minds on our glorious future and on our Savior, Jesus Christ. Ironically, suffering can be a gift that deepens our faith and increases our love for the Savior.

Sadly, many Christians are focused on simply surviving rather than thriving in their suffering. Paradoxically, 1 Peter shows us that we can not only be *hopeful* people in the midst of suffering, but we can even *rejoice* in it. Why? Because trials are temporary (1:6), trials sanctify us (1:7 9), trials reward us (1:7), trials deepen our love for Jesus (1:8), trials focus us (1:13, 4:1), trials glorify God (2:12), trials follow Jesus’ example (2:21), trials increase our witness (2:15, 18, 3:1, 3:15), trials showcase God’s grace (2:19-20), trials are used for our good (3:18), trials end in glory (2:22), trials bless us (3:13), and they concentrate us on others (5:9) and the future (5:10).

Do you want to be empowered to face the future? Do you want a new and fresh perspective on suffering? The book of 1st Peter is for you!

“*After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you*.” 1 Peter 5:10

April 2021

2nd Edition

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**PO Box 7758**

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**For more information:**

**disciplemakersmultiplied@gmail.com**

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1 PETER

*Standing Firm in God’s Grace*

# Introduction

## The background and purpose of 1 Peter

### The book of 1 Peter was written to first century **Hebrew** Christians, many of whom had fled Jerusalem and Judea because of persecution from the Jewish religious community.

#### Having left from their homeland, these believers in Jesus Christ were living as strangers and aliens abroad. Peter encouraged these **temporary** residents to stand firm in the grace of God. 1 Peter 5:12

#### Additionally, he warned them of **more** suffering to come. 1 Peter 4:12-19

### When Peter wrote this letter, Christians were being **slandered** in various ways. Because of their participation in the Lord’s table, they were accused of cannibalism. They were called conspirators because they spoke of the coming kingdom of God. They were considered traitors by Jewish unbelievers who deemed Christianity a threat to Jewish traditions.

#### Christians have often been the **target** of wrath by godless governments, jealous religious activists, and scornful nonbelievers. To this day, Christians around the world continue to be demonized and portrayed as a menace to society and to progress. Acts 16:19-23

#### The world we live in is dominated by Satan, who **hates** Christ and His people, the church. We should never be surprised if we suffer at the hands of a world that is under Satan’s evil control. John 15:20-21

### These first century Hebrew Christians very much **needed** Peter’s instruction and encouragement, just as we do today.

#### While Paul is often called the apostle of faith and John the apostle of love, Peter could be called the apostle of **suffering** and **glory**.

#### Peter explained that suffering is part of our job description as believers and that we should not **run** from it.

##### Peter encouraged his readers to see their suffering as an opportunity to **walk** by faith. 1 Peter 1:7-9

##### Peter reminded his readers that their suffering would be greatly **rewarded**. 1 Peter 4:12‑14

##### Peter gave Christ as the ultimate **example** of how Christians should relate to those who abuse, accuse, and oppose the biblical worldview. 1 Peter 2:21-23

#### Peter often referenced our future glorification as Christians. He encouraged persecuted believers by speaking of a future **inheritance** reserved and waiting for them in heaven. He encouraged his readers to view their present suffering and trials in light of the glory yet to come. 1 Peter 1:3-6

### The purposeof 1 Peter can be seen in 1 Peter 5:12b: “*I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true* ***grace*** *of God. Stand firm in it*.”

#### 1 Peter is an expression *of the true grace of God* written on parchment and serving as an **encouragement** to suffering and needy believers.

#### Only God’s grace **empowers** us to *stand firm* in our calling and service in a hostile and perverse culture. 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

## Getting to know the author

### General information

#### The first verse of the first chapter of 1 Peter confirms that the apostle Peter **authored** this book. 1 Peter 1:1a

#### Peter was one of Jesus’ closest **friends** and part of the inner circle of disciples which also included James and John. Mark 5:37

#### Peter often acted as a **spokesperson** for the rest of the disciples. Matthew 15:15, 18:21, 19:27; Mark 11:21; Luke 8:45, 12:41; John 6:68, John 13:6-9, John 13:36

#### While Paul served the Gentiles, Peter was an apostle *to the circumcised*. In other words, Peter's **focus** of ministry was to the Jews. Galatians 2:7-9

#### We know Peter was **married** because Jesus graciously healed his mother-in-law. Mark 8:14-15, 1 Corinthians 9:5

#### Church tradition tells us Peter died a **martyr** for his faith. The story is told that Peter asked to be crucified upside-down, feeling unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as Christ. John 21:18-19, 2 Peter 1:14

### Peter’s names: In the New Testament Peter is called by **three** different names, each taken from a different language: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

#### Hebrew: Peter’s Hebrew name was **Simon**. This was his original name, the one his parents gave him at birth. Luke 22:31

#### Aramaic: Jesus gave Peter an Aramaic name, **Cephas** (KÉPHAS), which meant rock or stone (Jn. 1:42). Cephas was a prophetic label that described Peter’s key future role in the church. 1 Corinthians 1:12, 1 Corinthians 9:5

#### Greek: The name Peter (PETROS) is the Greek equivalent to the Aramaic name Cephas (KÉPHAS). This nickname was derived from the name **Christ** gave him (KÉPHAS). John 21:15

### Peter's **Failures**: Peter was confident and outgoing, but on the negative side, he was often outspoken and hasty. Here are some examples of Peter's most embarrassing moments:

#### Matthew 14:28-29 tells of Peter’s initial boldness to leave the **boat** and walk toward Jesus on the water. Peter struck out with great intentions, but then he promptly took his eyes off Jesus and began to sink.

#### In Matthew 16:21-23 Jesus publicly reprimanded Peter with the words “*get behind me* ***Satan***” when Peter insisted that Jesus should never go to the cross.

#### In Matthew 17:1-8 we learn of Peter’s misguided plan at the transfiguration of Christ. During that amazing event, outspoken Peter foolishly suggested they build **three** shelters, one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for Jesus. Even as Peter spoke, God the Father interrupted him, directing his focus to Jesus alone.

#### In Luke 22:54-62 Peter boasted that he would **never** forsake Christ, yet that very night he denied Christ three times. Matthew 26:33

#### In John 18:10-11 Peter tried to **protect** Jesus by zealously attacking a servant of the high priest and cutting off his ear. Jesus reprimanded Peter and then healed the man’s ear. Luke 22:50-51

#### Finally, in Galatians 2:11-14 the apostle Paul had to rebuke Peter in the presence of the entire **church** of Antioch because his insensitive and hypocritical actions toward Gentile believers contradicted the gospel of grace.

#### Most of us can **relate** to Peter, since we have all spoken or acted without thinking. Just like Peter, we confidently boast that we love the Lord, but then we deny Him by our words and actions.

#### Despite his failures, Peter became an exemplary **product** of God’s grace. God is the master of taking botched and broken people and using them to glorify His name.

### Peter's **Successes**: Peter also had some successes.

#### In Matthew 16:16-17 Jesus commended Peter for being one of the **first** to recognize that Jesus was the Messiah (the Christ).

#### After Peter’s epic failure of denying Christ, he was restored to fellowship in John 21:15-19. At that time Jesus commissioned Peter to **care** for His flock. Peter went on to play a key role in the development of the early church.

#### Peter **led** efforts to reach Jews, Samaritans, and even Gentiles with the gospel. Even though these three people groups were distinct in culture and perspectives, they became one unified organism called the body of Christ. Ephesians 2:11-19

##### On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), Peter **boldly** stood up and preached the gospel. As a result of his preaching, an astounding 3,000 Israelites came to believe in Christ.

##### Later in Acts 8 we observe Peter playing a **key** role when many Samaritans came to believe in Jesus Christ and were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

##### Then in Acts 10, as he ministered and preached at the home of Cornelius, Peter became instrumental in the conversion of the first **Gentiles**.

#### God used Peter to write **two** New Testament epistles which bear his name: 1st and 2nd Peter. To this day, these books endure as a blessing to the church of Jesus Christ.

#### In time Peter became an extremely **influential** person in the founding and development of the church of Jesus Christ. Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 2, 8, 10; 1 Peter; 2 Peter

#### Peter went from being a **fisherman** (Mat. 4:19, Luke 5:10), to being one of Jesus’ disciples (John 1:40-42), to being an apostle (1 Pet. 1:1), to being martyred for his faith.

#### Peter’s life shows that our God is a God of second **chances**. Just as God willingly used Peter despite his faults and failures, He can also use you.

## The audience

### 1 Peter is a **general** epistle. Rather than being addressed to a specific church, it is addressed to scattered Jewish Christians living as strangers and aliens in the various provinces of Asia Minor.

### As an apostle primarily to the Jews (Gal. 2:7-8), Peter was compelled to address specific issues relevant to scattered, persecuted Hebrew Christians living as **exiles** in the Gentile world.

#### In 1 Peter 2:12 Peter told his readers, “*Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles*.” Since Gentiles are non-Jews, this statement highlights the fact that this letter was addressed to **Jewish** Christians. Romans 11:11-14

#### In 1 Peter 4:3 Peter was clearly addressing a Jewish audience when he said, “*For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the* ***Gentiles***.”

### Peter assumed his readers to be Christian Jews who had a good **working** knowledge of the Old Testament. This is seen in the following passages.

#### In 1 Peter 1:10-12 Peter reminded his readers of the Old Testament prophets who **foretold** the sufferings of Christ.

#### In 1 Peter 1:24-25 Peter **quoted** from Isaiah 40:6-8, a passage that would have been familiar to all Jews, saved or unsaved.

#### In 1 Peter 2:6-8 Peter cited **three** Old Testament scriptures in rapid succession: Isaiah 26:16, Psalm 118:22, and Hosea 2:23.

#### In 1 Peter 2:21-25 Peter referred to **Isaiah** 53:1-8, applying these verses directly to Jesus Christ.

#### In 1 Peter 3:10-12 Peter quoted King **David** from the book of Psalms (Ps. 34:12-16).

#### In 1 Peter 3:19-20 Peter referred to the account of **Noah** found in Genesis 6-9.

#### In 1 Peter 4:18 Peter quoted Proverbs 11:31, words penned by King **Solomon**.

#### Finally, in 1 Peter 5:5 Peter again quoted from the book of **Proverbs** (Pro. 3:34).

## The date of writing

### Though it is impossible to pinpoint the exact date 1 Peter was written, it was likely written while Peter was in Babylon, sometime between AD **63** and AD 66.

### It is historically accepted that the Roman Emperor Nero committed suicide in June, AD 68 and that both Peter and Paul were martyred during his reign. If this is true, 1st and 2nd Peter would have been written **prior** to AD 68. John 21:18-19

### In 1 Peter 5:13 we learn that Peter's nephew, John **Mark**, was with Peter when Peter penned this epistle. Therefore, narrowing down the dates when John Mark was not with Peter, helps pinpoint the time of writing.

### From Colossians 4:10 we know John Mark was with Paul during his house arrest in Rome between AD 60 and AD 62 when he wrote the book of **Colossians**: “*Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas’s cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him)*.”

### We also surmise from Colossians 4:10 that upon John Mark’s departure from Rome, Paul expected him to travel eastward toward Colossae. If John Mark continued his travels **eastward** after leaving Colossae, he would likely have arrived in Babylon in AD 63.

### Since Babylon is the **place** from which Peter wrote this epistle, it is reasonable that 1 Peter was written between AD 63 and AD 64, certainly no later than AD 67.

### John Mark was likely with Paul again during AD 67, because in 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul asked Timothy to bring John Mark to him in Rome. If John Mark went with Timothy to go see Paul in Rome, he would have gone sometime **after** Timothy received this letter (2 Timothy was written in AD 67) and before Paul was martyred (2 Tim. 4:6).

## The place where 1 Peter was written

### 1 Peter 5:13 says, “*She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark*.” From this verse we learn that Peter wrote from **Babylon** to scattered Jewish Christians in Asia Minor. Babylon was in Mesopotamia, known today as Iraq.

#### At the time Peter wrote, Babylon was a large city on the Euphrates River. Babylon once prided itself in being the most beautiful and secure city on earth, but by New Testament times, it had **lost** its status and significance as a world power.

#### Even though Babylon's prominence in the world had declined by the time Peter wrote this letter, the city still housed hundreds of thousands of displaced Jews. Josephus, a first century Jewish historian, wrote that there were **millions** of Jews living outside of Israel during this time period, with the majority living in Babylon.

### Why would Peter have written from Babylon?

#### As the **apostle** to the Jews (Gal. 2:9), Peter’s travels would have taken him to Babylon to minister to fledgling Jewish congregations in that region. While there, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter was compelled to write his first epistle.

#### Peter’s firsthand understanding of the **needs** of Jewish converts in Babylon prepared him for writing to the scattered Jewish converts of Asia Minor.

### To whom does the word "***she***" refer in the phrase “*She who is in Babylon*”?

#### The pronoun “*she*” refers to the **church**. Not only is the Greek word for church (EKKLESIA) feminine, in the New Testament the church is portrayed as the bride of Christ, which requires a female pronoun as well. Therefore, “*She who is in Babylon*” refers to the church in Babylon. 2 John 1:1, 4

#### The church in Babylon may have been started by Jewish *residents of Mesopotamia* who were visiting Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached his first sermon (Acts 2:5-9). If that is the case, they would have taken the **gospel** back to Babylon, resulting in the formation of churches in that area.

## Is Babylon code for Rome?

### Was 1 Peter written in Babylon or was it actually written in Rome? Some teach that Peter used Babylon as a derogatory **code** word to speak indirectly about the city of Rome. How did this view come about?

#### This idea came chiefly from the 16th century reformer, Martin Luther, but was reinforced by other reformers as well. They believed when the apostle John mentioned Babylon in Revelation chapters 17 and 18, he was not referring to the actual city of Babylon, but to the **Catholic** church situated in Rome.

#### These reformers applied the **negative** description of Babylon found in Revelation to the Roman Catholic church. Eventually they applied other references to Babylon in the New Testament to the Roman Catholic church as well, including this verse in 1 Peter. This view is still held by some Protestants today.

### This curriculum does not support the view that Babylon **equals** Rome.

#### As a rule, we interpret locations described in the Bible as literal places unless the context clearly indicates an optional meaning. So, if the writer sends greetings from the church in Babylon, our first assumption is that the greetings are coming from the **actual** region of Babylon.

#### Since the geographical locations mentioned in 1 Peter 1:1 (*Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*) are generally viewed as **literal** places, it would be inconsistent to interpret the reference to Babylon any differently.

#### There is no discernable or necessary reason to assume Babylon is an alias for Rome in 1 Peter. Rome is mentioned **nine** times in the New Testament and each time it is spoken of as a tangible city, not a figurative one.

#### Peter would have had no reason to refer to Rome as Babylon, especially since doing so could have been viewed as an **insult** to the Roman Empire. This would not be consistent with the attitude toward government that Peter encouraged in this epistle.

#### In 1 Peter 2:13-14 Peter told his readers to **submit** “*to governors as sent by* [God] *for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right*.”

## Seven key terms in 1 Peter

### **Suffering** is found 16 times (1 Peter 1:11; 2:19, 20, 21, 23; 3:14, 3:17; 4:1, 13, 15, 16, 19; 5:1, 9, 10).

### **Glory** is used ten times (1 Peter 1:7, 8, 21, 24; 4:11, 13, 14; 5:1, 4).

### **Grace** is also used ten times (1 Peter 1:2, 10, 13; 2:19, 20; 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12).

### **Holy Spirit** is mentioned ten times as well (1 Peter 1:2, 11, 12; 2:5; 3:4, 8; 3:18, 19; 4:6, 14).

### **Holy** is used eight times (1 Peter 1:12, 15, 16; 2:5, 9; 3:5).

### **Salvation** is used six times (1 Peter 1:5, 9, 10; 2:2; 3:21; 4:18).

### **Precious** is mentioned six times as well (1 Peter 1:7, 19; 2:4, 6, 7; 3:4).

## The theme verse of 1 Peter

### The theme verse of 1 Peter is 1 Peter 5:10: *After you have* ***suffered*** *for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

### Peter wrote the book of 1 Peter to **encourage** persecuted believers to follow the example of Christ in His suffering. He assured these believers that patient endurance through trials would lead to a rich reward reserved for them in heaven.

# 1 Peter 1:1-12 – Our Living Hope

## 1 Peter 1:1-2 – An opening address

### 1 Peter 1:1a – *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ…* As already noted, **Peter** wrote two letters in the New Testament, both of which bear his name.

#### Peter opened this letter with his **Greek** name PETRAS. He did not use his Hebrew name, Simon, or his alternate Aramaic name, Cephas.

#### Peter was an apostle. The word apostle means “**sent one**” or “one sent on a mission.” 2 Peter 1:1

##### To **qualify** as an apostle of Christ, one had to have been an eyewitness of the resurrected Christ (Luke 24:24, Acts 1:21-22, 1 Cor. 9:1) and have been personally commissioned by Him (Matt. 10:1-4, 16:18-19; Gal. 1:1; Rev. 21:14).

##### Peter did not **defend** his apostleship to his readers. In fact, unlike the apostle Paul, scripture shows no record of Peter ever verifying his apostleship. It was simply never questioned. Galatians 2:9

### 1 Peter 1:1b – Peter wrote …*to those who reside as* ***aliens***…

#### The word *alien* (PAREPIDĒMOS) describes the **involuntary** dispersion of a person from his or her native homeland. The KJV translates this word *pilgrim,* which captures the idea very well. 1 Peter 2:11

#### The **Bible** speaks of several Old Testament saints who lived their lives as aliens or exiles. Abraham was a stranger in the land of Canaan, Joseph in the courts of Pharaoh, Moses in the land of Egypt, and Daniel and his three friends in Babylon. Daniel 1, Philippians 3:20-21, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 11:37-38

#### New Testament believers are encouraged to purposefully live as **strangers** in this world. 2 Corinthians 4:4

### 1 Peter 1:1c – Peter wrote *to those*…*scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia…*These were Roman provinces (not **cities**) located in Asia Minor. This area is where modern day Turkey is now located.

#### The word ***scattered*** is DIASPORA in Greek. The recipients of this letter were Jewish Christian refugees scattered throughout this region.

##### The term DIASPORA is used **three** times in the New Testament and each time it refers to Israelites exiled from their homeland. John 7:35, James 1:1, 1 Peter 1:1

##### In the Septuagint (the earliest Greek translation of the Old Testament), the word DIASPORA was used eight times and **always** referred to exiled Israelites. Deuteronomy 28:25, 30:4; Nehemiah 1:9; Psalm 147:2; Isaiah 49:6; Jeremiah 15:7, 34:17; Daniel 12:2

#### The **recipients** of Peter’s letter could have been any, or all, of the following:

##### They could have been Jewish Christians who **fled** Jerusalem and Judea because of severe persecution that began around AD 34. Acts 7-8

##### They could have been Jewish Christians who fled **Rome** around AD 49 when Emperor Claudius ordered all noncitizen Jews (Christian and non-Christian) to leave the city. Acts 18:2

##### They could have also included descendants of Old Testament Israelites who were scattered throughout Asia Minor during the **Assyrian** conquest (722 BC). Acts 2:9 mentions Jews from Pontus, Cappadocia, and Asia visiting Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when Peter preached the gospel, and many believed.

##### It is important to note that Peter’s letter was addressed exclusively to Christian Jews. It was not addressed to **unsaved** Jewish people still living as exiles in Asia Minor.

#### Interestingly, in Acts 16:6-8 the Holy Spirit prohibited the apostle **Paul** from entering Asia and Bithynia. It may be that God selected these places primarily for Peter’s ministry rather than Paul’s.

#### According to history, Peter’s ministry to these believers proved successful, as many of them became committed followers of Christ, standing firm through severe **waves** of persecution during the first few centuries of the Church Age.

### 1 Peter 1:1d *–* Peter wrote to those ...*who are* ***chosen****.*

#### To be chosen means to be designated by God as His **special** object of grace and mercy. Peter wrote specifically to Christians, God’s household. Christians are designated by God as His special object of grace and mercy.

#### Simply put, all who **believe** in Christ are His chosen ones. We see that all who respond positively to God’s call of salvation are placed into Christ and receive the designation of “chosen” or “elect.”

##### Christians are not chosen because of personal **worth** or merit. Titus 3:5-6

##### Christians are not chosen because they are intrinsically **righteous**. Romans 3:10

##### Christians are chosen because spiritually they are located “**in Christ**,” God’s ultimate chosen one. Ephesians 1:4, 1 Peter 2:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21

##### Christians are chosen because God devised a plan to save and accept those who **trusted** in Him. Since Peter's audience had trusted in Christ, they were chosen because they were included in God’s plan.

#### What is the significance of Peter beginning his letter by pointing out that his readers were chosen?

##### Peter wrote to believers who were being persecuted because of their **faith** in Christ. They were strangers in a foreign land facing uncertain days. These scattered believers needed encouragement.

##### In Christ they were a chosen people. For these displaced Jewish believers to hear that they were not overlooked or forgotten would have greatly bolstered their faith. It would have uplifted their spirits during days of persecution and suffering. Christian, **you** too are a chosen one. Live in that reality!

### 1 Peter 1:2a – …*who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father…* Simply put, foreknowledge means to know the **future**. God knows the future as accurately and as clearly as He knows the past and present.

#### Jesus Christ is God’s **chosen** one who was prophesied in the Old Testament. Isaiah 42:1 says “*Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations*.” Matthew 12:18, Luke 9:35, John 17:24, Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 1:20, 2:6

#### Ephesians 1:4 says God the Father “*chose us* ***in Him*** *before the foundation of the world*.” Based on His foreknowledge of our future association with Christ, God identified us with Christ before time began. Psalm 139:4, Acts 1:24, Romans 8:29

#### You are identified as God’s chosen one because through salvation you are now “in Christ.” Every believer can correctly say, “**I am chosen**.” If you are a believer, this is true of you regardless of how you feel or what you think. No unbeliever can make this claim; it is exclusively for believers.

#### It is unfortunate that the doctrine of election (being chosen) has become the cause of so many theological and philosophical debates. This was not Peter’s intent when he referred to believers as *chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*. He wanted persecuted and hurting believers to know they were **accepted** in Christ.

### 1 Peter 1:2b – *Who are chosen*… *by the sanctifying work of the Spirit…* The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity. When you became a believer, it was the Holy Spirit who actively set you **apart** in Christ as God the Father’s chosen one.

#### The word ***work*** is not in the Greek text. It was added by translators. This verse should read “by the sanctifying of the Spirit.” We are chosen by means of the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying.

#### The Holy Spirit sanctified you when He **placed** you into Christ the instant you believed. At that moment He set you apart as God’s child (Rom. 6:3, 1 Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:27). But for what purpose?

### 1 Peter 1:2c – …*to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood.* Here we see two purposes related to God choosing us in Christ. Peter mentioned these to encourage his beleaguered readers to not be paralyzed by **fear**, but to move forward in active service.

#### One purpose God had in choosing us was …*to* ***obey*** *Jesus Christ*. This communicates that God saved us for action. He did not save us to passively and aimlessly meander about in life, but rather to obediently honor and live for Jesus Christ. Romans 1:5, 16:26b; Ephesians 2:10

#### Another purpose God had in choosing us was to… *be sprinkled with His* ***blood****.* This imagery would have been readily understood by Jewish believers in the first century who were well versed in the Old Testament.

##### In the Old Testament, when an Israelite was sprinkled with blood, it meant he was set apart as a chosen vessel for God’s **service**. Exodus 24:3-8; Hebrews 9:19-20, 10:29

##### As outsiders in a foreign Gentile culture, it would have made these believers **feel** significant to hear they were God’s chosen ones, set apart for glorious purposes.

### 1 Peter 1:2d – “*May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure*.” Peter wished rich blessings on these suffering saints. God’s grace and peace were **exactly** what these oppressed and fearful believers needed.

#### *May* ***grace****… be yours in the fullest measure*… Grace is God’s riches at Christ’s expense. It is God’s unlimited and undeserved kindness toward us. God’s grace is always available in the fullest measure, but it is experienced more deeply during times of persecution and trials.

#### *May…* ***peace*** *be yours in the fullest measure…* Peter desired for God’s peace to overwhelmingly engulf his readers. Peace from God is always available to every believer, regardless of circumstances.

## 1 Peter 1:3-5 – A bright future

### 1 Peter 1:3a – ***Blessed*** *be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...* Peter now transitioned from his warm greeting to a doxology of tribute to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Peter knew that the best vantage point for understanding suffering is from the heights of the **gospel**. God the Father is the author of our great salvation.

#### When we understand that our salvation is guaranteed by the highest authority of all, God the Father, we can **rest** peacefully during difficulties and trials, rejoicing in the certainty of a joy-filled future.

### 1 Peter 1:3b *–* It is God the Father*…who according to His great mercy has caused us to be* ***born*** *again*.

#### What does it mean here *to be born again*?

##### When we were physically birthed into this world, we were born into Adam’s condemned lineage. This was our **first** birth. In this condition, we were regrettably trapped in Satan’s family, dead in sins and destined for eternal punishment. Romans 5:12-14, Ephesians 2:1-3, Colossians 2:13

##### To become God’s offspring, we must be born again, this time through a spiritual birth, not a physical one. This miraculous birth is not something we engineer for ourselves. God the Holy Spirit does all the **labor** in this supernatural delivery. John 3:3-6, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 1:13

##### As with our physical birth, our new spiritual birth happens **only** once, at a specific point in time. It is a one-way trip that can never be undone or reversed.

##### Just as a person cannot be "**unborn**" physically and placed back into their mother's womb, a Christian cannot become unborn spiritually. John 5:24, Romans 11:6, 1 Peter 1:23

#### By giving us a place of belonging in His family, God poured out *His great mercy* on our undeserving souls. God’s mercy means we do not **receive** the judgment we rightly deserve. Titus 3:5

##### God could have left us to **reap** the devastating consequences of sin, but instead He gifted us with a new birth into His family. We are now God’s very own children. As those who now belong to His family, He blessed us with indescribable privileges.

##### In 1 John 3:1 the apostle John said, “*See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be* ***called*** *children of God; and such we are*.”

### 1 Peter 1:3d – God the Father…*has caused us to be born again to a* ***living*** *hope…*

#### Divine hope is different than human hope. Human hope is wishful thinking and weak speculation. Divine hope is confident expectation and living certainty. Our hope is a **person**, not a feeling. He is alive, not dead. Titus 3:7, 1 John 5:13

#### As born-again children of God, life only gets **better** from here. We can travel the dark and dangerous alleys of life with confident anticipation of a safe and joyful arrival at our home in heaven someday.

#### Our coming resurrection and future with God are genuine and guaranteed. We can rest in this assurance regardless of what comes our way. Peter’s troubled audience would have rejoiced to hear these refreshing **truths**. Romans 5:5, Hebrews 6:18-19

### 1 Peter 1:3e – It is *…through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead* that we receive a living hope. Knowledge of our coming resurrection gives us a **living** hope.

#### Peter taught that the resurrection of Jesus Christ made the new birth possible. Without the resurrection, **no one** could be born again or experience the living hope that comes with it. John 11:25, Romans 6:5, 1 Corinthians 15:52

#### Some people do not see the resurrection as an essential part of the **gospel** that must be believed for salvation to occur. They argue that believing in the death of Christ is often the only requirement given in scripture for obtaining eternal like, but this line of reasoning is incomplete.

##### It's true that belief in Christ's death is the requirement most often given in scripture for salvation, but Christ's resurrection is **always** implied, even when it is not expressly mentioned in a specific verse.

###### Whenever we say, “Believe that Christ died for your sins,” we are implying that Christ is presently alive. We are not asking people to place their faith in a **dead** person. As we see in this verse, we have a living hope, not a dead one. Because Christ is now alive, He can deliver on His promise to save us.

###### If He did not resurrect, then our faith is meaningless, and **we** are without hope. 1 Corinthians 15:11-19

##### The apostles believed it was necessary to include the resurrection when they preached the gospel to the **lost**. Peter focused on the resurrection in his gospel preaching throughout the book of Acts. Acts 4:2, 17:18, 26:23

##### The gospel message we preach to the lost was **given** by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4: “*For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that* ***He was raised on the third day*** *according to the Scriptures*.” 1 Corinthians 15:1-2

### 1 Peter 1:4 – As members of the family of God we are appointed …*to* ***obtain*** *an inheritance*. For Peter’s readers who had suffered so greatly for Christ’s sake, the following four guarantees provided much needed consolation.

#### 1 Peter 1:4a – According to Peter, we were born again …*to obtain an inheritance which is* ***imperishable***. Imperishable means enduring forever. Our inheritance will last eternally; it will not deteriorate or lose value with the passing of time.

#### 1 Peter 1:4b – Also, we were born again …*to obtain an inheritance which is …****undefiled***. Our future inheritance is guaranteed to be free of defects or damage. Nothing profane or unholy will ever contaminate or ruin it. Psalm 11:5, 34:16, 92:15, 101:7; Revelation 22:15

#### 1 Peter 1:4c – Likewise, we were born again …*to obtain an inheritance which …****will not fade away***. This means our inheritance will not disappear or diminish. It does not age, change, or vanish with the passing of time. Ephesians 1:11

#### 1 Peter 1:4d – Finally, we see we were born again …*to obtain an inheritance which is …****reserved in heaven*** *for* [us]. In a world of uncertainty, Peter stated unequivocally that our inheritance is not only situated in heaven, but it is specifically reserved for us. Our inheritance already has our name on it.

##### The instant we trusted in Christ, we were born into God's **family** and blessed to become co-inheritors with Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:28

##### Since Christ is the inheritor of everything, through our association with Him we gain an inheritance together with Him. Hebrews 1:2 says, “*in these last days* [God] *has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed* ***heir*** *of all things, through whom also He made the world*.”

### 1 Peter 1:5 – Before anyone could question who receives this inheritance, Peter stated that it is for "…*you who are protected by the* ***power*** *of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*.” As believers, God is protecting us. He is committed to every detail of our salvation from beginning to end.

#### 1 Peter 1:5a – …*you who are protected by the power of God…* We do not maintain our own salvation; instead, by His awesome and infinite power, **God** keeps us. Because we are His children, He is constantly vigilant. He will indeed take care of us and provide us with our inheritance. Philippians 1:6, 1 Timothy 1:12

#### 1 Peter 1:5b – …*you who are protected by the power of God through faith*… Since the very first day when we were saved by grace through **faith**, God has kept right on protecting us. His unlimited power will continue protecting us until we are safe and sound in heaven someday.

#### 1 Peter 1:5c – *…you who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be* ***revealed*** *in the last time*. This is a clear statement about our future glorification. Glorification is the last phase of salvation when a Christian is saved from the presence of sin.

##### Our glorification will transpire specifically when Jesus Christ comes to snatch His bride away and take her to **heaven**. The bride of Christ is the church, those who have believed in Jesus Christ during this present age called the Church Age. John 10:28, 11:26; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 5:13

##### In 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 Paul described this moment saying, “*Behold, I am* ***telling*** *you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, …for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality*.”

## 1 Peter 1:6-9 – Our present suffering

### 1 Peter 1:6 – Peter had already explained that believers in Jesus Christ are born again, co-heirs with Christ, and protected by God **until** they reach heaven. We can rejoice through life’s storms knowing that all trials are short-lived. Against the backdrop of our guaranteed future in heaven, Peter now addressed how we are to face suffering. 2 Corinthians 4:16-20

#### 1 Peter 1:6a – Our trials are to be **desired**: *In this you greatly rejoice*… Blessings like those mentioned in the previous verses should indeed cause us to boldly face our present trials with great joy. Romans 5:3-5, 8:18, 35-40, 12:12; 1 Peter 5:10

#### 1 Peter 1:6b – Our trials are **dated**: *…even though now…* We are reminded to expect trials in our present life. Peter knew his readers were currently experiencing persecution and hardships. In 2 Timothy 3:12 the apostle Paul told Timothy “*Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*.” James 1:2-4

#### 1 Peter 1:6c – Our trials are **defined**: *…for a little while*… (1 Pet. 5:10) For the Christian, trials have an expiration date. From our perspective, our trials seem endless, yet in light of eternity, they are fleeting. In eternity our trials will seem like a faint whisper spoken in some forgotten place long ago. Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Revelation 21:4

#### 1 Peter 1:6d – Our trials are **decreed**: *…if necessary*… Sometimes trials are necessary for a greater purpose. As Christians, we need to understand suffering is an unavoidable part of our lives. In Psalm 119:71 the psalmist wrote, “*It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes*.” John 15:19, 1 Peter 4:1

#### 1 Peter 1:6e – Our trials are **disturbing**: *…if necessary, you have been distressed...* Peter did not gloss over trials or promise a rose garden.He acknowledged that trials are unpleasant and difficult. While some say spiritual Christians will not face trials, Peter knew better. Not only had Peter suffered, but his readers had as well. John 15:20-21

#### 1 Peter 1:6f – Our trials are **diverse**: *…distressed by various trials...* Being refugees, Peter’s readers faced a variety of distressing hardships.

### 1 Peter 1:7a – Our trials have a **purpose**: *…so that the proof of your faith*… Trials reveal the depth of our faith.

#### Without God, trials are of **limited** value, but in God’s hands trials become valuable tools for conforming us to the image of Christ. Romans 8:28 assures us that God “*causes all things to work together for good*” for His beloved children.

#### When it comes to placing our **full** confidence in God, we all struggle. Our faith is weakened by human viewpoint, self-dependence, and faulty motivation. God uses trials to purge these impurities from our lives and make our faith more pleasing to Him.

#### Hebrews 11:6 says, “***faith*** *pleases God*,” and thankfully trials give us the blessed opportunity to develop our faith. Contrary to what we might think, instead of causing us to despair, God uses trials to supernaturally nurture and deepen our faith. To God the proven genuineness of our faith is much more precious than gold. Hebrews 11

### 1 Peter 1:7b – Our trials **purify** our faith: … *so that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold which is perishable even though tested by fire*… The focus here is on the quality of our faith. Faith purified through trials is considered by God to be far more precious than gold that perishes. James 1:2-4

#### It is tempting for Christians to view material **wealth** as a sign of God’s approval and persecution and trials as a sign of God’s disapproval. Peter sought to correct this misunderstanding among his readers who had likely suffered the loss of material goods and were being persecuted in a foreign land. 1 Peter 4:12

#### God views wealth differently than we do. The suffering church of Smyrna was materialistically poor, but God called them **rich** (Rev. 2:9). On the contrary, the prosperous church of Laodicea was materialistically rich, yet God called them wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked (Rev. 3:17).

#### Persecution and suffering are the **flames** that God uses to refine our faith.

##### Suffering **purifies** us**.** Isaiah 48:10 says, *“Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”* When precious metal, like gold or silver, is put through a hot fire, impurities are removed. When our faith is subjected to fiery trials, impurities are burned up resulting in a richer faith in God.

##### Suffering **fortifies** us. Romans 5:3-4 says, “*And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope*…”

##### Suffering is an **honor**. Philippians 1:29 says, “*For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake*.” God wants to conform us to the *image of His Son* (Rom. 8:28) and suffering is an essential part of that plan (Luke 24:25-26, Acts 5:41). What an honor!

##### Suffering results in greater **intimacy** with Christ. Philippians 3:10 says, “*that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death*.”

##### Suffering is **designed** for our good. 1 Thessalonians 3:3 says, “*so that no one would be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this*.” Romans 8:28, 1 Peter 4:19

##### Suffering has eternal **implications**. 2 Timothy 2:9-10 says, “…*for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason, I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory*.

##### Suffering **develops** us. God planned for suffering to strengthen our faith. James 1:2-4 says, “*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance and let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing*.”

### 1 Peter 1:7c – *So that the proof of your faith…may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ*… Without any doubt, faith that is **matured** through trials will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Romans 8:17-18; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 2:12; 1 Peter 4:13

### 1 Peter 1:8a – …*and though you have not seen Him, you love Him...* By faith we **love** our soon-to-appear Lord. Although Jesus ascended and we do not see His physical body, by faith we love Him all the same. Galatians 2:20, 1 John 4:19

### *1 Peter 1:8b –* …*and though you do not see Him now but believe in Him…* Even though we do not presently see Christ in bodily form, by faith we are learning to **rely** on Him more fully. John 20:29; 2 Corinthians 4:18, 5:7; Hebrews 11:1, 6

### *1 Peter 1:8c –* …*you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory..*. Our faith in Christ gives us a joyful heart through every distress and difficulty of life. Having our future guaranteed by the Savior emboldens us to rejoice even when enduring **fierce** trials. 2 Corinthians 2:8

#### Romans 15:13 says, “*Now may the God of* ***hope*** *fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit*.” Romans 5:2

#### It is interesting how having a joyful attitude amid trials is connected to our love for the Lord. **Worship** of God and suffering actually go hand in hand. Job 1:20-21 gives a beautiful example of worship in the midst of tragedy.

#### Peter was definitely not immune to suffering. He was arrested, jailed, threatened, and eventually martyred for his strong **stand** for Christ. These words, coming from Peter's own experience, would have encouraged his readers just as much as they encourage us today. Habakkuk 3:17-18

### 1 Peter 1:9a – …*obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls*. The salvation of our **souls** mentioned here is the present tense salvation that occurs over the course of our lifetime. This is sanctification. It is the process whereby the believer is being saved from the power of sin on a day-to-day basis.

#### This is not speaking of the eternal salvation of our spirits that occurs at the **moment** we believe in Christ and are justified. This verse is speaking of the purification of our souls that continues throughout our lifetime.

#### Your spirit is saved from sin’s penalty in an **instant** when you are justified by faith in Christ, but your soul is saved from sin’s power through the process of time and that is the part of salvation called sanctification.

#### According to 2 Peter 2:7-10, Lot’s righteous **soul** suffered greatly while he lived among the sinful people of Sodom.

##### Although Lot was **saved** from the penalty of sin and destined for heaven, he was not allowing the Lord to save him from the power of sin in his daily life.

##### God does not want your soul to languish like Lot’s soul did. He wants you to be increasingly **sanctified** throughout your lifetime.

#### In James 1:21 James instructed believers to put “*aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness* [and] *in humility receive the word implanted,* ***which is able to save your souls***.” The saving of souls mentioned here refers to the lifelong **process** of being transformed into the image of Christ.

#### As we walk by faith through trials, trusting the One we do not see, the power of sin in our lives is diminished and we are increasingly conformed to **image** of Christ. Romans 6:22 says, “*But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life*.

## 1 Peter 1:10-12 – Our amazing salvation

### 1 Peter 1:10a – *As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you…* This remarkable three-part salvation (past, present and future) described by Peter in verses 1-10, was **prophesied** long ago in the Old Testament. 2 Peter 1:19-21, Hebrews 1:1-2

#### Our salvation was not plan B for God. Grace was not a **backup** plan in case all else failed. Our salvation by grace was arranged in eternity past, carefully foretold through Old Testament prophets, and executed by God with great precision.

#### Prophets like Moses, Isaiah, Zechariah, and Daniel all spoke and wrote about the coming Messiah and the salvation He would bring. They provided many **details** about His sufferings and future glory. Genesis 3:15, 49:10; Psalm 16, 22; Isaiah 53:5-8, 61:1-2; Daniel 7:13‑14; Zechariah 12:10

#### Peter stated that long before **Messiah** ever set foot on earth, the prophets had already predicted the glorious entrance of the grace of God. Genesis 3:15, 15:6; John 1:14,17, 1 Peter 1:20

### 1 Peter 1:10b – Now concerning God’s amazing grace, the Old Testament prophets *…made careful searches and inquiries*. The prophets were limited in grasping the full scope of what they were saying and writing, but that did not **stop** them from desiring to understand. Daniel 9:1-2, Matthew 13:17, Luke 10:24

#### As the prophets investigated and researched their own prophecies, they struggled to understand how grace was going to be expressed in our current age. Just as Old Testament saints struggled to understand prophecies back then, we are **puzzled** today by prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled.

#### From our vantage point, some dots concerning the future are hard to **connect**. While we firmly believe the written word of God, we are also compelled to make careful searches and inquiries concerning how things will ultimately transpire. What was the purpose of the prophets' careful research?

### 1 Peter 1:11a –They were …*seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating.* In other words, their inquiries were spurred on by their desire to know the **identity** of the coming Messiah and the circumstances surrounding His introduction to the world. Acts 13:27, 2 Peter 1:21

### 1 Peter 1:11b *–* They marveled **…***as He [Spirit of Christ] predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow*. The Old Testament prophets struggled to **merge** two seemingly opposing truths: the suffering and the glory of the coming Messiah.

#### The **first** Bible prophecy concerning the Messiah, found in Genesis 3:15, includes both the sufferings and glorious victory of the Messiah. Some Old Testament prophecies emphasize the Messiah’s sufferings while others focus on His coming reign and glory.

#### With historical facts in our rear-view mirror, it is easy to clearly **see** both the suffering and glory of Christ, yet it was difficult for Old Testament prophets to reconcile these two apparent contradictions.

#### Prophecies about the First Advent of Christ dealt with His suffering as a servant while prophecies concerning His Second Advent deal with His glorious reign as **king**. Some Old Testament promises about the Messiah were clear, while others are more obscure.

##### Speaking of the suffering of Messiah, Isaiah 53:5 says, *"But He was* ***pierced*** *through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed*.” Psalm 22:1-21, Isaiah 9:7

##### After a brief mention of Messiah’s birth, Isaiah 9:6 focuses more on the glory of His Second Coming. “*For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us and the****government*** *will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace*.”

### 1 Peter 1:12a – …*it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves*. God **used** the prophets to serve future generations like us. Many of their words were largely for our benefit today. For example, they prophesied about God’s grace in the future salvation of the Gentiles, something they could not easily grasp. Daniel 12:9, Luke 24:25, John 5:29

### 1 Peter 1:12b *– …they were not serving themselves, but you*… Present day believers benefit from the ministry of these ancient prophets concerning the details of our salvation. The predictions made thousands of years ago are amazingly accurate and fully trustworthy. Recognizing the precision of their predictions intensifies our **faith** in God’s word.

### 1 Peter 1:12c – *…in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you…* Peter reminded his audience that they had first learned the prophecies concerning the Messiah from those who had preached the gospel to them. **Peter** was one of those faithful messengers.

#### On the **Day** of Pentecost, Peter preached the gospel to Jews from many parts of the world, including Asia Minor. Acts 2:9-11

#### **Some** of the Jewish Christians Peter was writing to in Asia Minor may have migrated from Jerusalem and Judea in the early days of the church due to persecutions (Acts 8:1-4). Peter may have been instrumental in the salvation of some of these people as well.

### 1 Peter 1:12e – …*who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.* The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Godhead. He was **sent** by God from heaven to live inside and empower all believers during the Church Age. Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit would be given. John 14:16, 26, 15:26; Acts 1:4-5, 2:33

#### Just as the Holy Spirit moved, guided, and empowered first century believers to go and preach the gospel and establish churches everywhere, we continue to **depend** on the Holy Spirit to do the same today.

#### God graciously **showers** all believers today with help and power from the Holy Spirit, yet that doesn't mean all believers utilize this great gift given to us by God. Any Christian who wishes to be effective in sharing the gospel must learn to rely on the Holy Spirit. How do we rely on the Holy Spirit? John 7:38-39; Acts 1:8, 13:4

##### Just as a young **child** relies on their parents to teach them and help them, we are to rely on the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-17 calls the Holy Spirit our helper.

##### In John 16:8 Jesus said, “*But I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I am leaving; for if I do not leave, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you*.” Since the Holy Spirit lives inside us, He is continually with us. We are never left **alone** without help.

### 1 Peter 1:12f – …*things into which angels long to look*. Not only were the Old Testament prophets mystified as they diligently searched to understand their own prophecies, but angels also are **curious** about God’s grace revealed in the gospel.

#### Amazingly, while **angels** do not readily grasp these truths, they have been clearly communicated to Church Age believers by those who brought us the gospel. 1 Corinthians 2:7-8, Ephesians 3:8-10, Colossians 1:25-27, 1 Timothy 3:16

#### Just as we long to understand how angels **relate** to God, angels desire to understand our grace-based relationship with God. Luke 15:10

##### According to Job 38:6-7 angels **observed** the expression of God’s creative power during the six days of creation. The obedient angels would have been present when Lucifer and his followers were expelled from God’s presence. Isaiah 14:12, Luke 10:18

##### Revelation 4:8 tells of angelic creatures who **shout**, “*Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God almighty*.” Angels live with God in heaven. They are always with Him and know His pure and flawless character. Isaiah 6:2-3

##### Yet with all of this, angels do not experientially and personally **understand** the grace of God through salvation in the same way Church Age believers do. Redemption and forgiveness are not offered to them through the death and resurrection of Christ.

# 1 Peter 1:13-25 – Living in Light of Future Hope

## 1 Peter 1:13 – Our new mindset

### 1 Peter 1:13a – *Therefore…* After educating his readers about their great salvation, Peter **urged** them to live set-apart lives in this world. In this section we move from doctrine (belief) to duty (action).

### 1 Peter 1:13b – …*prepare your minds for action*… *Prepare* ANAZŌNNYMI is a word that literally meant to fasten up your **toga**. A toga was a lose fitting piece of clothing worn by the Romans. In war, Roman soldiers lifted their togas and fastened them under their belt so they wouldn't get entangled and tripped up by them as they ran or fought. Hebrews 12:1-2

#### Peter figuratively applied this **military** terminology to his readers, since it was something they could understand. Armed with a clear understanding of their salvation, Peter encouraged these persecuted believers to assume their duties as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:58, Galatians 6:9

#### Hebrews 12:1-2 says, “*let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the* ***sin*** *which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*.”

### 1 Peter 1:13c – …*keep sober in spirit*. As God’s soldiers they needed to avoid the **sleepy**, numb mentality so many Christians assume. We are in a life and death conflict; there is no time for pointless distractions and apathetic attitudes. Luke 21:34-36, 2 Corinthians 7:1, Ephesians 5:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Peter 3:14, Hebrews 12:1

### 1 Peter 1:13d – …*fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you…* This is Peter’s **first** imperative in the book. Peter’s audience may have been losing an eternal perspective and giving up hope. With prepared minds and a sober spirit, they were ready to fix their hope completely on their future glorification in heaven. 2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Peter 3:14

#### In order not to lose focus and give up **when** we suffer, it is of highest importance that we live with a view toward our coming glorification. We win in the end and Christ will reign supreme.

#### As Christians, our hope must be **set** on the promised grace that will come to us on the great day when Christ is revealed in all His glory. Forever and ever, we will bask in unparalleled blessings and breathtaking glory. Romans 8:18-24, 1 John 3:1-2

### 1 Peter 1:13e – *…to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ…* Our hope must be on Christ and God’s promises, not on Satan’s **failing** world system. 2 Corinthians 4:18

#### Our confidence should not be in economic security or political solutions. Instead of hoping in humanity’s **failed** ideas, our focus should be on Christ and the future worldwide revelation of His amazing grace. Romans 11:12, 15; Colossians 3:3

#### For the Church Age believer, the full revealing of Jesus Christ will come at the Rapture, a time in the future when all believers will be **taken up** to heaven. Grace will be brought to us in the Rapture as our bodies are glorified and we are carried away into the bliss of heaven. Philippians 3:20, 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18, Titus 2:13

#### Later, at Christ’s Second Coming, the whole world will **see** Him. Grace will be poured out on believers in both events, but here in this passage, Peter referred to the glory to be revealed to us Church Age believers when Christ returns at the Rapture, not when He comes to reign. Romans 8:18‑25, Titus 2:11-14

#### Peter used **both** their past deliverance in justification and their future grace in glorification to inspire readers to walk boldly in their present sanctification. To spur his readers onward, Peter placed the success of their present sanctification on a proper view of both the justification (past) and glorification (future) tenses of salvation.

## 1 Peter 1:14-16 – A life of holiness

### 1 Peter 1:14a – *As obedient children*… Since we do not **belong** to the world system, Peter challenged his readers to live as God’s children here and now. We were once slaves to sin, but now we are slaves to righteousness. Our lives should reflect this newness of life. Matthew 5:48, Romans 6:16, Ephesians 5:1, Philippians 2:15

### 1 Peter 1:14b – Peter introduced a **second** command to his readers: “*As obedient children do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance*.” As Christians, our heavenly Father does not want us to re-experience the ignorant lifestyles we endured when we followed the sinful patterns of the world. That would be foolish and hurtful. Ephesians 4:17-24

#### Previous to their salvation, Peter’s audience was **unaware** of the deadly consequences of sin. Galatians 6:7 states, “*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap*.” Many Christians think we can toy with certain sins and somehow avoid the consequences. Do not be deceived in this way. We cannot! Romans 6:23

#### As children of God, we are all called to be **transformed** into Christ’s likeness. Our daily conduct should match our honored position as God’s children. This can happen only through God's power working in us. Romans 12:2

### 1 Peter 1:15a – *But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior*. Instead of being a **photocopy** of the world, Peter explained how we as believers in Christ should permit God to change us. Our behavior as God’s children matters. Holiness or Christlikeness is God’s desire for believers.

#### What does it mean to be holy and how does one accomplish it? Holiness speaks of the believer being **set apart** in actions and character. God wants His children to be holy just as He is holy. He wants us to live pure lives in this sinful world.

#### True holiness is impossible to achieve by self-determination or human grit. It **comes** through God's strength and power, not our own. With that said, this command is not an option.

#### In this verse, “*be holy”* is a **passive** command. This means we do not make ourselves holy by our own human effort, rather we are told to allow ourselves to be holy.

##### It is God’s **work** to sanctify us; however, it is our job to permit Him to do so. As active participants, our goal is to allow this change to occur. By faith we are to constantly allow God to distance us from sin.

##### Philippians 2:13 says it this way, “*For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure*.” God desires to **change** our lives. Ephesians 2:10

#### In 2 Peter 1:3 Peter wrote “*that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence*.” God has provided everything we **need** to live holy lives. He wants us to believe His promises and trust in the Holy Spirit’s enabling power.

### 1 Peter 1:16 – Why be holy? “*Because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”* This is a quote from Leviticus 19:2 and 20:26. It is a **future** tense statement showing an anticipated outcome. Someday in eternity, we will be completely holy, just as Christ is holy.

#### In God’s presence we will be fully set apart from sin. Absolute and complete holiness is God’s ultimate goal and our **sure** destiny.

#### Why this outcome? Because ultimately, whether it was Israel in the past or Church Age believers today, God desires for everyone He redeems to be holy just as He Himself is **holy**.

#### In the **beginning** we were created in God’s image, but that image was severely tarnished by sin (compare Genesis 5:1 with Genesis 5:3). As we walk by means of the Holy Spirit, we are being saved from the power of sin in our daily lives (sanctification) and God’s image is steadily restored in us.

#### Even though the process of holiness takes a lifetime, God wants holiness for **each** of His children. Thankfully, He is relentless in working toward this goal in our lives. Philippians 1:6 says, “*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus*.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

## 1 Peter 1:17-21 – A life of reverence

### 1 Peter 1:17 – Our conduct during our temporary **stay** on earth should be motivated by a great respect for God, the creator of the world. Here are Jude’s humble words in Jude 1:25 on this important subject, “*to the only God our Savior…be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever*.” 1 Chronicles 29:11

#### 1 Peter 1:17a – *If you address as Father*… Through His sacrifice on our behalf, Christ procured for every believer the amazing privilege of addressing God as **Father**. Through Christ we boldly and confidently approach God the Father’s presence in trusting prayer. Ephesians 3:12, 14-15; Hebrews 4:16; 1 John 3:1

#### 1 Peter 1:17b – …*the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work*… This is not talking about works done by the unsaved in hopes of obtaining salvation. Those works are **useless** and unrewardable. Romans 3:20 says, “*Therefore no one will be justified in His sight by works of the law*.”

##### This is talking about the believer’s works in sanctification. As both our Father and our judge, God **plays** no favorites. He judges according to truth. Romans 14:4

##### God our Father “*understands our thoughts from afar* [and] *is intimately acquainted with all* [our] *ways* (Ps. 139:2-3). Nothing is **hidden** from His sight. He knows our thoughts and our motives. Unlike humans who often judge wrongly, God's judgment is impeccable and accurate. Hebrews 4:12-13

##### God judges according to **truth**. He is the one who will decide which works are rewardable and which ones are not. Romans 2:11, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15

##### 1 Corinthians 4:5 – *Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise* ***will come*** *to him from God*.

#### 1 Peter 1:17c – …*conduct yourselves in fear…* No one, not even you, is better equipped than God to make an **accurate** assessment concerning your conduct.

#### 1 Peter 1:17d – …*during the time of your stay on earth…* This statement underlines the temporary nature of our lives here on earth. Our choices and conduct should reflect an understanding of the **brevity** of our days on earth.

### 1 Peter 1:18-19 – Understanding our redemption motivates us to **live** a life of reverence.

#### 1 Peter 1:18a – *Knowing that you were* [not] *…redeemed with perishable things…* Redemption is a rich word tied directly to the concept of **slavery**. Because slavery is no longer an open and acceptable practice in most parts of the world, we can easily miss the full meaning of these statements about our redemption.

##### In ancient times, redemption typically involved a person being **rescued** from slavery by means of a payment. In this scenario, the slave's freedom was purchased by someone who felt compassion for the slave. Redemption took both love and investment. To set the slave free, the redeemer made a significant sacrifice.

##### Often redemption included the idea of **buying** back what technically belonged to the buyer in the first place. This happens in our world today whenever a parent pays a ransom for a child who has been kidnapped. The ransom is paid to get back the child who was stolen from their family.

##### Redemption made sense to Peter’s Jewish audience. For nearly 400 years their forefathers had languished in **Egypt** as slaves. By God’s mighty hand they were finally rescued, a rescue described in Deuteronomy 6:12 as their redemption. Exodus 6:6-9, Micah 6:4

#### 1 Peter 1:18b – *Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold*… We were redeemed by the sacrificial and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ, the **Lamb** of God. The Son of God gave His life to rescue us from the slave market of sin.

#### 1 Peter 1:18c – *…from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers.* These Jewish converts had been rescued from the marketplace of burdensome enslavement to Jewish **legalism** and empty traditions.

##### Matthew 23:1-3 – *Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees have* **seated** *themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore, all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them*.”

##### Matthew 23:4-5a – “*They tie up heavy* **burdens** *and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men*.”

#### 1 Peter 1:19a – *…but with the precious blood...* Peter explained to his readers that it was not earthly wealth that purchased their release; their freedom was purchased by Christ’s own **precious** blood. Hebrews 9:22

##### **Blood** was the standard of exchange required for our redemption. Hebrews 9:22 reminds us “*without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."*

##### Jesus did not **die** by drowning, electrocution, lethal injection, or another form of execution that did not involve the shedding of blood. He was crucified. Christ's crucifixion was a painful, agonizing death that involved the shedding of His own blood. Leviticus 17:11

##### Our redemption was **purchased** through the sacrificial death of Christ, which included the shedding of His blood. We were enslaved to Satan, sin, and death, but Christ intervened on our behalf and provided the required payment of His own blood to purchase our freedom.

##### Although salvation is offered free of charge to us, it cost Jesus Christ **everything**. He gave His blood and His life for our deliverance. Knowing the great expense Christ paid for our redemption should motivate us to new heights of holy living and godly service. Acts 20:28b, 1 Corinthians 6:20

#### 1 Peter 1:19b *– …as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ*. As our **substitute**, Christ was the Lamb of God who bled and died in our place to free us from sin and death. John 1:29

##### The term “*unblemished”* speaks of Christ’s uncontaminated spiritual **condition**. Just as the Passover lambs that prefigured the Messiah had to be unblemished, Christ Jesus “*committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth* (1 Pet. 2:22).” Exodus 12:5; 1 Corinthians 5:7, 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26

##### Jesus was *spotless*; He was absolutely pure and holy. Just as a blemished or marred lamb would have been an unacceptable sacrifice, a **sinner** could not die for another sinner. As the one and only perfect individual, only Jesus was uniquely qualified to be our substitute.

##### God approved Christ's perfect work when He raised Him from the **dead**. God was perfectly satisfied with the quality of Christ’s offering for the removal of our sins.

### 1 Peter 1:20-21 – Who provided our redemption?

#### 1 Peter 1:20a – …*for He was foreknown before the foundation of the world.* Even before God created the world, God **selected** Jesus Christ to be our Savior.

##### God’s plan of salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ was not a secondary strategy. Providing salvation through Christ was God’s intentional **plan** from eternity past, long before earth and heaven were created. Acts 2:23, Revelation 13:8

##### In God’s eternal wisdom He planned how Christ would provide for our salvation. You can be assured that God has **always** desired to have a relationship with you. Back in eternity, He made plans to redeem you, to buy you back.

#### 1 Peter 1:20b – *He…has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.* It is one thing to make an elaborate plan, but it is quite another to pull it off. Incredibly, from before creation, God planned every detail of our redemption. It was not an afterthought. It all happened **exactly** as He envisioned. Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Micah 5:2, Acts 2:23

##### Christ *…has appeared in these last times.* “*These last times*” refers to the **day** in which Peter lived. Christ came on the scene at exactly the right time in history. Romans 5:6, Galatians 4:4‑5

##### Christ appeared …*for the sake of you.* In eternity past when God **chose** Christ to be the redeemer, He already had you in mind.

#### 1 Peter 1:21a – God **acted** …*for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God*. It was through Christ Jesus and His triumph in redeeming you that you were able to become a believer in God.

##### The sole reason any of us have a relationship with God is because of Jesus Christ. In John 10:9 Jesus said, “*I am the door*.” Jesus is the one who **opened** the door for us to have a relationship with God. We now relate to God because of Him. John 14:6, 1 John 1:3

##### When Adam and Eve sinned, their fellowship with God was **severed**. As a result, all their offspring were born separated from God, including everyone alive today. In Christ, however, our relationship with God is restored.

#### 1 Peter 1:21b *–* We are believers in God *…who raised Him* [Jesus] *from the dead...* God the Father eternally approved of Christ’s work of redemption by raising Him from the dead. Because we believe in Jesus, we also **believe** in God, who resurrected Him.

##### The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a **vital** aspect of the gospel message we preach and believe. When we share the good news of Jesus Christ, we include the resurrection of Christ as something that must be believed for salvation. Acts 2:32, Romans 6:4, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

##### What is a resurrection? A resurrection is the **reversal** of death. It occurs when the soul and spirit of a deceased person rejoin their lifeless body and that body is then revived.

##### Christ rose again by the will of the Father. His physically deceased body came back to life. This one fact alone proves He was victorious over sin and death. Since Christ will never die again, at the Rapture we too will be resurrected with **changed** and glorified bodies. We shout, “*come Lord Jesus*!” Revelation 22:20

#### 1 Peter 1:21c – …*and gave Him glory…* God not only raised Jesus from the dead, but He also gave Him **glory**. Jesus is not currently hanging on a cross. He is no longer dead. He is no longer suffering. Christ is alive, risen, and exalted to the place of highest favor at the right hand of God. Ephesians 1:19-21

##### Christ will **subdue** all God’s enemies. 1 Corinthians 15:28 says, “*When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all*.”

##### Although Christ has already received glory at the right hand of God, He will gain even **more** honor in the future. After Christ conquers His enemies at the Second Coming, He will assume His place on the throne of David and establish His righteous rule forever. Jeremiah 23:5-6; Lamentations 5:19; Hebrews 1:8

##### Philippians 2:8-9 says “*Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a* **cross***. For this reason, also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name*.” Psalm 110:1, 118:16; 1 Peter 3:22

#### 1 Peter 1:21d – Peter added, “…*so that your faith and hope are in God*.” God is the one who raised Christ from the dead and gave Him glory, therefore our faith and our hope are in God. Since Jesus has triumphed over sin and death, because of our association with Him, we look forward to **sharing** in His victory. Mark 16:19

## 1 Peter 1:22-25 – A life of love

### 1 Peter 1:22a – *Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls…* At salvation, when we put our trust in Christ, we obeyed the truth by believing the gospel. In that instant God positionally **purged** us from sin, purifying our souls. Peter used this as a jumping off point to explain how that purity affects the rest of our lives.

### 1 Peter 1:22b – *…purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren*… Our justification resulted in genuine affection for our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is the fellowship or **brotherly** love (PHILADELPHIA) that Christians mutually enjoy. We were born again into this kind of relationship with one another. 1 Thessalonians 4:9

### 1 Peter 1:22c – *…fervently love (*AGAPE) *one another…* In addition to having brotherly love, Peter commanded believers to **deeply** love one another with AGAPE love.

#### As we mature, our brotherly love for the body of Christ (PHILADELPHIA) that is available to us at salvation must **grow** into an even deeper and more complete love (AGAPE). Galatians 5:22-23, Philippians 2:1-4

#### While brotherly love is inherent through salvation, AGAPE love is to be **actively** expressed. Agape love is steadfast and selfless, finding its origin in God (Rom 5:5). This sacrificial love is not swayed by convenience or bad responses. In the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians the apostle Paul gave a long and complete definition of AGAPE love.

#### As we grow and get to know God better, we should **move on** from mere kindness and friendliness to actual self-sacrificing love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. “*Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply…brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness* (PHILADELPHIA)*, love* (AGAPE)." 2 Peter 1:5-7

### 1 Peter 1:22d – *…fervently love one another from the heart*. How should we express AGAPE love? Peter gave three important modifiers that describe the believer’s **appropriate** expression of AGAPE love. Romans 5:5, 1 John 4:8

#### We are to love …*fervently.* Fervently means intently, earnestly, or with **zeal**. We must love with intensity and perseverance. According to 1 Corinthians 13:7, “*Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance* (NLT).” Without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit this is impossible. Colossians 2:2

#### We are to love …*one another*. Brothers and sisters in Christ are to be the primary focus of our love. Love is critical for the **church**, especially in times of great suffering and persecution. Jesus said in John 13:35, “*By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*.”

##### The world tells us to love ourselves, but God says just the opposite. We are to love others. In times of distress, it is not **natural** to put others first.

##### When there is stress and persecution, our human nature desires to be **selfish**. Without this loving reminder, we might selfishly turn a blind eye to the suffering of our Christian brothers and sisters. 1 Peter 4:8

##### Love of this caliber is not forced, coerced, or manufactured. This kind of love is not based on conditions and requirements. It is not merely intellectual. The kind of love that puts the interests of others ahead of personal agendas is produced in us only as we **walk** dependently on the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23, Philippians 2:2-8

#### We are to love …*from the heart*. Love should not come from **shallow** emotions or forced compliance. AGAPE love is deep, not superficial. It comes from God and is not of this world. It flows from our heart when we live in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

##### John 7:38-39 explains how the Holy Spirit is the **source** of good in our lives. *“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive...”*

##### This AGAPE love so eloquently described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 is an impossible standard for an imperfect human to achieve in their own strength. **Only** Christ, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, can produce this kind of love in a believer. John 15:12-13

### 1 Peter 1:23a – Why should we love? …*For you have been born again.* As imperfect descendants of Adam it was impossible for us to please God, but now we have been born again into God’s family. We are now identified with Christ and the Holy Spirit lives in us. In Christ, we have **everything** we need to live a holy life and love fully. 2 Peter 1:3-4

#### We were saved for **more** than a get-out-of-hell-free plan. From the moment of our salvation, God not only blessed us, but He also initiated an intentional plan for the transformation of our lives. He wants us to live holy. Philippians 1:6, Ephesians 2:10

#### We were not given the new birth and a new life so we could be self-centered, isolated, and ultimately unhappy. You were born again into a family, the family of God, to be a **good** sibling to other believers (Genesis 4:9). God wants us to love and care deeply for our family in Christ. John 13:35, Ephesians 4:15-16

#### For a **second** time in this chapter, Peter mentioned our new birth. Peter expected his readers to live lives consistent with the extraordinary magnitude of their noble calling. In 1 Corinthians 6:20 Paul states, “*For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body*.”

#### Love is the trademark of Christianity. When we **abide** in God’s love and tangibly show it to others, we fulfill God’s plan for our lives as His unique and holy children. 1 Peter 1:22

### 1 Peter 1:23b – *For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable*. We were born again from incorruptible seed. Thankfully, our eternal life and security in God’s family are grounded in our second birth into God's family and not in our **behavior**.

#### All **farmers** know that without seeds there is no possibility of a crop sprouting and growing. Seeds represent a potential for harvest.

#### Paraphrased, this verse might read: The seed that gave us life at the new birth is not corruptible; it is **everlasting**. What is this seed that gave us life?

### 1 Peter 1:23c – Peter clarified that the seed that gave us life is the living **word** of God. *For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable that is, through the living and enduring word of God*. The word of God was the spark the Holy Spirit used to give us the new life we presently enjoy in Christ. Romans 10:17

#### James 1:18 teaches that God **gives** new birth and the privilege of belonging to Him through the word of God: “*In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures*.”

#### In 1 Corinthians 1:18 we read, “*For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God*.” The preaching of the word of the **cross**, the gospel message, was the catalyst that led to our salvation and continues to be the catalyst for our ongoing sanctification.

#### In Hebrews 4:12 we learn that “*the word of God is* **living** *and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart*.”

#### Could we possibly obtain eternal life without the word of God? No. The parable of the sower in Luke 8:11 explains, “*Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God*.” The seed sown by the preacher is the word of God. With regards to salvation, the word of God is **essential** for giving us the new birth. Peter will build on this thought.

### 1 Peter 1:24 – *For, all flesh is like grass*… Here Peter quoted Isaiah 40:6-8 to give the reader an **eternal** perspective. Humans are powerless to impart eternal life to either themselves or others. God’s word plays a vital role in our new birth.

#### Like **grass**, our physical bodies quickly grow old, wither, and die. In time, everyone's legacy is all but forgotten. The life we inherited from our imperfect ancestor, Adam, is not eternal. To rely solely on this life is to place hope in something temporary and fading. Thankfully, eternal life has come to us through the seed of God’s enduring word.

#### Peter wanted to draw the thoughts of his suffering readers away from the bankruptcy of their old lives and **center** them fully on the new life experienced in Christ.

### 1 Peter 1:24b – *For, all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass*… The temporary glory of the life we received from Adam is like a **fading** grassland flower. That is not a pleasant way to describe us, but it is true. Our days in these bodies are numbered, but the new life we get by means of the word of God is permanent. Psalm 90:12-17

### 1 Peter 1:24c – Continuing with the Isaiah 40 quote, not only does “*the grass wither*” but also “*the flower falls off*.” Our flesh will die, and our glory fade. In light of eternity, the brevity of our human life is like a flower that **quickly** wilts. Peter’s readers needed to occupy their minds with the eternal and not with what was fading away. James 4:14

### 1 Peter 1:25 – *But the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word which was preached to you*. Never doubt or downplay the **importance** of the word of God for your life. It is of eternal value to you.

#### The word of God was the seed that gave you eternal life. It was planted in you through the **preaching** of the gospel and is cultivated in you through the ongoing study of God's word.

#### In Psalm 119:89 the psalmist expressed the **enduring** nature of God’s word: *"Forever, O LORD, your word is settled in heaven*.” In Matthew 24:35 Jesus stated, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away*.”

#### The word of the Lord continues to endure and stand the test of time even though our physical bodies don't. Since God’s word gave us **new life** in Christ, our love and care for others ought to reflect the truth of His word.

# 1 Peter 2:1-10 – A Maturing Life

## 1 Peter 2:1-3 – Growing well

### 1 Peter 2:1 – *Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander*… There comes a time when we must purposely **put aside** childish attitudes and actions. God calls every one of His children to grow into maturity. 2 Corinthians 12:20, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 4:20-31, Hebrews 12:1

#### *Therefore…* In light of the new birth we received by means of the enduring word of God, we should take spiritual growth very **seriously**. If God used His word to furnish us with eternal life, it is reasonable to believe He would use that same word to fuel our spiritual growth.

#### *…putting aside…* In this verse Peter recorded a list of **shameful** sins his readers were to discard. All these sins hinder spiritual progress and destroy relationships. Romans 6:6, 22-23; Hebrews 3:13

#### *…putting aside* **all malice***…* Malice is a vicious or mean-spirited attitude. A malicious person focuses on the negative and enjoys seeing others suffer. A malicious attitude prevents spiritual growth. All believers are commanded to appropriate God’s power to reject this sin. Ephesians 4:31, James 1:20-21

#### *…putting aside…* **all deceit**… Deceit is to mislead through dishonesty, trickery, lying, manipulation, or cheating. In Greek, this word was related to luring or baiting. It includes the idea of intentionally setting a snare. Deceitfulness is not appropriate for believers. Psalm 34:13, 1 Peter 2:22

#### *…putting aside…* **hypocrisy**… Hypocrisy is the creation of an impression that does not match up with reality.

##### The word hypocrite originated in the Greek **theater** where actors put on masks and pretended to be someone else. It includes the idea of saying one thing and doing another or living a double life.

##### When a person's actions do not **match** their words, we say that person is a hypocrite. The mask of hypocrisy must be removed from the life of the believer. Matthew 23:1-5

#### *…putting aside…* **envy***…* Envy and jealousy can lead to long-standing resentment and bitterness. Rather than rejoicing in the successes of others, envy causes us to be discontent and angry. God can empower us to live above this cancerous attitude. Proverbs 27:4, 1 Corinthians 13:4‑7

#### *…putting aside…* **all slander***…*To slander is to destroy the reputation or character of another by false and malicious gossip. Satan is the greatest slanderer of all (Rev. 12:10). As Christians, we must never imitate his ways. Words are powerful and can do a lot of damage. Proverbs 16:28, Colossians 3:8

### It is important to note that Peter told his readers to put aside this laundry list of sins **before** instructing them in verse two to desire the true milk of the word. Peter didn’t want these sins to gain a foothold in the believer's life. Hebrews 3:13b

#### The sins listed in this verse involve **attitude** and heart issues. Since they are not explicit acts of depravity, many believers think they are acceptable. Gossip, jealousy, rudeness and lying are often wrongly classed as personality deficits rather than sins.

#### But these sins **contradict** Christ’s command to love one another. Christian's who participate in these sins miss the mark of God's perfection and destroy the unity of the body. John 13:34, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Galatians 5:14

#### When we as believers entertain any kind of sin in our lives, we are walking in darkness and are out of **fellowship** with God the Father. In this state we lose our appetite for God’s word. 1 John 1:6-9

#### Are you struggling with these sins? As a believer in Christ, you **are** dead to sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:10-11, 1 Peter 2:24). If necessary, confess your sin to God (1 John 1:9) and follow Peter’s exhortation to drink deeply from the word of God.

### 1 Peter 2:2a – *Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word…* All healthy babies come with an insatiable appetite for milk. Until they can digest solid food, they depend on milk for nourishment. To *long for* is a **strong** command in Greek.

### 1 Peter 2:2b – *…long for the pure milk of the word…*To “*long for”* is to strongly **desire**. The aorist active imperative tense of this verb intensifies the command. Peter compared God's word to milk to emphasize our need to read and study God's word. God’s word needs to be the object of our most intense desires. Your spiritual well-being depends on it.

#### “*Pure milk*” is milk that has nothing **added** to it. It is not contaminated in any way. Just like giving a newborn milk mixed with Coca-Cola would not only make them sick, but would also stunt their growth, so mixing worldly philosophies and false doctrines in with the word of God hurts believer’s and stunts their growth.

#### In Deuteronomy 4:2, Moses gave the Israelites this **command**: “*You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you*.”

#### Psalm 12:6 says, “*The words of the Lord are* **pure** *words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times*.” 2 Samuel 22:31

#### By means of the pure word of God we have all we need for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3-4). But if we contaminate God’s word with human ideas and philosophies, we will be left unsatisfied and malnourished. Our **growth** will be severely hampered. Psalm 19:8-9, John 17:17

#### Every new believer carries a lot of **baggage**; no one becomes a Christian with an empty slate. Truth be told, we all have many secular ideas we are unaware of. That is why Paul commanded, “*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind* (Rom. 12:2a). Colossians 2:2-4, 8

#### Your life should be built on the **word of God**. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us this about God’s word: *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man* [person] *of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work*.

#### The word of God is just as important for mature believers as it is for immature. As we grow, we are able to ingest the **meat** of the word. Not only should we voraciously devour the pure milk of the word, but we should also go on to the meat of God’s word, with a desire to grow and mature in Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:2, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Hebrews 5:12-13

##### Psalm 1:1-2 says, “*How blessed is the man who* **does not** *walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law, he meditates day and night*.” Psalm 37:31

##### 2 Timothy 2:15 says “*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately* **handling** *the word of truth*." Psalm 119:9

##### When Jesus was tempted by **Satan**, He was safeguarded by the scriptures He had stored away in His mind. Psalm 40:8 says, “*I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart*.” Psalm 119:11

### 1 Peter 2:2c – …*so that by it you may* **grow** *in respect to salvation...* 2 Peter 3:18

#### The purpose for drinking in the word of God is not to acquire academic knowledge but to grow and **mature** spiritually. 1 Corinthians 8:1 states, “*knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies*.” 1 Corinthians 13:2, Ephesians 4:15

#### If you approach Bible study as a purely academic pursuit, you may acquire more knowledge of scripture, but that won’t make you more like Christ. The whole point of learning the word of God is so it can **change** you. Psalm 119:11 declares, “*Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You*.”

### 1 Peter 2:2e – You must take in God’s word so that …*by it you may grow in respect to salvation.* This statement refers to the sanctification process of our salvation. Salvation in this verse refers to being delivered from the **power** of sin (sanctification) rather than being saved from the penalty of sin (justification).

#### The word of God is not only what brought us to believe in Christ for our justification at a moment in time, but it is also the **basis** for our continued sanctification throughout our life. John 8:32, 17:17; Hebrews 4:12

#### *You may grow* is in the **passive** voice. This is significant because it suggests that although it is our job to drink in the nourishment of God's word, it is God’s job to bring about growth in our life. John 15:4-5, 1 Corinthians 1:8, Philippians 1:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:23‑24, 2 Thessalonians 3:3

#### God desires that every Christian grow to become holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16). For us to grow well, our thinking must align with God’s word. For this alignment to occur we need a steady diet of the unadulterated **milk** of God's word. Through a walk of faith based on studying and applying the word, we become progressively more like Christ.

### 1 Peter 2:3 – *If you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.* Here the Greek word *if* assumes a reality: if, and let’s assume it’s so. This *if* is sometimes translated *since* or *because*. This statement could correctly read, “**Since** you have already tasted the kindness of the Lord.”

#### Obviously, we must **first** be born again before we can grow (Psalm 34:8, 1 Peter 1:23). Since (or *if*) they had already tasted the kindness of God through salvation, Peter encouraged his readers to passionately long for the pure milk of the word for growth.

#### When you know you have received eternal life as a free gift by faith alone in Christ alone, you are then encouraged to **grow**. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

## 1 Peter 2:4-8 – Growing strong

### In this section Peter used a metaphor to make his point. He compared Jesus Christ to various kinds of **stones** and then broadened the analogy to include Christians.

#### We will see **Jesus** referred to as a living stone (v4), a choice stone (v6), a precious stone (v6), a rejected stone (v7), a corner stone (v7) and a stumbling stone (v8). Amazingly in verse 5, Peter included believers in this metaphor, also calling them living stones.

#### Why call Christ a rock or stone? Typically, stones are strong and endure the test of time. Because Christ is **unchanging**, He is an enduring rock. Whenever we look to Him in faith, we find Him completely dependable. He is forever the strong and worthy object of our trust. Psalm 18:2, 46; 118:22

#### There are no commands to **obey** in these verses, only rock-solid facts to grasp. Peter understood that we need truth to keep us strong through life’s difficulties. His readers needed to build up their faith and stay focused on these truths. Ephesians 6:14, 2 Peter 1:3-4

### 1 Peter 2:4a – *And coming to Him…* The Greek word for *coming* PROSERCHOMAI describes an **ongoing** action.

#### Having tasted the Lord’s kindness in verse 3, the Christian is then called to relentlessly come near to the Lord and constantly **seek** His face. Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 7:7-8, Hebrews 12:2

#### Peter’s emphasized sanctification in both of his epistles, explaining that **active** faith is required in order for a Christian to maintain close fellowship with God. 2 Peter 3:18

### 1 Peter 2:4b – We are to come to Him …*as to a living stone*. In contrast to the **dead** stones that make up pagan shrines and temples, Peter referred to Christ as *a living stone*. When Peter said, “*And coming to Him as to a living stone,*” he was encouraging his readers to seek the living God, the true rock on which to stand.

#### Christ is **alive** not dead! After Christ died for our sins, He rose victorious over the grave, and He remains alive forevermore. Acts 2:24, Ephesians 1:20

#### In the prophecies of Daniel 2:35 and 2:45 concerning the coming Messiah, Christ is referred to as the stone cut **without** human hands. At the Second Coming Christ will pulverize His enemies, so we can rest assured He is very much alive.

### 1 Peter 2:4c – Christ is a stone *…which has been rejected by men.* Christ was ridiculed and *rejected* by those He came to save. The word rejected means to examine something and **deem** it unworthy. Sadly, the ancient leadership of Israel examined Jesus and deemed Him unfit to be the Messiah. Isaiah 53:3; Matthew 12:22-24; Luke 17:25; John 1:11, 5:43

### 1 Peter 2:4d – Even though many have rejected Christ *…[He] is choice and precious in the sight of God*. In **contrast** to humanity’s rejection of Christ, God is eternally well-pleased with Jesus Christ and has chosen to glorify Him. Isaiah 42:1, Matthew 3:17

#### Christ is …*choice…*God **handpicked** Christ for Himself. In eternity past, before the world began, God chose His Son, Jesus Christ, to secure our salvation. God is glorified through His most excellent Son, Jesus Christ. Luke 4:18, 9:35; Acts 2:23

#### Christ is …*precious…*It is impossible to put a **price tag** on Jesus Christ. He is the most prized, cherished, and loved possession of God the Father. Even before Christ accomplished His mission, God said of Him, “*This is my beloved in Son, in whom I am well pleased*.” God has always been pleased with the Son. Psalm 2:7, Matthew 3:16-17

#### Whereas the leadership of Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah (John 1:11), the Jewish audience to whom Peter wrote fully **agreed** with God’s outstanding assessment of Christ.

### 1 Peter 2:5a – *You also, as living stones…* Peter told his readers that like Christ, they were living stones. The truth is, we are alive because Christ gave us life. Peter called believers stones because like construction **blocks**, we are used by the Lord in the church, His chief project of this age. 1 Corinthians 3:9-11, Ephesians 2:19-22, Colossians 1:24-29, 1 Timothy 3:15

### 1 Peter 2:5b – …*are being built up as a spiritual house…* As believers we have been incorporated **into** a vast spiritual edifice called the church that is founded upon Christ himself. The Greek verb translated “*are being built up*” is in the passive voice.

#### First, God is the one who skillfully builds up the **church**. He places each member exactly where He wants them so they can contribute and function as He desires. Romans 12:6‑8, 1 Corinthians 12:18, Ephesians 4:16, 1 Peter 4:10

#### Second, God is the **one** who ultimately sanctifies each believer. Romans 8:28-29; 1 Corinthians 1:8; Philippians 1:6, 2:13; Hebrews 12:2

#### Christ is the **primary** corner stone of this valuable and unique structure. The apostles and prophets laid the foundation, and each believer contributes to the building up of this spiritual house. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

#### In Ephesians 2:20-22 we read more about this project. Paul said, *“…having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the* **corner** *stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.*”

##### The **designer** of this spiritual house is Christ. Unlike any other structure on earth, He is not only the architect and builder, but as the cornerstone, He is an integral part of the structure.

##### This concept of the architect being also **placed into** the project as a stone is unique to Jesus Christ, setting this house apart from the design of any other structure in the world. Matthew 16:18, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, Hebrews 12:2

### 1 Peter 2:5c – …*for a holy priesthood…* A **priest** is someone who has access to God for people and access to people for God (Rev. 1:6, 5:10). God has built up Church Age believers as a spiritual house so we can function as a unique and holy priesthood.

#### In the Church Age, **every** believer is a priest. As priests, we now have direct access to God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16, 10:19). How can this be?

##### Positionally, all believers are righteous, or holy, **in Christ**. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says God *made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*. In His son, God now sees us as perfectly righteous. Ephesians 1:4

##### Positionally, we have **direct** access to God, but not because of what we have done. We are priests because of what Jesus Christ did to give us access to God.

##### In practice, we are daily being conformed more and more to the likeness of Christ. This is a practical side of our priesthood that is very important to God since we represent **Him** to the world. John 15:8, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Ephesians 5:25-27

#### Peter's **exiled** readers needed to hear, understand, and appreciate the amazing blessing of direct access to God without the need of mediating priests and physical temples.

##### The Levitical priesthood the Jewish people had followed for centuries had terminated, and the church now constituted a **new** priesthood for this age.

##### This new spiritual priesthood was a radical **shift from** a burdensome and distant approach to God to a personalized individual and direct relationship with God by every believer.

### 1 Peter 2:5d – *As living stones* we are supposed …*to offer spiritual sacrifices*. The offering of physical sacrifices ceased when Jesus Christ was sacrificed as the Lamb of God, but spiritual sacrifices **remain** for Church Age believers to continue to present to God. These sacrifices are not for gaining eternal life; they are offered by believers as part of our sanctification.

#### We offer the spiritual sacrifice of **praise**. Hebrews 13:15 describes this sacrifice: “*Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name*.” Psalm 50:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:18

#### We offer the spiritual sacrifice of **giving**. In Philippians 4:18 Paul stated, “*But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God*.” 1 Corinthians 4:7, 2 Corinthians 9:7

#### We offer the spiritual sacrifice of **good works**. While we can never be saved from the penalty of sin by our good works, God does want to inspire good works through us. Hebrews 13:16 states, “*And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased*.” Philippians 2:17

#### We offer the spiritual sacrifice of personal **service**. In Romans 12:1 Paul said, “*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship*.” Romans 6:13, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

#### We offer the spiritual sacrifice of church planting and **missions**. In Romans 15:16 Paul described this sacrifice: “*to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit*.”

### 1 Peter 2:5e – …*to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* God **counts** our spiritual sacrifices as acceptable and pleasing to Him only when they are inspired by and accomplished through Jesus Christ.

#### We are a priesthood **under** the great high priest, Jesus Christ. Christ is the true mediator between us and God and apart from Him our spiritual sacrifices are pointless efforts. John 15:5; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:25, 10:12-14

#### Sacrifices inspired by human **resolve** have never been acceptable to God. Isaiah 1:11-13, Malachi 1:10, Romans 15:18, Galatians 3:2-3

### 1 Peter 2:6a – *For this is contained in Scripture: “Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone…”* The *cornerstone* is the **primary** foundation stone in a construction project. Jesus is not only the living stone, the choice stone, and the precious stone, but He is also the cornerstone of the greatest construction project on earth, the church of God.

#### In this verse, Peter quoted Isaiah 28:16-17. In quoting Isaiah, he confirmed that Jesus was indeed the long-prophesied cornerstone. Through His role as cornerstone of the church, Jesus Christ **stands** as the backbone and support of God’s plans and goals in this age.

#### Jesus Christ is the **firm** cornerstone on which the church rests. As the cornerstone, Jesus was laid in Zion, which is the ancient name for the city of Jerusalem, the most sacred city in the world for Jewish people. Psalm 118:22, Romans 9:33

#### The church was a **mystery** in the Old Testament, but now in the New Testament, Jesus is presented as its cornerstone. Throughout the New Testament the church is referred to as a temple, a building, and a household, all structures that need a firm foundation. 1 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Timothy 3:15

### 1 Peter 2:6b – Here we have the last half of Peter’s quote from Isaiah 28:16: “*And he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.*” Jesus will **never** fail anyone who believes in Him. You can trust Him to deliver on His promises. Psalm 18:2

#### Your life as a living stone is **anchored** to the immovable cornerstone, Jesus Christ. Christ does not waver or change. “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever* (Heb. 13:8).” 2 Corinthians 1:19-20

#### Our secure future is **based on** the living stone, Jesus Christ. In 2 Timothy 1:12 the apostle Paul stated, “*I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day*.” John 3:16, 4:14, 7:38

### 1 Peter 2:7a *– This precious value, then, is for you who believe…*The preciousness of Christ is altogether recognizable to us as believers. We are **honored** to have Christ as our Savior.

### 1 Peter 2:7b – …*but for those who disbelieve, "the stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone.”* The word **disbelieve** is in the present tense, implying an ongoing posture of disbelief or rejection. John 3:18

#### When Jesus came, the builders, the leaders of Israel, denied that He was the **Christ**. They said He was not the foundation stone, the promised Messiah; and they advocated for His death.

#### Tragically, throughout history many have continued to **reject** Christ. Those who do so will never benefit from what He offers. It is a sad and serious mistake to refuse to believe in Jesus Christ.

### 1 Peter 2:7c – *“The stone which the builders rejected; this* **became** *the very corner stone…”* Here Peter was quoting Psalm 118:22.

#### When people do not believe the gospel, they are like a stonemason who looks at the most valuable stone of all and casts it aside, deeming it unfit. Jesus Christ was the stone that was foolishly cast aside by the **builders** even though He was the greatest component of all.

#### On once occasion, when Jesus **quoted** this Psalm in Matthew 21:42-46, the Pharisees realized He was talking about them. Peter also quoted this Psalm in Acts 4:11-12 when he was arrested by the leaders of Israel and told to never again preach in Jesus’ name.

#### Much like ancient Israel, many people today still consider Christ to be of **little or no** importance. Some see Him as a nuisance and think they can cast Him aside and live just fine without Him. Others see Him as an offense and strongly reject all He has to offer.

#### The living stone Jesus Christ is precious and chosen by God the **Father**. When a person rejects Him and His saving work, it is the single most harmful and costly decision he or she will ever make. Instead, we should choose that which is most valuable. John 3:18

### 1 Peter 2:8a – Jesus becomes *...a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense*. Christ becomes a tripping **hazard** for those who reject Him. While believers enjoy the priceless value of Christ as the cornerstone, those who disbelieve experience the exact opposite.

#### Christ's life and death do not make **sense** to those who cast Him off. When people set Jesus aside, they invariable end up stumbling over Him. He becomes a perplexing rock of offense. John 10:31-33

#### Unbelievers today often consider Jesus Christ to be **offensive**. While He was on earth, Jesus faced major rejections as well. The Jewish leaders scorned Him and accused Him of sedition (Jn. 11:47-48), public agitation (Lk. 23:5), demon possession (Lk. 11:15), and even insanity (Jn. 10:20). 2 Cor. 2:15-16

#### In 1 Corinthians 1:18-24 Paul wrote that the message of the cross (the **gospel**) is offensive to the so-called powerful and wise of this world.

#### Because many people today still stumble over Christ, they are often **hostile** toward His followers. We should not be surprised by this. Jesus warned that if the world hated Him, it would also hate those who belong to Him (Jn. 15:18-21).

### 1 Peter 2:8b – Why do people become offended by Christ? *…for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word*. If you turn off the **light**, don’t be surprised if you trip and fall. Jesus is the light, and when someone rejects Him, they get tripped up because they willfully choose the darkness rather than the light. John 8:12, 12:35

### 1 Peter 2:8d – *…for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word and to this doom, they were also appointed*… **Doom** is guaranteed for every person who does not trust in Christ. According to Isaiah 8:14, when a person rejects Messiah, they are destined to fall. Peter concluded that for those who reject Christ, there is no way around this fatal outcome.

#### A person can **freely** make the choice to reject Jesus, but they must endure the consequences of that decision. Skeptics are not predestined by God to reject Christ, but once they choose to ignore the truth of the gospel, they are sure to be offended by Jesus Christ and trip over Him. John 3:18

#### In clear contrast to the those who **reject** Jesus Christ, the recipients of this letter were believers. They were not appointed to stumble and fall, instead the amazing benefits of Jesus Christ were designed for their stability, enjoyment, and blessing.

### In summary, **Peter** taught his readers the following truths in 1 Peter 2:4-8:

#### Jesus Christ is the cornerstone in the new, living **temple** He is erecting called the church. Believers are incorporated into this spiritual temple to serve as a new and holy priesthood. Through Jesus Christ, we offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

#### The **stone** that God laid in Zion was Jesus Christ. He is precious and choice to God, therefore everything we offer in sacrifice through Christ becomes precious and choice to God as well. Peter’s audience had this blessed honor through Christ just as we do today.

#### In the first century, the leadership of Israel was disobedient to the gospel. They **stumbled** over Jesus Christ being the Messiah, which, as Isaiah prophesied, resulted in their own undoing.

## 1 Peter 2:9-10 – Growing bold

### 1 Peter 2:9a – *But you are a chosen race…* Because we are chosen in Christ, the church is referred to as a special **race** of humanity. 1 Peter 1:1

#### In the Old Testament we see that **Israel** bore the title of “chosen”. They were often mentioned as God’s special people. Isaiah 43:21 says, *"The people whom I formed for Myself will declare My praise*.” In this present age, God has singled out those who belong to the church as His special people. Revelation 5:9-10

#### The church refers to **all people** who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. It is not a reference to a building, an earthly structure, an ethnic race, or a certain religious denomination. The church refers to all people who have been deemed acceptable in God's sight due to their belief in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

#### Peter told His Christian audience they were now a choice people in God’s **sight**. Today, whether Jew or Gentile, all who belong to Christ’s church are favored and special to God (Eph. 2:15-19). Through faith in Jesus Christ, Christians are now God's unique entity on earth, His chosen people. Titus 1:1

### 1 Peter 2:9b – *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood…* This statement is true of the church, made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers (Eph. 2:11-19; Rev. 1:6, 5:9). As royal priests, we now have **access** to God for ourselves and others.

#### These statements, “*a chosen race, a royal priesthood*,” would likely have reminded these Jewish converts of God’s words to the Jews of the **Exodus** Generation found in Exodus 19:5-6.

#### While their ancestors had disobeyed God and **failed** miserably, now, through the church, Peter’s Jewish readers could boldly participate in God’s plans as a new and royal priesthood.

#### As a royal priesthood, believers not only serve Christ now, but will **reign** with Him forever in the ages to come. Our conduct here and now should reflect this future honor as we live for God’s glory. Revelation 1:6, 5:10, 20:6

### 1 Peter 2:9c – *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation*… The church is composed of people from **every** nation; it is not made up of only one nationality. The church does not replace Israel. It is a completely new and unique entity, set apart as the center of God’s plan for this age. Matthew 28:19-20

### 1 Peter 2:9d – *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession…* God leaves no room for **doubt**;every member of Christ’s church, whether Jew or Gentile, is the special possession of God.

#### It cost Christ His **life** to include us as His own. Since we belong to Christ, we are no longer condemned people, we are God's own possession. Titus 2:14, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18

#### God has separated us as His very own **property**. Because we belong to God, He reserves exclusive rights over our lives, our affections, and our future. This fact results in both privileges and duties. 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20; Ephesians 1:12, 14; 1 Thessalonians 5:9

### 1 Peter 2:9e – God **purchased** you *…so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you..*. As a part of our salvation, we have been given the lofty privilege of being Christ’s ambassadors to this lost world. Ephesians 2:10

#### We were saved to *proclaim**the excellencies of* our Savior, Jesus Christ. We were not saved to promote ourselves or create a following. We were saved to promote Jesus Christ and Him **alone**.

#### The word *proclaim* means to vocally announce or advertise broadly with **words**. The Holy Spirit abides in us and wants to make Christ known through us (Col 1:27). We have the task of reconciling people to God through sharing the gospel and announcing the incredible glories of our wonderful Savior. Acts 4:29, 1 Peter 4:11

#### The **world** needs to know the excellencies of our God. People need to hear God loves them. Everyone should hear the good news about Jesus Christ. They need to see how He made a way for all people everywhere to have forgiveness. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

#### Our lives are to be human **billboards** for Jesus Christ. We should point others to our hope and boldly proclaim the glory of God in all we say and do. Our lives should shine as bright lights in this dark world. Are you up for such a challenge? Matthew 5:14

#### Many teach that we model the gospel by listening, serving, and being an example. While these are important qualities, the Bible teaches that *faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God* (Rom.10:17). Our conduct is important, but we should also directly **proclaim** the gospel without apology. Ephesians 6:18-20

### 1 Peter 2:9f – *…who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*. Through the gospel, God called us **out of** the endless night of death and darkness into the brilliance of new life in Christ. 1 John 1:5

#### In John 12:46 Jesus spoke of our liberation from **darkness** when He said, “*I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness*.” John 3:18

#### At one time you were dead in your sins and were by nature God’s enemy (Eph. 2:1-3), but then in His great love and mercy God **rescued** you out of darkness and transferred you into the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13). John 12:46, Acts 26:18

### 1 Peter 2:10a – *For you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God*… Even though his readers were born into a race that was chosen by God (Israel), their heritage did not make them God’s **true** children. Before salvation, these Jewish refugees were lost and undone, disconnected from God’s household. Romans 9:6-8, 11:5; Galatians 6:16

#### While the Jews may have been God's chosen people, that did not automatically make them **part** of God's family. This is why Jesus told the Jewish leader, Nicodemus, that he needed to be born again if he wanted to see God's kingdom. John 3:3-7, 1 Peter 1:23

#### In Galatians 6:16 Paul referred to those Israelites who believed in Christ as the *Israel of God*. Not every Israelite is included in that statement, only **believing** Israelites. Hosea 1:9‑10, 2:23, Romans 9:6-8, 25-26, 1 Peter 1:18

#### It was their faith in the gospel, not their **ethnic** heritage, that made Peter’s audience children of God. It is the same for us today. No one is saved because they belong to a certain ethnicity, nationality, church denomination, or family.

#### Before salvation, we all struggled through life looking for acceptance and a sense of belonging. We had **no bond** with God. We did the best we could through self-effort, but it was never enough. But now in Christ things are different. There is no greater privilege than to be a child of the Creator!

### 1 Peter 2:10b – *…you had not received* **mercy** *but now you have received mercy*… Mercy is not getting the bad consequence you deserve. Hosea 1:10

#### Before we were saved, we were strangers to the mercy of God. We were God's enemies. We missed the mark of God's perfection and deserved eternal **death**. Romans 3:23

#### But when salvation **came**, God showered us with mercy and delivered us from an eternal punishment we fully deserved. Romans 9:25

# 1 Peter 2:11-3:12 – Submission as a way of life

## 1 Peter 2:11-12 – Alien humility

### 1 Peter 2:11b – *…Beloved I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts…* As foreigners, Peter’s readers may have been **tempted** to conform to the pagan culture around them to gain acceptance.

#### Peter urged these Jewish Christians to not **succumb** to the dominant culture by indulging in *fleshly lusts*. Daniel 1:8, 3:8-18, 6:16-23; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:1

##### In simple terms, a fleshly **lust** is an overwhelming yearning for anything God has forbidden. *Fleshly lusts* are desires, cravings, and passions that are opposed to God and His holy nature. Genesis 3:6

##### Not all human desires are fleshly lusts, but when a desire **controls** us or causes us to violate God's righteous standards, it becomes a type of desire that is not good for us or acceptable to God.

##### 1 John 2:15-16 outlines three categories of sinful desires and one of them is lust of the flesh or carnal lusts. The **other** two are lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

##### The birthplace of these fleshly lusts is the **sinful** human nature we inherited from Adam. This fallen nature is also called the Adamic nature, the sin nature, the fleshly nature, or the old nature. It will continue to reside in our bodies until the day of our glorification when God will change our bodies. Romans 7:17, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

#### To *abstain* is a present tense command in this verse. To abstain means to distance yourself, to keep from **contact**, to not allow influence.

##### As children of God, we are not to entertain or **flirt** with a desire that has the potential to rule us or cause us to violate God's righteous standard. To do so is to invite failure and defeat into our lives. James 4:4, 1 Peter 1:17

##### In our own strength we will not be able to successfully obey this command. It is only as we **count** on our identity with Christ and depend on the Holy Spirit that we are able to successfully abstain from fleshly lusts. Romans 7:14-24, 8:7; Galatians 3:3

#### We are *aliens and strangers*. Based on our new identification with Christ, sin’s power over us has been **broken**.

##### We are no longer **part** of the world system where we had no choice but to be ruled by our fleshly lusts. We are now foreigners and strangers to that world. In Christ we are dead to sin and alive to God. Romans 6:1-11, 1 Peter 2:24

##### As we **count** on this fact and depend on the Holy Spirit who lives in us, we are empowered to do God’s will. John 15:5, Galatians 5:16

### 1 Peter 2:11d – *…abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul*… Our fleshly lusts are not sitting around **dormant**, content to be inactive. They are aggressively taunting and challenging us. For this reason, we must walk by means of the Spirit at all times. Galatians 5:16

#### Your fleshly nature unleashes a **lethal** campaign against your own soul. This was Peter’s motivation for the command to abstain from fleshly lusts. The imagery Peter used reminds us of a crouching animal, poised for attack. The moment you relax, it strikes and devours. Genesis 4:7

#### When you walk according to the flesh, you will end up **violating** God's standards. In those moments you are no longer walking according to the Spirit. Galatians 5:17-21

#### Every second of our lives we are either walk according to the Spirit or according to the flesh. It is **either** one or the other. Romans 6:13, 16; Ephesians 5:15-17

### 1 Peter 2:12a – *Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles…* As Jewish believers living in a Gentile world, Peter encouraged his readers to have a **holy** testimony. The word *behavior* describes a way of life.

#### We too are **strangers**, living as ambassadors for Christ in a hostile world. Our actions should be righteous and honoring to God. Romans 13:13; Philippians 1:27, 2:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; Hebrews 13:18

#### In Colossians 4:5 Paul gave a similar command: “*Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity*.” As Christians interacted with people around them, both Peter and Paul wanted believers to **build** honorable relationships so they could share the gospel with others.

### 1 Peter 2:12b – *So that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers..*. To **slander** is to defame or degrade, most often by exaggeration or outright falsehood. Slanderers fabricate lies to accuse their victims of evil. Peter’s readers were exposed to this kind of defamation from their unbelieving neighbors. Matthew 5:11

#### Christians have always faced accusations. When Christians did not worship idols, they were accused of **atheism**. Likewise, Christians were accused of starting the great fire that consumed Rome during Nero's reign. Acts 18:6, 1 Corinthians 4:12-13

#### As Christians, we can expect to be falsely accused, but we are never to **act** in a way that gives legitimacy to these accusations. Matthew 5:16, Philippians 2:14-16

### 1 Peter 2:12c – *…they* [unsaved people] *may because of your good deeds as they observe them, glorify God…* You may be the only **Bible** a person ever reads. When unbelievers slander you and put you down, they watch your response. Your kindness and undeserved forgiveness speak louder than words. Romans 12:14-21

#### Our **deeds** should bring glory to God and point unbelievers to Him. Hopefully unsaved people will notice something different and perhaps even ask what makes you able to respond to ridicule and persecution with kindness, joy, patience, love and forgiveness. 1 Peter 3:15

#### This does not mean, however, that a Christian who is the victim of sexual abuse or some other crime should remain **silent**. If you have the privilege within the justice system of your country to seek justice, you should do so. But in all your responses be sure to be respectful and keep a good conscience. 1 Peter 3:15-16

### 1 Peter 2:12d – *…glorify God in the day of visitation*. What is the day of visitation?

#### The day of visitation may refer to the day of your tormentor’s salvation, since on that day they are indeed **visited** by God. It is possible that when and if the person who slandered you gets saved, they thank God for the good deeds they observed in you that helped lead them to salvation.

#### However, since not everyone who sees a Christian do good works gets saved, this verse likely refers to a **future** day of judgment when God personally pays every individual a visit, giving each of them their personal day in court. Romans 2:15-16; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 5:13, 20:11-15

#### We know that on a future day of judgment every knee will **bow** in praise to Christ, acknowledging His supreme worth (Phil. 2:9-11). That is likely the event prophetically mentioned here, when the unsaved will *glorify God* for our good works done during adversity by the power of Christ. Revelation 3:9

## 1 Peter 2:13-17 – Submission to government

### 1 Peter 2:13a – *Submit yourselves…* Submission is the voluntary **act** of placing oneself under the authority of another. All Christians are called to live humble lives of voluntary submission. Forced submission is slavery and is not what Peter was advocating here; however, voluntarily submission is an amazing decision that requires faith and humility.

### 1 Peter 2:13b – *Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake*… What is the correct motivation for submission? According to Peter, we do not submit for our own sake, society's sake, the government's sake, or even another person's sake. We submit for the **Lord’s** sake. This means we submit because we desire to please the Lord.

### 1 Peter 2:13c – To whom are we to submit? In this passage we *…Submit* [ourselves] *to every human institution…* This refers to **any** legitimate governmental organization that has authority over us. But why should Christians submit to human governments?

#### Genesis 9:6 is considered a **key** verse in understanding why we submit to the government. God told Noah, “*Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man*.”

#### God is the originator of government. By instituting a system called human government, God gave people the authority and responsibility to restrain lawlessness (particularly **murder**). The purpose for government is to punish those who do evil and reward those who do what is right.

#### In Romans 13:4 we learn that government “*is a minister of* **God** *to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil*.”

#### Titus 3:1-2 shows the **posture** Christians are to take toward human governments: *“Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men*.”

#### We must remember that God is the **ultimate** authority. If a government is in power, it is because God is allowing it for a time. In Daniel 2:21 we read that God removes and establishes kings. Psalm 83:18, 145:13; Isaiah 40:15, 23; Jeremiah 27:5-7; Daniel 4:34-35

#### These biblical statements about obedience to our government in no way imply that our governments are **perfect**. In fact, many times governments go beyond God’s design and harm those who do good. Later in this epistle Peter addressed unjust treatment of believers by governments.

### 1 Peter 2:13d – *Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority...* We are called to **submit** to our head of government whether it is a king, a president, a prime minister or even a dictator. Matthew 22:21

#### When Peter said to submit *to every human institution*, he meant any system of government whose authority we are placed under. *Every* includes government institutions we do not particularly **agree** with, be it a democracy, a monarchy, or even a dictatorship. When Peter wrote this, the cruel Roman emperor Nero was in power.

#### History has deemed **Nero** as one of the most evil and insane rulers of all time. He tortured and murdered Christians in horrific and unimaginable ways. Yet even though Nero abused his position and was anything but a righteous leader, Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, commanded believers to submit to his authority.

#### Christians are not to be **hostile** toward the government under which they are placed. Instead, we are told in 1 Timothy 2:2 to pray for their authorities. When we do not submit ourselves to the government God placed over us, we dishonor God, the originator of human government.

### 1 Peter 2:14a – ..*.or to governors as sent by him*…Not only are we to submit to the head of government, but Peter also commanded submission to lesser authorities. **Local** officials as well are authorized by God.

### 1 Peter 2:14b – …*for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.* Governments act as judges, weighing whether deeds are lawful or unlawful, right or wrong. Even under **corrupt** governments, violations are generally punished, and honorable conduct is usually commended.

### 1 Peter 2:15a – *For such is the will of God*… Peter gave some practical reasons for submitting to government. First, submission to human government is God’s **will**. God instituted governments and He wants us to submit to them. For this reason alone, we ought to honor the authorities that preside over us.

### 1 Peter 2:15b – …*that by doing good you may silence*…. This Greek term for *silence* PHIMOŌ is used in Mark 4:39 when Jesus quieted the sea. In 1 Timothy 5:18 this same word is translated “**muzzle**.” When Christians do good through submission to the government, they muzzle would-be accusers.

### 1 Peter 2:15c – …*the ignorance of foolish* [humans]. A Christian's humble, honorable conduct can stop even the **cruelest** people in their tracks, unable to effectively bring an accusation against someone who is faultless. There is however one important exception to obeying the government. Matthew 27:3-5

#### Civil disobedience is allowed when there is a clear **conflict** between the laws of the government and the law of God. If the government tells you to do something that goes against God’s word, then, and only then, is disobedience warranted. Exodus 1:17; Daniel 3:16-18, 6:10-13; Acts 4:19, 5:29

#### We see this type of **civil** disobedience throughout the Old and New Testaments: Daniel ignored a law about praying (Dan. 6:10); Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down to an idol (Dan. 3:14); Egyptian midwives refused to participate in infanticide (Ex. 1:15-17); and Peter and John disobeyed the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:19, 5:29).

### 1 Peter 2:16 – *Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil but use it as bond slaves of God.* Peter wrote to Jewish believers who were no longer under the Mosaic **Law** yet were not exempt from the laws of the land. He said, “Go ahead and act as free people, but do not abuse your freedom.” Our freedom never gives us a license to sin.

#### Peter’s audience was told to use their freedoms to serve God as His servants. Romans 7:4-6 explains that the purpose of our freedom as Christians is so we *might bear fruit for God*. We have been released from bondage to the law so we can be **free** to serve God in a new and fruitful way. Romans 6:15, 7:4

#### Christian freedom never endorses **lawless** living or rebellion against a government. Our freedom in Christ was given to us so we could serve God, not so we could start a rebellion against our government. Galatians 5:13, 2 Peter 2:1-3

#### Some Christians rebel against government by do things like refusing to pay **taxes**. These people claim their freedom in Christ puts them above the laws of men. Peter said this type of thinking is a covering for evil. Mark 12:13-17

#### The point here is that freedom in Christ does not exempt a Christian from following human governments and societal laws. God is the one who established governments to begin with and all current governments exist only because God **sanctions** their existence. Romans 13:1-7

### 1 Peter 2:17a – *Honor all people*… Why would God give such a sweeping command?

#### Christ died equally for **all** humanity. Since all people are valuable to God, all people should be valuable to us as well. Leviticus 19:15, John 7:24, Romans 13:7, James 2:1-9

#### All people are **made** in the image of God and thus possess a nonnegotiable level of dignity and worth regardless of their status in life or behavior. While the world sees people as a means to an end or a mere commodity, God values all people everywhere regardless of their significance in society.

#### This command implies that every person **matters** to God. No matter who you are or what you have done, you are valuable in God’s eyes. In fact, God deems you so valuable He chose to send His Son to die for your sins. Matthew 6:26, John 3:16

#### The command to honor **all** people applies to the weak, the unlovely, the forgotten, the shamed, and the vilest people alive in our world today. It includes people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. There are no exceptions. If we take this verse literally, we are even to honor those who persecute us. Ezekiel 33:11; John 3:16; 1 Timothy 1:16, 2:4

#### The command to honor all people includes the **unborn**. When we understand that life begins at conception and that unborn children are made in God's image, we realize they are of all people the most vulnerable and thus worthy of special honor and protection.

### 1 Peter 2:17b – *…love the brotherhood…*This is a specific call for us to love God’s **family**, those who are believers in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 13:1; 1 John 3:1, 4:7-12

#### The Greek word for love used here is AGAPE, which is unconditional love that comes from God rather than a mere **human** emotion. It is sacrificial in nature and universal in scope. This is a present tense imperative command which means we are to AGAPE love our Christian family every day, as a way of life. 1 John 2:10

#### Churches should be known as citadels of **love**. In John 13:35 Jesus said to His disciples, “*By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*.” Throughout history love for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ has been the mark of Christianity, setting it apart from all other religious communities. Romans 12:10

### 1 Peter 2:17c – …*fear God…* In this verse the command to *fear God* does not imply being **scared** of God; rather, it refers to having a deep awe and respect for Him. When you fear God, He becomes the last person you would ever want to offend. 1 Chronicles 29:11, Proverbs 1:7, Romans 11:36, 1 Peter 1:17, 1 John 4:18

### 1 Peter 2:17d – …*honor the king…* It's important to remember Peter gave this command when **Nero**, a cruel and sadistic madman, was on the throne.

#### Romans 13:1 states, “*There is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God*.” We are to honor our leaders because God is the one who has **allowed** them to be in that position. Daniel 2:21, Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:1-7

#### To honor a leader does not mean we have to **agree** with everything they do or say. It does mean we need to submit to their authority and treat them with respect regardless of disagreeable political views.

## 1 Peter 2:18-20 – Submission in the workplace

### 1 Peter 2:18a – *Servants…* After discussing a Christian’s submission to government, Peter transitioned to the topic of **slavery**.

#### The word *servant* as used here was a term that generally meant **household** slave. It is important to understand that slavery was a common and accepted practice in the ancient world and in New Testament times. Slaves represented much of the work force.

#### It is estimated that one out of every **five** people in the ancient world may have been a slave. By the time the New Testament was written, about 30% of people in the Roman empire were slaves.

#### Slaves were of many nationalities and ethnic groups and included Christians and non-Christians alike. Slave **owners** also consisted of both Christians and non-Christians. Thankfully, many slaves became believers in Christ. Philemon 1:1-25

#### In 1 Corinthians 7:21 Paul addressed those who were in slavery and under bondage. If offered, He encouraged them to **choose** freedom; “*Were you called* [saved] *while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that*.”

#### It is important to understand that the reason Peter included this passage in scripture was to **show** Christians how to live successfully if they found themselves in that tragic circumstance. Peter did not excuse or tolerate slavery, but he did give believers who were slaves instructions on to how to live godly lives in the hand that was dealt to them.

#### Since slaves made up a significant part of the **workforce** and performed a variety of duties in the ancient world, it is not a stretch to apply Peter’s teaching to ordinary employees in our modern-day world.

### 1 Peter 2:18b – *Servants be submissive to your masters with all respect…* Peter directed slaves to not only submit, but to go a step further and submit **reverently**. By way of application, a Christian employee should submit to his or her boss and show respect as well.

### 1 Peter 2:18c – Servants were to be submissive *…not only to those who are good and gentle but also to those who are unreasonable*. It might have been easy to submit to a benevolent owner, but it would have been very **difficult** to submit to an unreasonable master. Matthew 5:41, Luke 6:27-29

#### The term *unreasonable* means warped, perverted, unfair, or twisted. Peter commanded Christian slaves to submit to their unreasonable masters. This would have required great faith in God, but God can be trusted to **protect** His children. Psalm 34:15 says, “*The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and His ears are open to their cry*.”

#### As Christians in today’s world, we may find ourselves in a less than ideal work situation. Even when an employer is harsh and unreasonable, God wants Christians to work enthusiastically, doing the **best** we can, as though we are directly serving the Lord. Ephesians 6:5-8, Colossians 3:23

#### Are there exceptions to submitting to an employer? Yes!

##### Obviously, an employee is not a **slave** and is free to seek employment elsewhere, but the idea here is for a Christian to work wholeheartedly while under the authority of an employer.

##### God does not want you to stay in a dangerous situation or remain in a condition where you might be sexually or otherwise **abused** (Prov 22:3). In today’s world, you have the freedom to leave an at-risk setting.

##### There is another exception to submitting to an employer. If your employer asks you to do something that is **illegal** or contrary to God’s will, you should obey God rather than your employer. Acts 5:29

### 1 Peter 2:19a – *For this finds favor..*. The word favor here comes from the word CHARIS, meaning grace or kindness. If a Christian respectfully submits to their employer, even in unreasonable and unfair circumstances, they will **find** favor, first with God and second with their unreasonable master or employer.

### 1 Peter 2:19b – *…if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly*. When a believer suffers unethical treatment due to their loyalty to God, God **takes up** their case. Exodus 2:23-25

#### Our tendency today is to submit to an employer only when we think they deserve it. We are taught to demand our rights and never put up with any unfair treatment. On the contrary, God wants us to willingly **give up** our rights and persevere, even under difficult circumstances or incompetent bosses. Romans 12:14

#### When a Christian willingly submits to an unreasonable boss, the life of Jesus Christ is displayed **through** them. Since Christians serve God rather than people, they often have the most cheerful demeanor and greatest productivity. This kind of posture makes them respected, desirable, and a testimony of God to their employer. 2 Corinthians 4:10

#### God is **pleased** when we trust Him to empower us and protect us. He is pleased when we do what He asks. He promises to always be with us and meet our every need. Psalm 34:4-8; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:13, 19; Hebrews 11:6, 13:5b

### 1 Peter 2:20a – *For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience?* There is no special honor when you sin and then patiently endure suffering due to that sin; you are simply **reaping** what you sowed. You had it coming to you. Galatians 6:7-8

### 1 Peter 2:20b – *But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it; this finds favor with God*. It is fair for you to endure suffering for doing wrong, but it is quite another thing to **endure** suffering when you do what is right. We see that enduring unjust suffering conveys God’s favor to us. John 17:14, 1 Peter 3:17

#### When we humbly submit to the will of an unworthy employer or master, God is honored. In any **trial**, when we respond by faith rather than pride or bitterness, we experience ever-increasing degrees of God's grace. 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, Hebrews 12:3

#### The ultimate way to trust God and thus bring Him glory, is to endure **unjust** suffering. Peter connected our suffering to submission to government and masters (employers). Next, he will link our unjust suffering to the unjust sufferings of Christ. Isaiah 53:7

## 1 Peter 2:21-23 – Submission through undeserved suffering

### 1 Peter 2:21a – *For you have been called for this purpose*… God **allows** all believers to experience unjust suffering. If suffering was appointed for Christ, it is also appointed for us. Philippians 1:29

#### To **suffer** for Christ becomes an ultimate honor for the believer. When we endure wrongful suffering, we are faithfully following His pattern. 2 Corinthians 6:19; Philippians 3:10; 2 Timothy 3:12, 4:17-18; 1 Peter 4:1, 13

#### Christ **permitted** Himself to be abused by irrational authorities to save us from our sins and give us eternal life. In Philippians 1:29 Paul said we ought to have this same mindset: “*For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake*.”

#### When we face suffering, we can be of good **cheer** because Jesus said: *“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way, they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”* (Matthew 6:11-12)

### 1 Peter 2:21b – …*since Christ also suffered for you leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps*… Christ is the ultimate **example** of undeserved suffering. As we navigate life, we are called to trace the footsteps of Christ through the veil of suffering. Colossians 1:24

### 1 Peter 2:22a – Christ …*who committed no sin…* became the utmost example of enduring, undeserved suffering. Jesus overcame every temptation known to man, and **never** sinned. He did not deserve to suffer and die. Isaiah 53:9, Luke 23:41, Hebrews 4:15, 1 John 3:5

### 1 Peter 2:22b – …*nor was any deceit found in His mouth*. Jesus was not deceitful. He never told a **lie**. He was true and honest through and through. If there would have been any trace of hypocrisy in Christ, Judas would surely have reported it, but Judas said of Christ, “*I have sinned by betraying innocent blood* (see Matt. 27:3-5).”

### 1 Peter 2:23a – Christ was the perfect example of undeserved suffering because *while being reviled, He did not revile in* return. When Christ was insulted and ridiculed, He did not **retaliate**. Isaiah 53:7, Mark 14:61

### 1 Peter 2:23b – Christ was the perfect example of undeserved suffering because *while suffering, He uttered no* **threats** even though He could have. Matthew 26:53; Hebrew 12:3

### 1 Peter 2:23c – Christ was the perfect example of undeserved suffering because He *kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously*. By entrusting Himself to His Father, Christ became the perfect model for us to follow. He powerfully demonstrated **total** dependence on God. Mark 14:36, Hebrews 5:7

#### During His suffering, Jesus said to the **Father**, “*Not my will, but thine be done* (Luke 22:42).” His whole life illustrated this humble attitude. John 5:19, 7:16, 8:28, 14:31 19:11, 12:49

#### When we **follow** in Christ’s footsteps, we are sometimes unjustly accused and persecuted just as Christ was. When this happens, we should take heart and entrust ourselves to God’s loving care just as Christ did. God will never put us through anything that is outside of His will or too difficult to handle. 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Peter 2:9

## 1 Peter 2:24-25 – A submission that brought salvation

### 1 Peter 2:24a – Christ, the perfect example of undeserved suffering, *bore our sins in His body on the cross*. The substitutionary work of Christ was His death for **ours**. He died a death He did not deserve. He died our death, *the just for the unjust.* 1 Peter 3:18

#### Jesus sacrificed Himself to pay for our sins. At **no cost** to us whatsoever, He suffered and died so we could be forgiven.

#### On the cross He bore our sins and **paid** for them in full. He bore all our sins in His own body in order to provide the perfect payment we critically needed. Hebrews 7:27

### 1 Peter 2:24b – Christ*… Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness…* The benefit of the gospel goes far beyond merely saving us from sin’s penalty. The good news of what Christ did for us includes deliverance from sin’s power in our **daily** lives. Christ's work on the cross gives us the ability to live holy lives.

#### Christ won freedom for us over sin’s domination. When Christ died on the cross He not only died for sins (plural), but He also died *to sin* on our behalf (Romans 6:10). This aspect of Christ’s work on the cross is seldom **taught**.

#### Since we are dead to sin and alive to God, we are free to serve others even when we are wrongly treated. We are free to do this through the **power** of Christ and His work on the cross on our behalf. Romans 6:1-11, Colossians 3:1-4

#### The power of sin over our lives was broken by Christ’s work on the cross. Being now dead to sin we possess a brand-new ability to submit to others even when we are treated badly. Peter brought in this teaching so we could be **reminded** *to live to righteousness* especially when we might otherwise be tempted to react negatively.

### 1 Peter 2:24c – Quoting from Isaiah 53:5 Peter said, “*For by His wounds you were healed.*” This sounds like we were healed physically by Christ’s death on the cross, but in context, this verse actually speaks of being healed spiritually from the tragic **effects** of sin.

#### Because of Jesus’ suffering on the cross, we now receive **spiritual** healing for our sin-sick souls. The death of Christ does not guarantee physical healing, but it does guarantee complete spiritual healing for every person who believes in Him.

#### Although this verse does not guarantee physical healing as some teach, that does not mean God does not answer prayers and **heal** those who are physically sick. God is the great physician. We should always pray for the sick among us. James 5:14-16

### 1 Peter 2:25a – *For you were continually straying like sheep…* Loosely quoting Isaiah 53:6, Peter reminded these displaced Jewish believers of their past lost condition. Like **sheep**, they had gone their own way and had wandered in the wilderness of sin and rebellion.

### 1 Peter 2:25b – …*but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls*. Christ is both our shepherd and guardian. While we may suffer mistreatment of our bodies or loss of our possessions, **nobody** can overpower the guardian of our souls, Jesus Christ.

## 1 Peter 3:1-6 – Wives and a spirit of submission

### 1 Peter 3:1a – *In the same way you wives be submissive to your own husbands*… Flowing from Christ's example in the previous verses, Peter encouraged wives to wisely and willingly submit to their **own** husbands. Let’s consider the subject of submission.

#### In attributes and deity, God the Father and God the Son are **equal**, but within the authority structure of the Godhead, God the Father is over Christ. In 1 Corinthians 11:3 we read, “*But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ*.”

#### Jesus Christ is happy with this difference in **roles** and willingly subjects Himself to His Father. 1 Corinthians 15:23-28

##### Christ’s example throughout the gospels shows He **willingly** did whatever the Father asked Him to do. It was Christ’s decision to do the Father’s will over His own. John 8:28, 12:49-50

##### There is great joy and perfect **harmony** in the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. John 5:19b-20a says, “*For whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing*.”

#### Just as Jesus willingly submits to God the Father, Christian wives **should**, of their own volition, submit to their own husbands because this is the authority structure our wise and loving creator God established within marriage.

#### Before God’s eyes, husbands and wives are equal, but their roles in marriage **differ**. There is joy and harmony when we follow God’s way (Psalm 145:17). The role of women in marriage is in place to bless and protect wives, not to demean them.

#### It is important to note that a Christian wife is not required to submit to **men** in general, only to her *own husband*. Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18

#### While there are role differences within the church, the Bible nowhere teaches that women are **inferior** to men.

##### Throughout His lifetime, Jesus placed a high **value** on women. In fact, New Testament teaching elevates the value of women far beyond anything seen in the ancient world or within the declining cultures of today's world. Galatians 3:28

##### Peter did not address this here, but there are **logical** exceptions to a wife’s submission to her husband. We know that submission to a husband does not include sinful, criminal, dangerous, or otherwise questionable activity.

##### In cases where a wife is asked to submit to biblically sinful activities, the wife should always **choose** to submit to God and His word over submission to her husband.

### 1 Peter 3:1b – …*wives be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word…* Peter stated that the wife should choose to be submissive even if her husband is **disobedient**. This is no minor issue that the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to address. What does the phrase *disobedient to the word* mean?

#### *Disobedient to the word*…This phrase may refer to an unbelieving husband who has not believed the gospel message (1 Peter 4:17). The Greek word used here for *disobedient* APEITHÉŌ means to not allow yourself to be **persuaded**. All unbelievers have clearly not yet allowed themselves to be persuaded to obey and believe the gospel.

#### *Disobedient to the word*…This phrase could equally apply to the believing husband who is not currently walking with the Lord or has no interest in spiritual things. Therefore, we see this command **applies** to the wife of either a saved or unsaved husband regardless of the motivation behind her husband’s disobedience.

### 1 Peter 3:1c – *…they may be won without a word…* Why would a Christian wife submit to a disobedient husband? The practical goal of this level of submission is so that **without** any words spoken, merely by her way of life, a believing wife may be able to positively influence her rebellious husband and attract him to the Lord.

#### This command follows on the heels of 1 Peter 2:13-25 where **all Christians** are instructed to be submissive to those who are over them. In verse 18 Peter directed servants to respectfully submit to their masters “*not only to those who are good and gentle but also to those who are unreasonable*.” This is the example Christ set for us.

#### A wife may feel the urge to try to force her husband to go to church, read the Bible, or show interest in spiritual things. If she takes a verbal approach, it will likely drive him **away**. God calls the married Christian woman to trust God and use His methodology.

### 1 Peter 3:2 – …*as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior*… The Christian wife has non-verbal lifestyle **tools** at her disposal. Her silent testimony speaks louder and more effectively than her spoken words. Proverbs 21:9, Proverbs 19:13

#### The word *chaste* describes freedom from defilement or contamination. The sincere Christian wife who submits with **pure** motives enjoys a convincing testimony that can melt the defiance of her disobedient husband. Titus 2:5

#### Even a disobedient husband may respond positively to unmerited respect from his wife. This **response** is precisely what Peter desired from this teaching. Ephesians 5:33

### 1 Peter 3:3a – *Your adornment must not be merely external*… The Christian wife is not to **depend on** her physical or external appearance in her approach to marriage.

#### The Greek word for *adornment* is KOSMOS which means an organized arrangement, like the order and alignment of the **universe**.

#### Interestingly, our English word **cosmetic** is derived from the Greek word KOSMOS. In this context, *your adornment* refers to how you as a wife seek to beautify yourself to make yourself attractive.

### 1 Peter 3:3b – *Your adornment must not be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses*. As in Peter’s day, it might be easy for Christian women today to **depend** on trendy hairstyles, fashionable clothes, and expensive jewelry to make themselves attractive.

#### Nevertheless, Peter encouraged believing women to not imitate the **world** by putting excessive emphasis on outward appearance. Without neglecting their appearance, God calls Christian women to something greater. Romans 12:2, 1 John 2:15

#### This is not a prohibition **against** adornments, fashionable clothing, or taking care of one's appearance. It is simply a matter of priority and emphasis.

### 1 Peter 3:4a – *But let it be the hidden person of the heart…* The *hidden person of the heart* is the inner man (the **new** inner self) referenced in Romans 7:22, 2 Corinthians 4:16 and Ephesians 3:16.

#### In Ephesians 4:23-24 the inner man (person) is referred to as the “*new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*” When we were born again into the family of God, we became a new **creation** with a new inner self created in the image of God. 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:10, 1 John 3:9

#### Not only does the Holy Spirit strengthen our new inner self day by day so we can please God, but He also produces His **fruit** through the inner self as we walk in active faith. John 15:4-6, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 3:16

#### It might be tempting for a woman who has a *disobedient* husband to seek his approval or try to change him through her **external** appearance. However, Peter taught that an external strategy does not win a husband’s defiant heart. Adorning oneself with the new inner self is the correct strategy.

### 1 Peter 3:4b – But let a wife’s adornment be …*with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit*. When a believing wife focuses on her **inward** person, she focuses on what gives real and enduring beauty. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#### A *gentle and quiet spirit* is a spirit at **rest**.

#### A woman who is secure in Christ’s love and acceptance is **content**. She is not anxious or stressed, because she trusts in her God. Her peaceful, confident disposition is reflected in her countenance. According to God's word, this is what makes a woman truly attractive. Psalm 23:1, Proverbs 31:28-30, Philippians 4:4-7

#### Whereas outward beauty fades with time, a gentle and quiet spirit **endures** forever and will receive praise from the Lord.

### 1 Peter 3:4c – *Which is precious in the sight of God…* This type of spiritual and invisible beauty is something God greatly **values**. While the world is consumed with the visible, God is concerned with the authentic beauty of the internal person. 1 Samuel 16:7

### 1 Peter 3:5 – *For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands*. Peter was not proposing a **new** idea. He went back in history to show how godly women *used to adorn themselves*.

#### First, it's important to remember Peter is talking about *godly* women of old, not merely any women who lived in Old Testament times. **Godly** women of old *…hoped in God*. Because of their confidence in God, they were able to submit to their very imperfect husbands. Psalm 9:10, 31:1, 34:15, 55:22; Hebrews 4:16, 13:5-6

#### Second, they…*hoped in God…being submissive to their own husbands*. In Ephesians 5:22 the apostle Paul commanded **believing** wives to “*be subject to [their] own husbands, as to the Lord*.” He went on to explain that just “*as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything*.”

#### On this challenging issue, the Christian wife can trust that God’s **will** is *good and acceptable and perfect* (Rom 12:2) and that in doing what God commands He will watch over her and maintain her greater good. God promises to protect and care for all who rely on Him. A Christian wife can rely on God for wisdom, courage, and protection. 1 John 5:3

### 1 Peter 3:6a – *Just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord*… Peter presented Sarah as an example of *the holy women who hoped in God*. For indeed, Sarah trusted in the Lord and gave respect to Abraham even though his **lies** endangered her on at least two occasions (Gen. 12:11-13, 20:2). Even through confounding events, Sara knew God was in control.

### 1 Peter 3:6b – Peter told Christian wives they *…have become [Sarah’s] children, if [they] do what is right without being frightened by any fear.* Just like Sarah, a Christian wife can **rest** calmly, knowing God will defend and care for her regardless of her husbands’ spiritual state.

## 1 Peter 3:7 – Husbands and submission to Christ

### 1 Peter 3:7a – *You husbands in the same way…* *In the same way* refers **back to** Christ’s humble disposition (submissive spirit) in the face of injustice (1 Pet. 2:21-25). The way Christ subjected Himself to the will of the Father is a perfect example for us. Philippians 2:5-8

#### In marriage, **Christ** is given as an example for both the husband and the wife. Christ was never self-serving. Even when mistreated, He never responded improperly. When maligned, He actively entrusted Himself to the Father.

#### Just as Jesus **laid aside** His personal rights for the good of others, the Christian husband must constantly depend on God’s grace to lay aside his personal desires for the benefit of his wife.

### 1 Peter 3:7b – *You husbands in the same way live with your wives in an understanding way*… The Christian husband must be considerate of his wife, paying special **attention** to her needs. God placed the responsibility on the husband to adjust to his wife rather than the other way around. Ephesians 5:25-27

#### When Peter used the phrase “*in an understanding way,*” he wasn’t saying husbands must be **all-knowing**. Peter simply meant Christian men ought to know their wives well enough to love them in ways meaningful to their specific needs, wants, and aspirations.

#### Men and women often **process** life differently, and men do not automatically understand or appreciate many of these differences. Therefore, the command to *live with your wife in an understandable way* is especially important. The believing husband should know and appreciate his wife’s particular strengths and weaknesses.

### 1 Peter 3:7c – …*as with someone weaker since she is a woman*… This weakness does not refer to weak intellect or frail character; rather, it refers to **physical** differences that exist between women and men. Peter was not demeaning or insulting women in this verse. He was not implying that men are superior to women in any way.

#### When something is weaker, it does not mean it is **less** valuable, but it does mean it requires special attention. A proper understanding of this verse places the emphasis on the husband's need to provide exceptional understanding, patience, and care, rather than on a wife's potential weaknesses.

#### This statement was directed toward believing husbands, instructing them to up their game and show greater concern and respect for their wives. The intentional care one gives an expensive treasure is how a husband should treat his wife. Men should take exceptional care of their wives, protecting and guarding them with the deepest **love**.

### 1 Peter 3:7d – …*and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life*… The Christian husband is not only commanded to give his wife **honor**, but he is also told to remember that they are equal heirs of God’s gracious gift of eternal and abundant life. Colossians 3:10-14

### 1 Peter 3:7e – There is a practical side to this command: “*so that your prayers will not be hindered*.” God cares very much how a man **treats** his wife. If a husband is not considerate of his wife, his prayers will go unanswered. That is a sobering thought.

## 1 Peter 3:8-9 – Submission to one another

### After teaching how to have a good relationship with government, employers and spouses, Peter concluded this section with a series of commands about **unity** within the church. We will observe that having a blessed life does not depend on how we are treated, but rather on how we humbly treat others.

### 1 Peter 3:8 – *To sum it up all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble …* Peter gave his readers summary instructions on **how** to treat one another.

#### *Be* **harmonious**… Christians can easily become divided. The fact that Peter gave this command to persecuted believers shows that discord is possible, even in difficult times. As a body of believers, we should make every effort to remain united in thought and mind, especially during trying times. Romans 12:16, Ephesians 4:1-6

#### *Be …***sympathetic***…*Believers are to be compassionate. Rather than being callous or indifferent, we are to empathize with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are hurting. If they are rejoicing, we are to rejoice with them too. Romans 12:15

#### *Be …***brotherly***…* Believers are to show brotherly love to each other in attitude and action. As Christians, we are all born again by means of the same Holy Spirit through faith in the same gospel. We are family. We are our brother’s keepers. Genesis 4:9, Romans 12:10-11, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 John 3:16-18

#### *Be …***kindhearted***…* Believers are to be kind and compassionate to each other. In Ephesians 4:32 Paul gave a similar command, saying, “*Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you*.”

#### *Be …***humble in spirit***…*Believers are to have an attitude of humility. This is fundamental to Christianity. We are not to think highly of ourselves, because the ground at the foot of the cross is level. Apart from the grace of God, we would all still be dead in our sins. Romans 12:3, 16; 1 Corinthians 4:6-7, 6:9-11; Ephesians 2:1-3; Philippians 2:3

### 1 Peter 3:9a – …*not returning evil for evil or insult for insult*… Peter moved from addressing mindsets to focusing on **actions**. He encouraged his audience to refrain from retaliation, even if treated cruelly or with disrespect.

#### This statement brings us all the way back to Christ and His example (1 Peter 2:21-25). When mistreated, Jesus **never** hated or threatened His attackers (Matthew 26:53). His reactions were not what we would normally expect. He was the kindest man to ever live. Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 11:28-29, 27:12

#### Peter taught that **retaliation** is God’s business. He told his readers not to counter or react against bullies. Believers are never to stoop to the level of those who mistreat them. Matthew 5:38-48; Romans 12:14, 17-21

### 1 Peter 3:9b – *…but giving a blessing instead…* Instead of wishing evil on those who cause harm to us, Peter said to **bless** them. In Romans 12:14 Paul said, “*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse*.” God’s grace at work in our lives inspires us to bless those who mistreat us and to refuse bitterness. Luke 6:28

### 1 Peter 3:9c – …*for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing*. In salvation, all believers **inherit** a blessing we don't deserve. Since this is our reality, we can certainly confer blessings on those who mistreat us and don't deserve it.

## 1 Peter 3:10-12 – Psalm 34:12-16, A submissive lifestyle

### Next, Peter **wove** Psalm 34:12-16 into the flow of his instructions for the church. Let's take a closer look.

#### In Psalm 34 David expressed what it means to experience *good days* or days of blessing. It is important to see that David never claimed good days are **free of** fears, troubles, or broken hearts. Good days can have all three: fears (Ps. 34:4), troubles (Ps. 34:6, 17,19), and broken hearts (Ps. 34:18).

#### If we are honest, we **know** suffering is a part of our Christian experience. Peter’s readers were well acquainted with suffering, yet Peter assured them that the ability to enjoy life was well within their reach. As believers, we can experience God’s blessings and live a fulfilled life even in the midst of suffering.

#### In the middle of his hardship, **David** magnified the Lord, experienced answers to prayer, tasted the goodness of God, and even felt the nearness of His presence (Ps. 34:1-8; 18). When we have the right perspective, even the bad times can be joyful.

### 1 Peter 3:10a – *For the one who desires life, to love and see good days*… Sadly, many believers never **enjoy** the abundant life Christ promised. They do not enjoy the blessings they inherited in salvation. But here, quoting from Psalm 34:12, Peter gave several practical principles for Christians who want to relish life and see good days.

### 1 Peter 3:10b – *…must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.* According to this verse, our enjoyment in life is directly related to our **mouth**. To enjoy a good life, we are called to reject evil talk and deceitful speech. James 3:6, Matthew 15:11

### 1 Peter 3:11a – *He must turn away from evil and do good*… To enjoy life, David said we are to avoid **evil**. Sin might seem enjoyable for the moment, but in the end, it will never bring fulfillment or a good life. It always ends in misery and defeat.

#### **Moses** understood this principle. Hebrews 11:25-26 says Moses chose “*rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the temporary pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward*.”

#### In Proverbs 16:17 we **learn** “*The highway of the upright is to turn away from evil; one who watches his way protects his life*.”

### 1 Peter 3:11b – …*he must seek peace and pursue it*… Peace is the **absence** of strife. Romans 12:18 says, “*If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men*.” Peace in relationships and life should be the goal of every believer. Romans 14:19

### 1 Peter 3:12a – *For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous…* Those who belong to God are declared righteous in His sight the moment they **believe**. As believers in Jesus Christ, we are God’s dearly loved children. As His children we now receive His special care. Psalm 33:18, 2 Peter 2:7-9, 1 John 3:1

### 1 Peter 3:12b – *and his ears attend to their prayer…* God pays **special** attention to the prayers of His children. This gracious honor gives believers privileges the unrighteous do not possess. What a blessing! Because Jesus paid the penalty for our sin, we can boldly approach God in prayer, and know He listens. Proverbs 15:8, Ephesians 3:12, Hebrews 4:16

### 1 Peter 3:12c – *…but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.* Those who **do not** belong to the Lord do not receive this special support or care because their evil deeds are not covered by the redeeming love of Jesus Christ. Rather than providing nurture and protection, God opposes those who practice wickedness. Psalm 5:4-6

# 1 Peter 3:13-22 – Grace in Suffering

## 1 Peter 3:13-16 – How to respond to suffering

### 1 Peter 3:13 – *Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?* This could be rephrased like this: “Who would want to harm you for being eager to do good?” We might think if we do good no one will want to harm us, but this is **not always** the case, as the next verse reveals.

#### Faithful believers who are **serious** about pleasing the Lord will face persecution. In 2 Timothy 3:12 Paul said, “*Indeed, all who want to live in a godly way in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*.” Those are tough words. John 15:20, Romans 8:36, 1 Corinthians 4:9-13

#### Jesus went about doing good, but the world **hated** Him. We cannot expect to be treated better than our Savior. Jesus warned His disciples that just like He was persecuted, they would also be persecuted simply for doing good. John 15:18-24, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

### 1 Peter 3:14a – *But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness…* It’s one thing to suffer when you deserve it, but it certainly seems **unfair** to suffer for doing what is right. However, there is reason to rejoice when we suffer unfairly. 1 Peter 2:19

### 1 Peter 3:14b – *…you are blessed.* This statement does not mean you will be jumping up and down with **happiness** in the middle of persecution, but it does mean God will bless you and give you a reason to rejoice. Acts 16:24-25

#### In moments of undeserved persecution, count yourself **privileged**. It isn’t natural for us to think this way, but according to Peter, to suffer for the cause of righteousness becomes a great honor and blessing. Matthew 5:10, 1 Peter 4:14-16

#### Peter wasn’t giving **hollow** advice. After Peter and other believers were imprisoned and beaten for righteousness, Luke wrote this about them: “*So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name*.” Acts 21:13

### 1 Peter 3:14c – *And do not fear their intimidation and do not be troubled …* When opponents of the gospel belittle, humiliate, or threaten us, we are not to **fear**. Isaiah 51:7

#### The apostle Paul had similar **advice** for the believers in Philippi. In Philippians 1:28 Paul told them not to be frightened by their opponents. He said their courage would unnerve their tormentors. Hebrews 13:5-6

#### In Luke 12:4-5 Jesus said, “*Now I say to you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear; fear the One who, after He has killed someone, has the power to throw that person into hell; yes, I tell you,* **fear Him***!*”

#### While God’s eye is on the righteous, Psalm 34:16 warns, “*The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to eliminate the memory of them from the earth*.” God has everything under **control**. Nobody can inflict “real” hurt on a child of God without God’s permission. If God grants that kind of permission, you can rest assured it is for an awesome goal.

### 1 Peter 3:15a – …*but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts*… Rather than fearing people, we should focus our attention on **pleasing** Christ. We are to set Him apart as Lord in our thinking, remembering that He is the highest authority who will ultimately avenge us in good time. Proverbs 29:25, John 12:42-43

#### To **allow** Christ to have a preeminent place in our lives is of utmost importance. When we suffer, we easily want to react in anger and self-preservation. Peter said to focus instead on giving Christ the right place in our lives.

#### To *sanctify Christ* is a command for **believers** only. Unbelievers, including those thinking about trusting the Lord for salvation, cannot set Christ apart as Lord over their lives. They are dead in their trespasses and sins. Ephesians 2:1-3

#### Only believers can set Christ apart as the **Lord** over their lives. Lordship is a sanctification issue for the child of God, not a justification issue for an unsaved person. To honor and revere Christ as Lord in our heart is a privilege and responsibility only Christians possess.

### 1 Peter 3:15b – …*always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you*. When you suffer for doing right, your **witness** greatly increases. Your positive attitude through trials speaks loudly and greatly increases your opportunities to share the gospel.

#### The Greek word for defense used here is APOLOGIA from which we get our English word apologetics. Apologetics means to give a **defense**, reason, or sound argument.

#### Peter was not saying we should defend the authenticity of Christianity; he was saying we should be prepared to give a logical, intelligent **reason** for the hope we possess. This command takes our responsibility out of the intellectual realm and makes it personal. Ephesians 6:15, Colossians 4:6

### 1 Peter 3:15c – ... *always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you…with gentleness and reverence*. When opportunities arise to give a **defense** for our hope, we must do so with great kindness and respect. It is entirely possible to become rude, arrogant, or even malicious when defending the faith, but we are commanded not to react in anger.

### 1 Peter 3:16 – …*and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who disparage your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame*. This verse recaps the model Peter has been presenting all along. The goal is not to win an argument. The goal is to silence those who maliciously persecute you through your **integrity**.

## 1 Peter 3:17-22 – The pattern of suffering

### 1 Peter 3:17 – *For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.* Sometimes we suffer because of our own wrongdoing, but at other times God allows us to **endure** unjust suffering.

#### Regardless of whether our suffering is just or unjust, we should entrust ourselves to our loving heavenly Father and respond humbly. If we suffer for doing what is wrong, we deserve what we get, but we can still **respond** with humility before God.

#### However, God is **pleased** when we patiently endure unfair treatment. Luke 6:32-36, Romans 13:5, 1 Peter 2:19-20

### 1 Peter 3:18a – *For Christ also died for sins once for all…* Christ **willingly** endured unjust suffering. Peter used the suffering of Christ as the greatest model of all for enduring unjust suffering. Romans 6:10; Hebrews 7:27; 9:12, 26; 10:10

#### Christ’s example in 1 Peter 2:21-24 teaches the right **response** to unjust suffering.

#### Christ’s example in 1 Peter 3:17-22 teaches the amazing **results** of unjust suffering. Christ brought you and me to God through His willing endurance of unfair adversity.

### 1 Peter 3:18b – Christ died as …*the just for the unjust…* To pay a debt He did not owe, Christ suffered a death he did not deserve. He willingly accepted the undeserved hatred that was poured out on Him while He also endured untold physical pain. He suffered in this way for a very important purpose: **You**! 2 Corinthians 5:21

### 1 Peter 3:18c – …*so that He might bring us to God…* Christ unjustly suffered for the likes of you and me. He endured unjustified cruelty that culminated in a gory and agonizing death in order to **gain** our marvelous salvation. His example motivates us to likewise endure undeserved persecution. 1 Peter 2:21, 1 John 2:6

### 1 Peter 3:18d – …*having been put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit*… Although Christ was physically killed, He was raised back to life by the Spirit of God. It is interesting to note that Christ did not resurrect Himself. God the **Holy Spirit** brought Him back to life.

#### Romans 1:4 says, “*Who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead,* ***according to*** *the spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord*.”

#### Romans 8:11 says, “*But if the* ***Spirit of Him*** *who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you*.”

### 1 Peter 3:19 – …*in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison.* In other words, in the past, Christ, **in the spirit**, went and made proclamation to spirits who are currently (at the time of Peter’s writing, and even still) imprisoned.

### 1 Peter 3:20a –…*who once were disobedient (APEITHEŌ) when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark…* The spirits to whom Christ made proclamation had been **disobedient** in Noah’s day.

#### The **first** question is this: How did Christ make proclamation to disobedient spirits who are now in prison?

##### The answer is that in the spirit He made proclamation. In other words, Christ, **through** the Holy Spirit, preached through messengers like Noah (2 Pet. 2:5) and Enoch (Jude 14-15).

##### Earlier in this epistle, Peter talked about other Old Testament prophets through whom the Spirit of Christ **spoke**. Peter wrote that these prophets were “*seeking to know what person or time* ***the Spirit of Christ within them*** *was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow*.” 1 Peter 1:10-12

#### The **second** question is this: What is the identity of the currently imprisoned spirits who were disobedient in the days of Noah? Were they fallen angels (demons) or spirits of people?

##### The word for *disobedient* APEITHEŌ that is used here typically describes someone who **refuses** to believe. Peter used this same word to describe a person who is refuses to believe God’s word (1 Pet. 2:8, 3:1) or the gospel message (1 Pet. 4:17). All who refused Noah’s message died in the flood. 2 Peter 2:5

##### Many teachers propose that these spirits were the **fallen** angels who cohabited with women in the days of Noah. This verse does not specifically state whether they were demons, humans, or half human and half demon; however, we know from the Old Testament that multitudes of humans were disobedient in Noah’s day.

##### Genesis 6:3 states, "*Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with* ***man*** *forever, because he also is* ***flesh****; nevertheless, his days shall be one hundred and twenty years*.”

##### Genesis 6:5-7 says, “*Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of* ***man*** *was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The LORD was sorry that He had made* ***man*** *on the earth… The LORD said, ‘I will blot out* ***man*** *whom I have created from the face of the land*…’”

#### The easiest way to understand these verses is that long ago in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, the Spirit of Christ within Noah made proclamation (**preached**, 2 Pet. 1:21) to the disobedient spirits of humans who are currently residing in hell. Luke 16:26, Hebrews 9:27

### 1 Peter 3:20b – *In which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water*. In the days of Noah, only **eight souls** were saved from the global deluge. These eight souls consisted of Noah and his family.

#### Despite the unjust suffering Noah faced for 120 years while preaching righteousness and building the ark, God was **faithful** to Noah and his family and saved them in the end.

#### 2 Peter 2:5 says God “*did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a* **preacher** *of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.*”

#### Hebrews 11:7 says, *"By faith Noah, being* **warned** *by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*”

### 1 Peter 3:21a – …*corresponding to that…* goes back to the previous verse. Peter, an experienced sailor and fisherman, did not let this reference to **water** pass without a comparison. He was referring back to the phrase, “*eight persons, were brought safely through the water*,” from 1 Peter 3:20.

#### The Greek word for *corresponding (*ANTITUPON) means a resemblance, a picture, or a matching **parallel**.

#### According to Greek grammar rules, the phrase “*corresponding to that”* refers to water and not to the ark as some assume. Peter was making an analogy comparing the flood waters with **baptism**.

### 1 Peter 3:21b *– …corresponding to that* [the waters of the flood] *baptism now saves you…* We know from a careful study of the New Testament that the act of water baptism does not save a person from their **sins** (1 Corinthians 1:17), but it is indeed part of a Christian's sanctification or growth process as a disciple of Christ.

#### According to Matthew 28:18-20 the ritual of water baptism publicly identifies a person as a **disciple** of Christ.

#### The phrase “*now saves*” SOZO is in the **present** tense in Greek. This speaks of our current ongoing salvation or sanctification and not our salvation from sin’s penalty or justification.

#### As an **initial** aspect of our discipleship, Matthew 28:19 teaches that believers are to be baptized in water. Water baptism symbolizes that the believer made a break from his or her past life and has now aligned themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. This watery act of identification often spawns persecution for a believer. James 1:21, 2 Corinthians 6:17, Hebrews 10:22

#### Like the flood waters separated Noah and his crew from the sinful world, the waters of our baptism **symbolize** our separation from the world and our alignment with Christ. 1 Peter 3:15

##### Although God had saved Noah spiritually long before the flood came on the earth (Heb. 11:7), the flood waters saved Noah and his family **physically**. The flood waters lifted Noah and his family up, separating them from the judgment others suffered on the earth below.

##### A person gets saved from spiritual death by faith alone in the gospel **prior** to water baptism. Sanctification is next. Sanctification is being saved from the power of sin in our daily lives. Water baptism is an important part of our sanctification, and therefore baptism saves or sanctifies us practically.

### 1 Peter 3:21c – …*not the removal of dirt from the flesh…* Peter emphasized that the baptism in water is not a **bath** that cleanses you spiritually, providing justification. Baptism looks back and depicts what happened to you spiritually when you trusted in Christ for salvation.

### 1 Peter 3:21d – …*but an appeal to God for a good conscience*… The Greek word for *appeal* EPEROTEMA refers to an earnest or intense **yearning** or plea. Baptism is an earnest plea before God for you to have a good conscience.

#### Water baptism is an important **first step** in obedience for a newborn Christian. It is a chance to stand for God, showing the world your earnest desire to identify publicly with Christ. This results in a good conscience before God and people.

#### In the face of inevitable persecution, some of Peter’s audience might not have wanted to **publicly** declare their faith through water baptism. Unlike Noah, the preacher of righteousness, they might rather have remained quiet about God’s salvation. Peter wanted them to have a good conscience and progress in their sanctification.

### 1 Peter 3:21e – …*but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ…* Baptism is part of our sanctification because through it we are appealing to God for a **clear** conscience, demonstrating faith in our new standing before God through Jesus Christ. Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12

### 1 Peter 3:22 – …*Jesus Christ who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.* Be of good cheer because the pattern of suffering ends in **glory**. Jesus proved this.

#### Like Noah who suffered for a **long time** to bring rest to the world (Gen. 5:28-29), Jesus was subjected to extreme suffering for our salvation. Noah was vindicated when he was brought through the flood alive. Jesus was also vindicated because He is now resurrected, glorified, and seated at God’s right hand in the position of great honor.

#### The sufferings of Christ, as severe as they were, were temporary. So were Noah’s. So are yours and mine. This should have encouraged Peter’s audience and you should be encouraged as well. Even if your suffering is severe, **do not fear**! You are in good company and on the right track. Psalm 37:5-6, Hebrews 12:1-3

# 1 Peter 4:1-6 – Suffering and Sin

## 1 Peter 4:1-3 – Rejection of the world

### 1 Peter 4:1a – *Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh*… Christ was fully God and at the same time fully human. However, when we say Christ was fully human, we do not mean Christ was a sinner with a **fleshly** nature. Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 14; 10:30; Galatians 4:4; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 4:15

#### Although the Greek word *flesh* (SARX) **often** refers to the sin nature, we know Christ did not have a sin nature; therefore, in this passage the word *flesh* is a reference to Jesus' human body. John 1:14, Romans 8:3, Hebrews 2:17-18, 1 Peter 3:18

#### Jesus had a human body and experienced physical suffering. He got hungry, cried tears, felt pain, and shed human blood. Although Christ unjustly endured hardships and pain throughout His lifetime, His suffering reached a climax when He **died** the agonizing death of the cross for our sins.

### 1 Peter 4:1b – *…arm yourselves also with the same purpose*… To arm oneself conveys the idea of getting ready for **battle**. Since Jesus Christ suffered (Is. 53:1-12), we need to likewise prepare ourselves for suffering. Colossians 1:24-25, 2 Timothy 3:12

#### John 15:20 – “*Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they* **will also** *persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also*.’” Philippians 1:29, 3:7-21; 1 Corinthians 9:24-25

#### Christ suffered to the point of **physical** death. As believers we are called to follow in His steps. To be martyred for being a Christian is considered the pinnacle of following Christ. Philippians 1:21, 2:5-8; 1 Peter 2:21-24

### 1 Peter 4:1c – …*because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.* God uses physical suffering in our lives to **conform** us to the image of Christ. Romans 8:17, 28; Hebrews 12:2-5

#### At first glance the phrase *ceased from sin* may give the impression that those who suffer will no longer **sin**, but we know a Christian is never completely sinless in this life, even the Christian who suffers (1 Jn. 1:8). Only at the Rapture when we are glorified will Christ bring about the complete end to sin for believers. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

#### The verb to *cease* (PAUO) in this verse is in the passive voice, indicating that the suffering Christian is being **acted upon**. As we endure suffering, Christ, not us, causes spiritual growth in our lives. 1 Corinthians 1:8; 2 Corinthians 1:21; Philippians 1:6, 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; Hebrews 12:2

#### Ceasing from sin describes a **release** from the grip of sin and that is a part of our sanctification. How can this be? How can suffering bring about a release from sin? Philippians 3:10, Hebrews 12:11

##### Suffering causes us to **depend** on God rather than on ourselves. In our weakness, God’s faithfulness and power are displayed, causing us to get to know Him better and love Him more. 2 Corinthians 1:8-9, 12:9-10; Philippians 3:7-11, 4:13

##### Suffering teaches us about God and His word, which leads to a **better understanding** of His ways. Psalm 119:71 states this truth poetically, “*It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes*.”

##### Suffering gives us a new perspective. It causes our **focus to shift** from the temporal to the eternal. When this happens, sin's powerful influences become less enticing. Psalm 73:25-28; Romans 5:3-5, 8:28; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 2 Timothy 4:8

##### Suffering is an experience we **share** with our Savior (1 Pet. 2:21-25). As we suffer, we increasingly identify with Him. Philippians 3:10-11

### 1 Peter 4:2 – *So as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God*. God wants Christians to **pursue** Him rather than the ways of the world (Col. 3:1-2, 1 John 2:15-17). God has some specific goals in mind for each of us:

#### God wants us to be refined and purified. Just as gold is refined and purified through **fire**, God uses suffering in our lives to burn off impurities. 1 Peter 1:7

#### God wants us to persevere and become **mature**. God uses suffering to accomplish this process in our lives. Romans 5:3, James 1:3

#### God wants us to **gain** eternal rewards. The suffering we endure during our short stay on earth is nothing compared to the glory that will be ours for all eternity. Suffering results in eternal rewards. 2 Corinthians 4:17

### 1 Peter 4:3a – *For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles*… In our old lives as unsaved people, we sinned **enough** to last a lifetime.

#### Peter used the term “*Gentiles”* to refer to **unsaved** people. In Ephesians 4:17-19, Paul used this term in the same way. Peter knew that the desires that are typical of the unsaved appeal to us because of the fleeting pleasures they provide. Hebrews 11:24-26

#### As believers, we are not immune to sinful desires. That is why we need to be cognizant of the fact that presenting ourselves to the sin nature will invariably **lead to** slavery, destruction, and ultimately death. Presenting yourself to the sin nature is not worth the temporary pleasure it provides. Romans 6:16‑23, Galatians 6:7-8, James 1:13-15

### 1 Peter 4:3b – …*having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries*. The phrase *having pursued a course of* refers to a **journey** of sinful conduct. This list predominately involves sexual sins, alcohol, idolatry, and wild parties.

#### **Sensuality** conveys the idea of pleasing the senses, especially through participation in immoral behavior. 1 Corinthians 6:18, Colossians 3:5

#### A **lust**is an overwhelming desire, craving, passion, or appetite for something God opposes or forbids. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, 2 Timothy 2:22, James 1:13-15

#### **Drunkenness**has to do with being controlled by alcohol or drugs. Being intoxicated reduces your capacity for thinking and acting rationally. Ephesians 5:18

#### **Carousing**happens when one partakes in sinful activities with a group. The term originally referred to an idolatrous feast or festival that ended with community wide participation in sexual indulgences and depraved passions.

#### The phrase **drinking parties** conveys the idea of excessive consumption of alcohol and the wild revelries that go along with it. At these kinds of events, individuals lose control of their mental awareness and they easily fall prey to behaviors that are immoral, degrading and harmful to themselves and others.

#### Finally, Peter instructed his readers to avoid *abominable* **idolatries**. This referred to the practice of worshipping pagan alternatives for the one true God. In those days, ritualistic or religious prostitution was often included in these detestable practices.

#### Believers who **fail** to remember their position in Christ become blind and forget that they were purified from sin and saved for a better purpose. These believers don't lose their salvation, but they lose future rewards and sadly become useless and unfruitful in life. 2 Peter 1:3-11

## 1 Peter 4:4-6 – Rejection from the world

### 1 Peter 4:4 – *In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you.* This verse implies that Peter's audience was presently facing **ridicule** for their refusal to be involved in the sinful activities of their pagan counterparts.

#### …*they are surprised*… Unbelievers tend to react in **shock** and feel judged when Christians do not join in their sinful activities.

#### …*they malign you..*. Christians who chose to refrain from these sinful activities are often ridiculed or **rejected** by those who practice them.

#### We should not be taken aback by these types of responses. Instead, Peter encouraged his readers to stay the course and **avoid** the sinful conduct of unbelievers. 1 Peter 2:12

### 1 Peter 4:5 – *But they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.* Peter appropriately reminded his audience that unsaved people will be **judged** for their reckless behavior and sinful deeds. Psalm 73:1-28, Proverbs 11:31

#### Unsaved people who taunt and criticize Christians for not participating in sinful practices will one day face God’s judgment. The Bible teaches that no unsaved person will **escape** judgment after this life ends. Acts 10:42

##### Hebrews 9:27 says, “*And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to* **die once** *and after this comes judgment*.” Acts 17:31

##### Hebrews 4:13 states that "*there is no creature who is* **hidden** *from His sight*." Every deed ever done, whether good or bad, will be judged. Everything will be fully examined by God. Romans 2:3, 5

#### No one escapes the consequences of rejecting Christ. Death is not an **escape** from the judgment of God. Whether living or dead, those who did not believe the gospel will be judged. This is an all-important and urgent issue that should not be ignored by anyone. Romans 14:9, Hebrews 10:31

#### Who is the one *who is ready to judge the living and the dead*? The one who will judge the living and the dead is none other than Jesus Christ our Lord. Every unsaved person will face a **day** of reckoning before Christ the supreme judge. John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42, 17:31; Romans 2:16

#### When will *the living and the dead* be judged? Peter did not reveal the **precise** timing of this judgment, but 2 Timothy 4:1 (YLT) says it will be during His future eternal kingdom: “*I do fully testify, then, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is about to judge living and dead at his manifestation and his reign*.” Revelation 19:11-21

##### At His second coming, Jesus will bring judgment against the **living** who persecuted His people. Acts 17:31 says, “*because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead*.” Acts 10:42, 2 Thessalonians 1:7‑8

##### Likewise, in eternity future, Jesus will judge all the **dead** unsaved people with absolute finality. This judgment of all unbelieving people who have died will be executed by God through Christ at the Great White Throne judgment spoken of in Revelation 20:11‑15. Philippians 2:10-11

#### As a forgiven child of God, when you are slandered or mistreated for choosing what is right you can entrust yourself to the **Lord**. You can be at peace knowing God cares for you and will judge those who persecute and slander you for your faith. Romans 12:19

### 1 Peter 4:6a – *For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead…* The word *preached* is in the aorist tense, making it a definite **past** event. Because of God’s judgment of all people who have ever lived, both living and dead, the gospel is being preached to the living and in the past was preached to those who are now dead.

#### If those who are now **dead** would have believed the gospel, they would have been made alive spiritually as the second half of this verse indicates.

#### Some teach that people are given a **second** chance to trust in Christ as Savior after death. The Bible does not support this notion. Hebrews 9:27 is clear on this matter: *“It is destined for people to die once, and after this comes judgment.”* Judgment, not salvation, awaits those who die without Christ.

#### The coming judgment of 1 Peter 4:5 shows why we should preach the gospel to the **living**. Accepting the good news of the gospel by faith during your lifetime provides the only escape from judgment in the future. 1 Peter 1:3

#### Those who have passed on from this life without believing the gospel are set to face a true **crisis** in eternity.

### 1 Peter 4:6b – …*that though they are judged in the flesh as men they may live in the spirit*. The phrase *judged in the flesh* shows that this judgment occurred in time. Consistent with 1 Peter 4:1, *flesh* refers to the human **body**.

#### Speaking of **Christ**, 1 Peter 3:18 uses this same grammar: “*For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God****, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit***.”

#### Temporary judgement at the hands of **men** pales in comparison to eternal judgement. Everyone will stand before Christ in eternity. Some will stand before Him with their sins forgiven and some will stand before Him without their sins forgiven. While the unsaved malign and persecute Christians, their day in court is coming.

#### In conclusion, Peter encouraged his audience that believing the gospel is the only remedy to avoid lasting **judgment**. They might suffer at the hands of unbelievers, but everyone who rejects the gospel will face the judgment of Christ. Which is worse? Temporal judgment at the hands of men, or eternal judgment at the hands of God?

#### 2 Timothy 4:1-2 encapsulates this section very well, “*I solemnly exhort you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:* ***preach the word****; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction*.”

# 1 Peter 4:7-11 – Suffering and Service

## 1 Peter 4:7-9 – Proper relationships

### 1 Peter 4:7a –*The end of all things is near…*The return of Christ is looming, followed by the end of the world and then the final judgment of the unsaved. Peter described the future end of the earth in greater detail in 2 Peter 3:7-12. When we consider all of this, we can see that **much** is at stake as we move toward *the end*.

#### Although we don't know the exact date when *the end* will occur, we know we are closer today than we were yesterday and much **closer** than when Peter penned these words.

#### If the end was close then, we can know it is exceedingly closer today. We are to live as if Christ will return at **any** moment. James 5:8; Revelation 3:11, 22:10

### 1 Peter 4:7b – *…therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.* Considering what is coming soon, we need to be sensible, alert, and serious. We need to always **engage** in believing prayer. 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 1 Peter 5:8

#### To have *sound judgment* means to understand situations correctly and **make wise** decisions based on that understanding. To develop sound judgment, one must know the word of God. A Christian with sound judgment is clearly grounded in the word of God. Philippians 1:9

#### To have a *sober spirit* means to keep one's mind free from the control of **outside** forces. A sober minded Christian does not allow himself to be controlled by influences that would lead him or her away from sound judgment. 1 Peter 1:13

#### Ezekiel 22:30 describes perilous times when God’s judgment was looming over Israel. God said: “*I searched for a man among them who would build up a wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found* **no one**.”

#### Peter wanted his readers to be faithful to God during their times of **peril**. He wanted them to also *stand in the gap.* He encouraged them to stay focused, keep their heads in the game, and pray as though the world would soon end. Titus 2:13

### 1 Peter 4:8 – *Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.* The purest form of Christianity is **love** for each other (1 Jn. 4:21). We see this all the way back in Genesis 4:9 when God asked Cain, “*Where is Abel your brother?"*

#### 1 Peter 4:8a – *Above all…* Peter emphasized that love for one another should be the highest **priority**, especially during times of suffering. Love brings the church together and this pleases God. Psalm 133; John 15:12-13, 17; 1 Thessalonians 4:9

#### 1 Peter 4:8b – …*keep fervent in you love…* Believers should love each other earnestly and zealously. Sadly, we tend to think **tolerating** each other fulfills this command, but *fervent* implies something much more than merely putting up with someone. To be fervent means to be enthusiastic and passionate. 1 Peter 1:22

#### 1 Peter 4:8c – …*in your love for one another…* The word for love used here is AGAPE. We are to remain fervent in our sacrificial love for one another. This command to love *one another* refers to fellow believers in the body of Christ. John 13:35 says our love for each other is **evidence** to the world that we are followers of Christ.

#### 1 Peter 4:8d – *…because love covers a multitude of sins.* Love **forgives**. That’s one major way that love covers sins. Love seeks the best for others, while hate stokes the flames of unforgiveness, strife, and revenge. Proverbs 10:12, James 5:20

### 1 Peter 4:9a – *Be hospitable to one another...* To be *hospitable* means to be **welcoming**; to provide for the needs of others in a warm and friendly way. Believers are to cheerfully share their resources and provisions with each other without being annoyed or bothered by it.

### 1 Peter 4:9b – …*without complaint*. Simply put, we are not to grumble about entertaining believers as **guests** in our home. We are to feed and lodge fellow believers willingly and joyfully. Romans 12:13, Philippians 2:14, 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8

## 1 Peter 4:10-11 – Proper use of spiritual gifts

### 1 Peter 4:10a – *As each one has received a special gift*… At the moment of salvation, every believer is given a spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is a special ability given by the Holy Spirit for service in the **church** of Jesus Christ. There are several different kinds of spiritual gifts given out by the Holy Spirit.

#### Romans 12:6a says, “*Since we have gifts that* **differ** *according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly…*”

#### 1 Corinthians 12:7 says, “*But to each one is given the* **manifestation** *of the Spirit for the common good*.” Ephesians 4:7

### 1 Peter 4:10b – …*employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*. Spiritual gifts are designed by the Holy Spirit to **divinely** empower us to build up *one another*.

#### The phrase “*one another*" is used three times in verses 8-10. This speaks of **selflessness**. Spiritual gifts are given for service to others, not to promote personal agendas or to draw attention to any individual. Romans 12:6-9; 1 Corinthians 3:5, 4:1-2

#### The word *manifold* in Greek is **many-colored**. God’s many-colored grace is evidenced by the variety of spiritual gifts He gives to believers. Each believer should faithfully serve others with their gift so that the body of Christ will be healthy and grow strong. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Ephesians 4:16

### 1 Peter 4:11a – *Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God*… This statement refers to the gifts of the Spirit that involve **verbal** communication, like teaching.

#### Teaching is a spiritual gift given to edify members of the church (Eph. 4:7-8, 11). Peter included a stipulation for would be speakers: they are to communicate *as one who is speaking the* **utterances** *of God*.

#### The purpose of speaking in the church is to point people to God and His truth, not to **draw** attention to oneself or one's ability to speak. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, 1 Thessalonians 2:4, Titus 2:1

#### Those who teach the word of God have the **responsibility** to do so accurately and faithfully. 1 Corinthians 12:27-28

#### Throughout scripture we see harsh words for teachers who misconstrue truth and lead people **astray** through improper teaching. Galatians 1:6-9, Revelation 22:18-19

#### The gift of teaching is to be exercised with humility and complete dependence on the Lord. Gifts associated with public speaking are not for **self-glorification**.

### 1 Peter 4:11b – …*whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies*… This statement refers to the spiritual gifts that involve **service**.

#### These gifts, referred to here as helping gifts, are less noticeable than the more **visible** speaking gifts, but are just as important for the body of Christ.

#### Helping gifts are given to assist people in the church in **practical** ways, but there is a stipulation with these gifts as well. Would be helpers are to serve *by the strength which God supplies.* Those who serve others are to do so through God’s power, not their own.

### 1 Peter 4:11c – …*so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ…* When spiritual gifts are exercised by Christ living through us (speaking through us and serving through us) then God gets the **glory**. 1 Corinthians 1:29-31, Philippians 1:20-21

#### Sadly, it is possible for spiritual gifts to be exercised by a fleshly believer. This does not glorify God. When we rely on our own ideas to serve God, the spotlight is taken away from God and put onto others or ourselves. We should only use our spiritual gifts for His glory relying on His **enabling** power and direction. Galatians 2:20

#### When we depend on Christ in the use of our spiritual gift, we are aligning ourselves with God's purposes and the result is the good **outcome** God intended. He produces His fruit through us, and that brings glory to God. John 15:4-5, 8; Romans 15:18; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

### 1 Peter 4:11d – *…to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen*. Since God is the creator and supreme **ruler** of the universe, all credit, praise, authority, control, and power belong to Him.

#### A sinful world refuses to give Him **credit** now, but eventually God will receive all glory as He legitimately deserves, and His power will be rightfully known to everyone throughout all of eternity. Isaiah 42:8, Romans 11:36, 1 Peter 5:11, Revelation 1:6

#### This reminder of God's eternal dominion would likely have encouraged Peter's persecuted audience. Although they were suffering **unjustly** in a godless world, they could rest knowing God is all powerful and will win in the end. Daniel 4:2-3, 34-35

#### The only fitting response to this powerful reminder is *Amen*, which is a statement of agreement, meaning “**so be it**”. You too can find rest in the storms of life knowing God is in absolute control.

# 1 Peter 4:12-19 – Suffering and Blessings

## 1 Peter 4:12-16 – The benefits of suffering

### 1 Peter 4:12a – *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal…* Peter told his readers to not be **shocked** by the persecution they faced.

### 1 Peter 4:12b – …*at the fiery ordeal among you*… This choice of words communicates **intensity** in suffering. We know heat from our trials burns off impurities and refines us. While this is not usually a pleasant process, the end result is exceptionally positive. Malachi 3:3, Philippians 1:28, 1 Peter 1:6-7

### 1 Peter 4:12c – *…which comes upon you for your testing…* God uses trials to **reveal** the extent of our faith and to strengthen our faith. The story of Job is a good example of a man who remained resolute in his faith in God even when he did not understand the purpose behind his suffering. Job 1:20-22, 40:3-5, 42:6; Romans 5:3-4; James 1:3-4

### 1 Peter 4:12d – …*as though some strange thing were happening to you*… Christians should think of suffering as a **routine** occurrence, something we can expect to face on a regular basis. In 2 Timothy 3:12 Paul said, “*Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*.” John 15:18-20, Philippians 1:29, Hebrews 12:3, James 1:2-4

### 1 Peter 4:13a – *…but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ*… We share the sufferings of Christ when we endure the **same** kinds of difficulties Christ faced while on earth. As individuals we share in the sufferings of Christ to varying degrees. You may suffer more or less than another believer. Romans 8:17, 36; Philippians 3:10; Colossians 1:24

### 1 Peter 4:13b – *…keep on rejoicing…* Peter urged his readers to not live on **yesterday’s** victories because every day should be a joyful participation with Christ. When suffering comes our way, we can rejoice because we are honored to be able to suffer together with Christ and for His name’s sake. Matthew 5:11-12, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

### 1 Peter 4:13c – *…so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation…* Here is a promise for those who share in Christ's sufferings: to the **degree** you participate in His sufferings, you will rejoice accordingly when He is revealed in all His glorious splendor. Daniel 10:4-9, Revelation 1:12-18

#### We will rejoice, not at the revealing of **our glory**, but at the revealing of the glory of Christ. Isaiah 42:8, Matthew 25:31, Romans 15:18

#### Christ deserves all the glory. We can never **boast** inour own glory because the only good we do is done by Christ living through us. John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 3:5, 4:7; Galatians 2:20

#### We will rejoice when all His glory is revealed in awesome **splendor**. He is our creator, our hero, our champion, and our victor and we are on His team. We boast in His glory.

### 1 Peter 4:14a – *If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed…* Naturally speaking, we presume that being persecuted is **negative**, but in reality, being despised and rejected for Christ’s sake is a great honor. Luke 6:22-23, James 1:12

#### In Acts 5:41 we read about the apostles’ response when they were flogged and ordered to no longer speak of **Jesus**: “*they went on their way …rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name*.”

#### Not only is it an honor to suffer for the coming “*King of Glory* (Ps. 24:10),” but in the future when we see Him, we will be **rewarded** for having suffered for His sake. Nehemiah 9:6; Matthew 5:11-12, 25:31; Hebrews 11:26

### 1 Peter 4:14b – …*because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you*. If you are a Christian being reviled for standing up for Christ, remember that at such moments the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. The *Spirit of glory and of God* is also known as the **Holy Spirit**.

#### Throughout the Bible we see there is only one God who exists as three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This one-of-a-kind relationship is known as the Trinity. Being part of the Trinity means the Holy Spirit is **fully** God. Ezekiel 43:5; Acts 7:55-56; 2 Corinthians 3:6-11, 17-18; 1 Peter 1:11

#### Before Jesus went up into heaven, He told His disciples, “*I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever* (Jn. 14:16). By means of this **helper**, called the Holy Spirit, Christ lives inside every believer and is available 24/7 to meet our every need. John 14:17-18, Colossians 1:27

#### In Ephesians 1:13-14 the Holy Spirit is called “*the Holy Spirit of promise.*” Jesus called the Holy Spirit “*the Spirit* **of truth** (Jn. 14:17)” and “*the Helper* [who] *will teach you all things* (Jn. 14:26).”

#### Here in this verse, when writing to believers under the stress of persecution, Peter referred to the Holy Spirit as “*the Spirit of glory and of God*.” In stressful situations a reminder of who the Holy Spirit is greatly **encourages** our hearts.

#### Glory speaks of God’s magnificent and unfathomable greatness, power, and majesty. During our suffering, God, by means of the Spirit gives us peace and meets our **every need**. Psalm 29:9, Isaiah 6:1-5, 2 Corinthians 12:4, Revelation 15:8, 21:11

### 1 Peter 4:15 – *Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler*. Here Peter gave an important **clarification** for anyone who might misunderstand or misapply his teaching on suffering.

#### When Peter spoke of believers sharing in Christ's suffering, he was not referring to suffering that results from a person's **wrong** behavior. Peter warned his readers against murder, robbery, evil behavior, and prying into other affairs.

#### Since Peter's readers were believers in Christ, we see once again that Christians are not **immune** from sins such as the ones listed. Peter knew it was entirely possible for a believer to suffer as a murderer. We know this is possible because David was a believer when he committed murder.

#### Our fleshly nature, which does not leave us when we are saved, is capable of any type of evil. For this reason, as Christians we should never think we can walk according to the flesh and not suffer for it. We **need** the Lord every minute of every day.

#### When we choose to walk by the Holy Spirit, the helper God has given us, we will be able to **avoid** these sinful pitfalls (Gal. 5:16). Walking by the Spirit means consistently presenting the parts of our body to Him for His use and counting on the fact that we are dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:11-13).

### 1 Peter 4:16a – …*but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed..*. While a Christian may experience **shame** for sinful or criminal behavior, Peter said a Christian should feel no shame for suffering for Christ. In Acts 5:41, the disciples rejoiced because “*they had been considered worthy to suffer*” for the glorious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 21:13

### 1 Peter 4:16b – …*but if anyone suffers as a Christian… [he] is to glorify God in this name.* Instead of feeling shame when we suffer, we are to **glorify** God.

#### In the earliest years of the Church Age, those who trusted in Christ were called disciples, believers, or followers of the Way. Soon thereafter, believers came to be known as **Christians**. The phrase *in this name* refers to the title “Christian.” Acts 11:26, 26:28

#### To be **identified** with Christ and to suffer for His name is an honor. If you suffer as a Christian, you bring glory to Christ.

#### As Nero's persecution of Christians spread throughout the Roman empire, it is probable that many of Peter's audience became **martyrs** after the writing of 1 Peter.

## 1 Peter 4:17-19 – The results of suffering

### 1 Peter 4:17a – *For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God…* the term *household of God* refers to the **church**, made up of believers in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:19, 1 Tim. 3:15, Heb. 3:6). What this is saying is that judgment begins with Christians first.

#### Although earlier Peter referred to God as the supreme judge (1 Pet. 1:17, 2:23, 4:5), this verse is not talking about the judgment of God. This is talking about a judgment executed by the **world** against Christians.

#### In this verse judgmentis a reference to the plans and decisions made by non-believers that result in suffering for Christians. Without a doubt, the world executes judgments that result in the persecution of God’s **household**, the church.

#### This judgment seems harsh and unjust, and indeed it is. It is an unwarranted judgment Christians have to endure, but it is nothing compared to the true and lasting judgment **God** will one day execute on nonbelievers. Matthew 10:28

#### The world that persecutes Christians and executes judgment against them is not the true judge. Even though God’s people are the first to receive judgment and the suffering that comes with it, this human judgment is only temporary and cannot compare to our **future** glory. Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

### 1 Peter 4:17b – …*and if it* [judgment] *begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?* What will be the outcome of God’s judgment against unbelievers in the future? It's reasonable to expect it will be **far worse** than anything believers face here.

#### The judgment Christian's receive at the hands of an unjust world are merely temporary. Even though believers are unjustly judged here, in eternity unbelievers will experience a far stronger and eternal judgment that is perfectly **righteous**.

#### Scripture says that those who do not obey the gospel will suffer eternal torment in **hell**. John 3:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, Revelation 20:14-15

### 1 Peter 4:18 – *And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?* If God’s people are narrowly saved while suffering here on earth, unbelievers will have **no hope** when they are judged by God in eternity.

#### Peter quoted Proverbs 11:31 from the Septuagint (LXX), the earliest Greek translation of the Old Testament. In many Bible translations Proverbs 11:31 is translated directly from Hebrew, so it may **read** slightly different. The NASB translates Proverbs 11:31 like this: *“If the righteous will be repaid on the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!*”

#### The phrase “*the righteous is saved*” refers to Christians overcoming the fiery trials we face here on earth. We know that many times the righteous struggle to **survive** the pain and suffering imposed on them from humanity. Indeed, many are even martyred for their faith in Christ. 1 Peter 4:12

#### If the righteous struggle under the fiery judgment they receive here on earth, how will *the godless and sinner* escape God's judgment that will befall them after death. Truly, those who do not **believe** the gospel have no hope. 2 Peter 3:7, Romans 1:18

### 1 Peter 4:19a – *Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God*… This is an important verse in 1 Peter since it gives a thematic conclusion to the section on **suffering**.

#### This verse mentions suffering according to …*the will of God*. This is the fourth time we see *the will of God* mentioned in 1 Peter. Many teachers talk about God’s will for our lives, but they seldom mention suffering as part of His **plan**. Peter made it very clear that suffering is inherent to God's plan for every Christian. How can this be?

##### It is *God's will* that Christians endure suffering as a shared experience with our **Savior** (1 Pet. 2:15, 21-25). It teaches us to follow Christ as our example. As we suffer with Christ we increasingly identify less with the world and more with His person. Philippians 3:10-11

##### It is *God’s will* that Christians suffer for **doing right** (1 Pet. 3:17) because Christ suffered for doing right and His suffering resulted in our reconciliation to God.

##### It is *God’s will* for Christians to face suffering because it **purifies** our lives (1 Pet. 4:2). It is a way God works to conform us to the image of Christ (1 Pet. 4:1-5).

#### Thankfully, God uses suffering to **loosen** the power of sin over our lives and draw us closer to Himself. Suffering makes us aware of our own deficiencies and causes us to rely more deeply on God’s sufficiency. Genesis 41:16, 2 Corinthians 3:5

### 1 Peter 4:19b – *…shall entrust their souls…* God is **worthy** of our confidence because He is faithful. We can trust our souls to Him without any fear or hesitation. Our physical body is simply the dwelling place of our invisible soul while it is here on earth. Our soul is what makes us who we are; our soul is the vital essence of our person. Psalm 143:6

#### Jesus is our example of **entrusting** His soul to God. When He was unfairly punished, He entrusted *“Himself to Him who judges righteously*.” 1 Peter 2:23

#### 2 Timothy 1:12 says, “*For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is* **able to guard** *what I have entrusted to Him until that day*.”

### 1 Peter 4:19c – *…shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.* Rest assured, God will **never** fail you.

#### God is the one who created you. When you suffer according to His will, you can **trust** Him with your life. Psalm 54:4, 138:8, 139:1-18; Romans 8:35-39

#### Isaiah 40:28-29 – "*Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks* **might** *He increases power."* Colossians 1:16-17

# 1 Peter 5:1-11 – Additional guidance

## 1 Peter 5:1-4 – Exhorted to lead

### 1 Peter 5:1a – *Therefore, I exhort the elders among you*… Peter had something to say to the elders of the churches *scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*. To *exhort* conveys the idea of encouraging, imploring or urging to not give up. Let’s stop and briefly look at the role of **elder** in the local church.

#### In this context, elder does not simply refer to an **older** man. Elders are mature Christian men who spiritually shepherd (guide and guard) the local church. Acts 20:17, 28-30

##### Christ alone is the head of His church (Col 1:18). Elders are the highest authority **under** Christ in a local church (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

##### In 3 John 1:9-10 we see an example of an elder who **misused** his God-given authority.

#### From the New Testament record we see that churches typically had a **group** of elders. Philippians 1:1 bears this out: “*Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons*…” Ideally, a church should have several elders who are co-responsible for the flock. Acts 15:4, 20:17; Titus 1:5

#### Although all elders in a local church are equal in authority, due to gifting, the elder(s) with the spiritual gift of pastor/teacher (Eph. 4:11-13) is a leader among **equals**. Although he is not superior in any way, because of his gifting he does provide distinguished service and leadership among the group of elders (1 Tim. 5:17-22).

#### Elders should exhibit the following characteristics:

##### Elders should have the **ability** to teach God’s word. Acts 20:28-31, 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9

##### Elders should exhibit genuine godly **character**. 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, Hebrews 13:7, 1 Peter 5:3

##### Elders should lead through **serving**. Matthew 20:25-28, John 13:15, Hebrews 13:17

### 1 Peter 5:1b – …*as your fellow elder…* This statement shows that Peter intimately identified with the elders he was exhorting. Without denying his apostleship, Peter expressed that he too **served** as an elder.

#### Peter encouraged the elders to whom he wrote to listen to him based on their **shared** roles and responsibilities. He understood firsthand the problems elders face. Because of Peter’s gifting and practical experience, they would greatly benefit from his wisdom.

#### In his appeal to elders, Peter did not exalt himself; he met them on their **level**. In this section we see that it was with humility that Peter urged the elders to follow his instructions. His admonitions flowed from the heart of a true shepherd. John 21:15‑18

### 1 Peter 5:1c – …*and witness of the sufferings of Christ…* Peter had firsthand experience of the sufferings of Christ. Starting just after His temptation, Peter was with Christ **daily** as He suffered insults and rejections.

#### Jesus was scorned by his own **nation**. John 1:11, Mark 6:1-6, John 5:16-18

#### Jesus was opposed by **religious** leaders. Matthew 12:24, Luke 11:53-54

#### Jesus was put on trial and **beaten** mercilessly. Matthew 26:57-68

#### Jesus experienced ultimate suffering on the **cross**. Isaiah 53:4-9, Matthew 27:46

#### Similarly, Peter also suffered in his **service** for Christ. Acts 5:27-42, 12:1-11

#### As a Christian, you too can **expect** to share in the sufferings of Christ. 2 Timothy 3:12-13, 1 Peter 4:13

### 1 Peter 5:1d – …*and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed...* The thought of sharing in the glory that will one day be revealed was meant to **motivate** Peter’s readers to willingly endure the inevitable suffering associated with shepherding the body of Christ. Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:17

#### Participation in future glory is a reoccurring **theme** throughout this epistle (1 Pet. 1:7, 4:13). What exactly does it mean to someday partake of glory?

#### To be a *partaker* KOINŌNÓS means you are a sharer, a companion, or a participant in something. According to Peter, church elders will **participate** in the glory to be unveiled in the future.

#### Elders will not only experience God’s glory, but as we are about to see, to the extent that they are faithful, they will also be **granted** a portion of that glory. 1 Peter 5:4

#### God’s glory is beyond description. It is described as majestic, powerful, brilliant in splendor, and **perfect** in goodness. Exodus 40:35, Psalm 31:19, Isaiah 6:1-5, Ezekiel 1:28, 2 Thessalonians 2:8

#### Although Peter was specifically addressing elders, the palpable glory of the Lord will one day be revealed to **every** believer. In light of such a glorious future, it is no surprise that the apostle John ended the book of Revelation with this anxious desire: “*Amen, Come Lord Jesus* (Rev. 22:20).”

### 1 Peter 5:2a – *Shepherd the flock of God among you…* To shepherd is to **watch over** a flock. Shepherds make sure that sheep are healthy, well-fed, and safe. It is important to note that in the Bible, the term pastor POIMĒNis the noun form of the verb to shepherd POIMAINŌ. John 10:1-6, 21:16; Acts 20:28

#### Peter described members of local churches as **sheep**. Generally, sheep struggle to survive on their own. They are vulnerable to attacks by animals of prey like wolves, lions, and bears. They require constant support and protection. 1 Samuel 17:37, Psalm 23:1-6

#### It is the responsibility of elders to watch over the *flock of God*. Peter did not **claim** ownership of the flock. The flock, or congregation, does not belong to the elders. It is God’s flock, and He has given the humble privilege of caring for His flock to the elders.

#### The elders are to ensure that the sheep *among them*, in their local assemblies, are kept healthy, well-fed, and **safe**. Elders should never lose sight of the God-given responsibility to willingly lay down their lives for His church. John 10:11, Hebrews 13:20

### 1 Peter 5:2b – …*exercising oversight…* The concept of *exercising oversight* EPISKOPÉŌ is the Greek verb from which we derive the nouns bishop and overseer. To watch over and provide spiritual **protection** is an important duty given to elders of the church.

### 1 Peter 5:2c – …*not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God…* Elders are called to **willingly** watch over the congregation under their care.

#### Paul described this concept in 1 Timothy 3:1 when he said, “*It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer* (EPISKOPĒ)*, it is a fine work he* ***desires*** *to do*.” John 10:10-14

#### Elders are to **cheerfully** do what is best for the sheep under their care in order to please God, the owner of the flock. They are there to do the will of God not the will of man. 1 Thessalonians 2:4, Philemon 1:14

### 1 Peter 5:2d – …*and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness…* *Sordid* AISCHROKERDŌSis a **strong** word meaning filthy, shameful, or dishonest. 1 Timothy 3:3, 3:8; Titus 1:7

#### Elders should not serve for what they can get out of it, such as financial **gain**, self-promotion, or any other dishonorable motivation. Ezekiel 34:1-10, Matthew 7:15, 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6

#### An elder is to be **selfless**, caring for the sheep under his care out of love for God and love for God’s flock. His motivation should be sincere and pure. 2 Corinthians 12:15, Philippians 2:8-12, 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 1 John 3:16

### 1 Peter 5:3a – …*nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge*… Elders **should not** control, dominate, or micromanage the sheep assigned to their care. Peter was clear that an elder is not a dictator (Mat. 20:25, Luke 22:25). Unfortunately, church leaders sometimes manipulate their congregations in unhealthy ways. 2 Corinthians 1:24, 3 John 9-10

### 1 Peter 5:3b – …*but proving to be examples to the flock*. As exemplified in scripture, **instead** of driving or herding God’s flock, godly elders lead by example. When elders follow the pattern of Christ, the flock grows and matures spiritually. Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; 1 Peter 2:21, 4:1

### 1 Peter 5:4 – *And when the Chief Shepherd appears you will receive the unfading crown of glory.* Elders are under-shepherds, with Jesus Christ being the Chief shepherd (Is. 40:10-11; Matt. 9:36, 1 Pet. 2:21-25, Heb. 13:20). When He appears, He will bring **rewards** for faithful elders (1 Pet 2:25).

#### The appearing of the Chief Shepherd mentioned here is likely a reference to the Rapture of the church. Why?

##### The Chief Shepherd’s appearance here is linked to elders (believers) receiving **rewards** for faithful service. John 14:2-3; Romans 14:10‑12; 1 Corinthians 1:7, 4:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; Revelation 22:12

##### However, at His Second Coming, Christ will not come as a shepherd dispersing rewards to believers; rather, He will come as a **conqueror** to fight, judge and destroy His adversaries. Matthew 25:31; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3; Revelation 1:7, 19:10-21

#### The New Testament mentions **five** crowns that are given to believers for faithful service.

##### James 1:12 – There is the **crown of life** for faithful endurance through trials. All who persevere through trials, especially those who endure to the point of being martyred, will receive this crown. Revelation 2:10

##### 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 – There is an **imperishable crown** for Christians who run faithfully through the marathon of life. This crown is not for winning but for competing well and not becoming disqualified along the way.

##### 1 Thessalonians 2:19 – Those we minister to become a **crown of rejoicing** for our faithfulness in disciple-making.

##### 2 Timothy 4:8 – There is the **crown of righteousness** for those who long for the Lord’s return. Those who believe in the Rapture and desire for it to happen will receive this reward.

##### 1 Peter 5:4 – There is the *unfading* **crown of glory** for elders who faithfully care for God’s flock (1 Pet. 5:1-4). This potential reward should motivate elders to faithfully shepherd even through difficult trials.

#### The earning of crowns is not to be confused with **entrance** into the eternal kingdom since that privilege is a free gift for all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:13‑14

## 1 Peter 5:5-7 – Exhorted to follow

### 1 Peter 5:5a – *You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders*… Just as the elders are to submit to the Chief Shepherd, **younger** men in the church are to humbly submit to the elders who shepherd them. Ephesians 5:21, Hebrews 13:17

### 1 Peter 5:5b – …*and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another*… Peter now shifted to all believers. All believers should treat each other with **humility** by putting others first. Christ set the example for us when He selflessly came to earth to serve and die for sinful humanity. Matthew 20:28, Philippians 2:3-8

#### Humility is often **confused** with self-abasement, but according to Colossians 2:23, self-abasement may have the appearance of wisdom, but it is not the real thing. Humility is not a virtue that can be attained through self-effort or by following certain steps. Romans 7:18

#### Only through dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ can we **obey** the command to *clothe [ourselves] with humility toward one another*. The fruit of the Spirit is the essence of true humility. We cannot produce this fruit through the flesh, but Christ can produce it through us as we trust in Him. John 15:4-5; Romans 7:18; Galatians 2:20, 3:3, 5:22-23

### 1 Peter 5:5c – …*for God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble*. Contrary to what we’ve been told, God does not help those who help themselves. God helps those who **admit** their neediness and humbly depend on Him. Proverbs 29:23; James 4:6

#### In Luke 18:9-14 Jesus told a parable about a Pharisee who came to God **proudly** proclaiming his own goodness and a tax collector who begged for God’s mercy. Jesus said the tax collector “*went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted*.”

#### Humility is the exact opposite of **pride**. Pride has to do with self-exaltation and self-dependence. Humility has to do with dependence on God. A humble person lives by faith, dependent on God’s grace. Humility allows the believer to experience the Lord’s help to the fullest degree because God gives grace to the humble. Isaiah 66:2

### 1 Peter 5:6a – *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God*… Humility is recognizing our **smallness** in light of God’s infinite power and majesty. Isaiah said that to God “*the nations are like a drop from a bucket* (Is. 40:15)” and the earth’s “*inhabitants are like grasshoppers* (Is. 40:22).” Job 40-42, James 4:10

### 1 Peter 5:6b – …*that He may exalt you at the proper time.* Humility comes with an amazing reward. As our example, Jesus humbled Himself to the very lowest degree and God exalted Him to the very **highest** place. Philippians 2:8-9, Hebrews 12:2-3, James 1:9

#### This statement ties in with the theme of glory observed throughout the epistle of 1 Peter. Remember it is God, not people, who will exalt those who humble themselves before Him. True and lasting exaltation comes from **God**, not people. Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11, 18:14; Hebrews 6:10

#### “*At the proper time*” is an important statement. You may not receive honor here on earth, but God will keep His **promise**. If you walk humbly, then just at the right time God will lift you up. We should bear in mind that the right time may be in the future, at the judgment seat of Christ. Romans 14:10-13, 1 Corinthians 4:5

### 1 Peter 5:7a – …*casting all your anxiety on Him*… This statement ties humility to faith. Those who are humble trust in God **rather than** in themselves. This glorifies God. If you are burdened, lay your every care at God’s feet; His mighty hand will protect you. Psalm 91:2; Jeremiah 17:5-8

### 1 Peter 5:7b – …*because He cares for us*. We are called to give all our worries over to Him in trusting dependence because *He cares for us*. You may not see a clear or immediate **response** to your prayers, but this verse declares that you are God’s personal concern. Do you believe this statement? Psalm 55:22, Matthew 6:25, Philippians 4:6

## 1 Peter 5:8-9 – Exhorted to fight

### 1 Peter 5:8a – *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert.* Why did Peter tell his audience to stay level-headed (***sober*** *spirit*) and watchful (*alert*) in this verse? 1 Thessalonians 5:6

### 1 Peter 5:8b – Because …*your adversary, the devil*… is on the **prowl**. Notice that the devil is your adversary, not your friend. Make no mistake, Satan is always looking for ways to extinguish you.

### So, just who is *the devil*? The devil is **Satan**. John 8:44b says “…*He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies*.”

#### Satan was a **cherub**, or ruling angel, who rebelled against God. Ezekiel 28:11-19

#### As a fallen angel and enemy of God, Satan leads a massive host of **demons** who are all opposed to God, His people and His work. Isaiah 14:12-14, Matthew 12:24

#### Satan is the **serpent** that caused man to sin back in the beginning of history. Genesis 3:1‑15, Revelation 12:9

#### Satan is a **tempter** by nature. Matthew 4:1-3, 2 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Thessalonians 3:5

#### Satan has great power and the ability to **control** unsaved humanity. John 14:30, Acts 26:18, Ephesians 2:1-3, 2 Corinthians 4:4

#### Satan is a **thief** who opposes all that God does. Matthew 13:19, Luke 8:12, John 10:10, 2 Thessalonians 2:9

#### Satan will be destroyed by God’s mighty **power**. Matthew 25:41, Revelation 20:10

### 1 Peter 5:8c – *…the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*. Just as a lion lurks about undetected in the darkness, Satan quietly **stalks** unsuspecting souls, and when they least expect it, he roars and tears them to pieces spiritually. Luke 22:31; 2 Corinthians 11:3, 14; Ephesians 6:10-17; James 4:7; 1 Peter 1:13-15

### 1 Peter 5:9a – *But resist him, firm in your faith…* The word resist means to **stand against**. Amazingly, God calls believers to stand their ground before Satan, the roaring lion. In the animal kingdom, predators know what to do with anything that runs, but they are baffled by anything that stands still. Ephesians 6:13

#### Peter spoke of our humility under God’s mighty hand (1 Pet. 5:6) **before** telling us to stand firm in our faith against the devil’s evil schemes (1 Pet 5:9). Humbling ourselves under God’s mighty hand is absolutely essential if we hope to effectively resist the enemy. James 4:7

#### Peter did not tell his readers to stand against the devil in their **own** strength. Only through unwavering faith in God and the truth of His word is it possible to stand against the devil and deflect his flaming arrows. Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 6:10-17, 2 Thessalonians 3:3

### 1 Peter 5:9b – …*knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.* When we **hurt**, it is easy to feel like we are the only ones who face suffering. The realization that others are also suffering can encourage our hearts and allow us to look beyond ourselves and our problems. 1 Thessalonians 5:6

#### When all is well where we live, we tend to **forget** that other believers throughout the world are suffering great persecution. When we face suffering, it makes us aware that this is no game; we are in a truly great spiritual war that is being fought on a global scale. Acts 14:22

#### Peter referred to our suffering as something that is “*being accomplished.”* It is important to see that the Christian worldview sees suffering as an accomplishment. Our sufferings are an achievement not a **loss**. We are not losers when it comes to suffering for Christ. 1 Peter 4:16

## 1 Peter 5:10-11 – Exhorted to endure

### 1 Peter 5:10a – *After you have suffered for a little while…* It may not seem like it, but Peter said that our suffering is only for a **short** while. Our sufferings, as hard and eternal as they may seem to be, all have a shelf life. Suffering is short-lived and trivial in light of eternity. 2 Corinthians 4:17, 2 Timothy 2:10, 1 Peter 1:6

### 1 Peter 5:10b – …*the God of all grace…* When we suffer, we need to remember that God is *the God of all grace*. Our infinitely gracious God freely **gives** us an inexhaustible supply of His undeserved kindness and enabling power. Let’s take a brief look at a list of some of the blessings He has given us by His grace. Ephesians 2:7, 3:20-22; 2 Peter 1:3-4

#### God freely gave us His most beloved possession, His only son, Jesus Christ, who **willingly** died in our place. John 3:16 says, “*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life*.” Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 3:18, 1 John 4:10

#### God generously declared us righteous in His **sight** through faith in Jesus Christ. Romans 3:24 says, “*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*.” Galatians 2:16, Titus 3:7

#### God gave us a firm **standing** in His grace. Romans 5:1-2 says, “*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.*” Romans 4:16

#### God gave us eternal life as a **free gift** through faith in Son. Romans 6:23 says, “*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*.” John 10:28, Acts 15:11

#### God **freely** gave us the Holy Spirit the instant we believed in Christ as Savior. Ephesians 1:13-14a says, “*In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise who is given as a pledge of our inheritance*…”

#### God graciously took away our **fear** of death. Hebrews 2:14b-15, “…*that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives*.”

#### Eternal security is God’s **free gift**. 1 John 5:11-13 says, “*And this is that testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life*.”

#### Truly, God is the God of **all grace**. He not only gave us enough grace; in His kindness He gave us the “*surpassing riches of His grace* (Eph. 2:7).” Ephesians 1:3,7; Colossians 2:10; 2 Peter 1:3

### 1 Peter 5:10c – …*the God of all grace who called you to His eternal glory in Christ…* God has called you to **forever** be with Christ in glory. In 2 Thessalonians 2:14 the apostle Paul wrote that incredibly believers will share in Christ’s glory, “*It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” 2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:17

#### We often understand God’s glory in terms of radiant and brilliant **light**, which is true. Matthew 17:2, 1 Timothy 6:16, Revelation 21:23

#### We seldom think of God’s glory in terms of **weight**. But the Bible describes it that way also. 2 Corinthians 4:17 says, “*For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond comparison*.” Isaiah 6:1-7

### 1 Peter 5:10d – …*the God of all grace …will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you*. Does God have a purpose for allowing His children to suffer? Yes, He does. God uses suffering to sanctify us. Peter gave us a four-part building plan for what God is carrying out day by day when He **allows** suffering into our lives.

#### God’s gracious plan is to **perfect** KATARTÍZŌ you. This word speaks of restoration (Gal 6:1) where what was broken is mended and made ready for use again. Through our trials and by His amazing grace, God is in the process of conforming us to the image of His dear Son. Romans 8:28-29, Philippians 1:6

#### God’s gracious plan is to **confirm** STĒRÍZŌ you. This word conveys the idea of being made steadfast. God is in the process of firmly establishing us in our faith. Romans 16:25; 2 Thessalonians 3:3

#### God’s gracious plan is to **strengthen** STHENÓŌ you. This means that God combines trials with grace to build you up and make you strong. Through your trials you can have the confidence that God is patiently conforming you to His image. God is not out to destroy you; He only wants your good. Romans 8:28-39, 12:2

#### God’s gracious plan is to **establish** THEMELIÓŌ you. This word conveys the idea of setting down an unshakeable foundation. God is working toward stability in your life. God desires a bright future for all of His children.

#### These four construction verbs show us that God wants to **build up** His disciples in order to be ready for any trial or challenge that may come. Jude 1:24-25

### 1 Peter 5:11 – In a burst of glorious praise, Peter finalized his letter with “*To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen!*” What an appropriate ending to this letter to suffering saints. Truly, 1 Peter is a testament of **victory** through suffering. Romans 8:28-29, 1 Peter 4:11

# 1 Peter 5:12-14 – Closing Remarks

## 1 Peter 5:12 – A vital statement

### 1 Peter 5:12a – *Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly…* Silvanus is another name for **Silas**. Peter likely dictated this letter to him.

#### Silvanus ministered in the gospel together with **both** the apostles, Peter as shown here, and Paul as seen elsewhere in the New Testament. Acts 15:22, 32; 16:25-26; 2 Corinthians 1:19

#### Clearly Peter considered Silvanus to be a reliable person. In fact, in the Greek text this reads “**the** faithful brother.” In Christianity, to be called faithful is probably one of the highest honors a person can receive. Proverbs 20:6; Matt 25:21; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Colossians 1:7; 2 Timothy 1:12, 2:2; Hebrews 3:2

### 1 Peter 5:12b – …*exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!* Peter affirmed that what he wrote was *the true grace of God* and he strongly encouraged his readers to stand resolute in this **true** grace.

#### As we have seen, God’s grace is a **major** theme in 1 Peter, appearing no less than ten times (1:2, 10, 13; 2:19, 20; 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12). Grace is God’s power to do God’s will. Romans 11:6, 2 Corinthians 12:9

#### Peter considered the **subject** matter of this brief epistle to be true grace. When it comes to our preaching of the gospel and the truth of God’s word, can we say with Peter that what we teach is *the true grace of God*?

#### Obviously from Peter’s statement, if there is *true grace* there must also be **false** grace. The distinguishing factor between true grace and false grace is that true grace leads to a life of holiness whereas false grace leads either to legalism (religious corruption) or license (fleshly corruption). Galatians 5:1, 13

##### Jude 1:4 speaks of false grace. “*For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who* ***turn*** *the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ*.”

##### Titus 2:11-13 is the **gold** standard for true grace: “*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously, and in a godly manner in the present age, looking for the blessed hope…*”

#### Grace is not freedom from godly living, as some suppose. True grace **transforms**. Your life inevitably shows what you believe. You can only show the grace you know.

## 1 Peter 5:13-14 – A final greeting

### 1 Peter 5:13a – *She who is in Babylon*… As noted in the introduction, the writers of this curriculum hold the view that Babylon is a reference to the actual city of Babylon on the Euphrates river. Since the cities listed at the start of this letter are understood as **literal** geographic regions associated with their names, Babylon should be taken the same way.

### 1 Peter 5:13b – *She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings…*

#### The feminine pronoun “**she**” has caused some theologians to conclude that Peter was referring to his wife (Matt. 8:14, 1 Cor. 9:5). However, since the Greek word for wife (or woman, GUNÉ) is not found in this verse and since a feminine pronoun can refer to any feminine noun, this conclusion is unfounded.

#### The correlation between Peter’s opening address to those “*who are chosen* (1 Pet. 1:1),” and this reference to others who were “*chosen together with you,*” together with the fact that church (EKKLESIA) is a feminine noun in Greek, makes it a natural conclusion that Peter was referring to the **church** in Babylon sending their greetings. 2 John 1:1, 4

### 1 Peter 5:13c – *She …sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark.* This is a reference to **John Mark**, the former traveling companion of Paul and Barnabas. Acts 12:25

### 1 Peter 5:14a – *Greet one another with a kiss of love*. Peter again encouraged his readers to express love to one another. In that culture, a kiss was a common form of greeting. While this is still practiced in many cultures, other cultures greet with a handshake. The way we **initially** greet one another communicates either acceptance or rejection.

### 1 Peter 5:14b – *Peace be to you all who are in Christ.* It is no coincidence that Peter opened and closed his letter by wishing **peace** on his persecuted and suffering audience. In a world of great turmoil, may God grant to each of us a special dose of His transcendent peace! Isaiah 26:3, John 14:27, 1 Peter 1:2, Philippians 4:6-7

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