



Bold Faith in Trying Times

A Study of 1 Peter

Background

Author:

Peter (1:1), Jesus' disciple and early leader of the Church

Date of Writing:

between 62 and 65 A.D., while Nero was emperor in Rome

Place of Writing:

"Babylon" (5:13), likely refers to Rome (since ancient Babylon had been captured and destroyed by this time)

Recipients:

Racially and culturally mixed Christians scattered by persecution throughout the world, especially in Asia Minor (1:1)

Purpose of Writing:

to encourage Christians facing trials and to assure them of the truth of the gospel (5:12) (the word "suffering" occurs at least five times in each of the five chapters of the letter)

1 Peter 1:1a

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

1. Read about the following incidents from Peter's life, and explain how each makes him uniquely qualified to write to Christians facing crises of faith under persecution.
 - a. Matthew 14:22-33
 - b. Matthew 16:13-28
 - c. Mark 9:2-10
 - d. Luke 22:31-34
 - e. Mark 14:32-42
 - f. Mark 14:66-72
 - g. 1 Corinthians 15:3-5
 - h. John 21:15-19
 - i. Acts 2:14,36-40
 - j. Acts 5:17-32
 - k. Acts 12:1-11



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1 Peter 1:1b-2

To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,² who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

2. (1:1) Unpack the significance of the recipients of this letter being:
 - a. Elect (cf. Ephesians 1:11-12, Galatians 3:29)
 - b. Strangers
 - c. Scattered (literally, "sown")



3. (1:1) Read **Acts 2:5,9-11**. What insight does this verse give as to how some of these congregations may have started?
4. (1:2) How is the entire Trinity involved in the work of salvation?
5. (1:2) Explain how grace and peace are connected.
6. (1:2) Discuss why the recipients of this letter might need grace and peace "in abundance."



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1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

7. (1:3) If you were writing to someone undergoing struggles, how would you begin your letter or e-mail? How does Peter begin his letter?
8. (1:3) Read **Ephesians 2:1** and **John 3:3-6**. Why did we need to be given new birth? How is our new birth something that we only have “in his great mercy” (literally, “right in line with his great mercy”)?
9. (1:3) How is our hope a “living” hope? How is our hope different from how the world uses the term “hope”?
10. (1:3) How does our hope come “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”?
11. (1:4) How is our inheritance different than any earthly inheritance? How is this comforting?
12. (1:4) Pastor Ken Lenz writes, “To make their hope even more certain, Peter continues by reminding these Christians that this inheritance is ready and, through faith, they are being guarded by none other than God Himself.” Explain the comfort that we have in knowing that both our inheritance and we ourselves are being guarded by God.
13. Between verse 3 and verse 4, Peter shifts from the 1st person (us, our) to the 2nd person (you, your). What is the effect of this shift?
14. (1:5) In what sense is our salvation “coming” and “ready to be revealed in the last time”?



1 Peter 1:6-9

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

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15. (1:6) The form of the verb “rejoice” describes an on-going, constant joy. In what do Christians “greatly rejoice” even in “all kinds of trials”?
16. (1:6) “You may have had to suffer grief” is, literally, “suffering grief, if it is permitted.” What assurance does this give to suffering Christians?
17. (1:6) How does a Christian view of time also help us rejoice in trials?
18. (1:7) Literally, the testing of our faith is worth more than the refining of gold. This is because of the *outcome* of the testing/refining. Gold, even after being refined, eventually perishes. Faith, tested and purified by trials, results in “praise, glory, and honor” on the Last Day.
Praise emphasizes that which is openly *spoken*.
Glory emphasizes the praiseworthy thing that has been *done*.
Honor emphasizes the *value* of that which has been done.

How do you understand that “praise, glory and honor” that will result when Jesus Christ is revealed? Who is praising whom, and for what?
19. (1:8) What relationship is central to the Christian’s life? How does a Christian nurture this relationship?
20. (1:8) How does this verse reinforce what Jesus said in **John 20:29**?
21. (1:8) How is our Christian joy “inexpressible”?
22. (1:9) How does the goal of our faith affect how we live in this world?
23. Agree or disagree: We are still waiting for the goal of our faith.



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1 Peter 1:10-12

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, ¹¹ trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

(1:13) "Therefore..." – Peter's commands and encouragement in the rest of the letter are built on the hope to which he has pointed his readers in 1:3-12.

1 Peter 1:13

¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

24. (1:10-12) How do New Testament Christians have an advantage over even the prophets and the angels of God in the Old Testament?
25. (1:10) Even God's inspired prophets searched the Scriptures "intently and with the greatest care." What can we learn from this?
26. (1:10-11) How well did the Old Testament prophets understand what Spirit of Christ in them led them to write down about the future coming of Christ? How might this affect our attitude toward what the Bible says about Christ's second coming life in heaven?
27. (1:10) Note the word that Peter uses to describe the message of the prophets.
(1:12) Note whom Peter identifies as the ones whom even the Old Testament prophets were serving.
Agree or disagree: The New Testament is more important than the Old Testament.
28. (1:12) In what sense were the Old Testament prophets not serving themselves but New Testament Christians?
29. (1:11-12) How do these verses teach the divine authorship of both the Old and New Testaments?
30. (1:13) The main verb of this verse is "set your hope." How do minds prepared for action and self-control (lit., thinking clearly) help us set our hope fully on the grace to be given?
31. (1:13) Why is it important for us to set our hope fully on God's grace? (Hint: On what other things might we sometimes set our hope?)



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1 Peter 1:13-16

¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

1 Peter 1:17-21

¹⁷ Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. ²¹ Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

32. (1:13) What specific strategies could we follow, so that our hope remains fully on God’s grace?

33. Classify verses 14-16: Primarily Law or Primarily Gospel
(1:13) For true obedience to the Law, what needs to come first?

What application can we make to our lives? our ministry?

34. (1:14) When did Christians live in ignorance? Of what were they ignorant? Why?

35. (1:15-16) How does the fact that God is holy make a Christian want to be holy? (see 1:18-19)

36. (1:15-16) Agree or disagree: If I don’t always appear to be striving for holiness, I will have more opportunities to share my faith.

37. (1:17-21) In the original Greek, these verses are all one long sentence. The main verb of that sentence is the command: “live your lives” (v. 17). Yet almost every other thought in the sentence is about what God has done. How is this significant?

38. (1:17) Read **John 8:31-47**. How does who our true Father is show in our lives?

39. (1:18) Remember that Peter was writing to both Jews and Gentiles. How could he call the way of life handed down to by all of their forefathers “empty”?



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1 Peter 1:18-21

¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. ²¹ Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

1 Peter 1:22-25

²² Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. ²³ For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For,

“All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord stands forever.”

And this is the word that was preached to you.

40. (1:19) Describe ways in which the blood of Christ is precious.
41. (1:20) Explain how this verse is comforting to us.
42. (1:21) Read **John 1:1,2,14**. How is it that “through [Christ]” we believe in God?
43. (1:21) Why is Jesus’ glorious resurrection so vital to our faith and hope?
44. (1:21) React to this statement: What matters is not how strong your faith is, but the strength of the one in whom you place your faith.
45. (1:22) Describe how our faith affects our relationships with others.
46. (1:22) Describe what “loving one another deeply” looks like.
47. (1:23) Of what “perishable seed” were we born the first time? Of what “imperishable seed” were we “born again”? Why does Peter describe conversion as rebirth in this context?
48. (1:24) How does the fact that “all men are like grass and all their glory is like the flowers of the field” affect our lives?
49. (1:23,25) Of what characteristics of God’s Word does Peter remind his readers? What do these characteristics mean for us and our lives and ministry?



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1 Peter 2:1-3

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Peter 2:4-5

⁴ As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— ⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

50. (2:2) React to the following comments from Pastor Mark Jeske: “It is ironic that some people spend a great deal of energy scrutinizing the labels of the food they buy, preferring foods that are organically grown, wary of chemicals and additives, and yet are careless about the official teachings of the church they join and the denomination to which they belong. God has taken great pains to give his pure Word to the world; we can do no less than to insist that our churches keep that purity in its teachings.”

51. (2:2-3) What keeps people from “craving” the pure spiritual milk in God’s Word?

How can we help one another as Christians crave God’s Word more and more?

52. (2:2) The end of this verse might be paraphrased, “so that it makes you grow, resulting in your salvation.” Why is it important for us to have a steady diet of “pure spiritual milk”?

53. (2:4) Who is *the* living Stone, and why is he described that way?

54. (2:4-5) Read **Mark 13:1-2** and **Ephesians 2:19-22**. How is the Christian Church far greater than any church building?

55. (2:5) Read **Psalms 51:17** and **Romans 12:1**. What are the “spiritual sacrifices” that we offer to God as his holy priests?

56. (2:5) Isaiah writes that “all our righteous acts are like filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). Everything we do is tainted with sin. What makes our “sacrifices” acceptable to God?



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1 Peter 2:6-8

⁶ For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious
cornerstone, and the one
who trusts in him will
never be put to shame.”

⁷ Now to you who believe,
this stone is precious. But to
those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders
rejected has become the
capstone,”

⁸ and,

“A stone that causes men
to stumble and a rock
that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they
disobey the message—which
is also what they were
destined for.

1 Peter 2:9-10

⁹ But you are a chosen
people, a royal priesthood, a
holy nation, a people
belonging to God, that you
may declare the praises of
him who called you out of
darkness into his wonderful
light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a
people, but now you are the
people of God; once you had
not received mercy, but now
you have received mercy.

57. (2:6-7) What is a cornerstone? What is a capstone? How is Jesus both the capstone and the cornerstone?
58. (2:6-8) What is the connection between these verses and verses 4-5?
59. (2:8) Read **Romans 9:30-33**. What is it about Jesus that makes him one over whom some stumble and fall?
60. React to this statement: There is no middle ground in relationships with Jesus. You are either for him or against him.
61. (2:6-8) How would these verses serve to comfort persecuted readers?
62. (2:9) Read **Exodus 19:5-6**. Explain how Peter’s statement differs from what the Lord told his people at Mount Sinai.
63. (2:9) Unpack the significance of each of these terms:
 - a. a chosen people:
 - b. a royal priesthood:
 - c. a holy nation:
 - d. a people belonging to God:
 - e. called out of darkness into his wonderful light:



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In verses 4-10, Peter has been talking primarily about Christians' relationship with Christ. In the next section (2:11-3:17), he addresses their relationships with other people. Note again the reminder that we are "aliens and strangers in the world." Because our final home is not in this world, the short-term gratification of this world does not motivate our lives.

1 Peter 2:11-12

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

1 Peter 2:13-15

¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.

64. (2:9) What do we naturally do because of our identity in Christ?
65. (2:10) When were Peter's readers not "people of God"? When had they not received mercy?
66. (2:11) Contrast how the world views "sinful desires" with how Peter describes them.
67. (2:11) Abstaining from sinful desires is easier said than done. Read **Ephesians 6:10-18**. How does God arm us for the battle?
68. (2:12) "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" is clearly not a Christian approach, at least not when it comes to living among unbelievers. What is one desire we have for what God might accomplish through our godly living? Do you have any examples to share from your life?
69. (2:12) When is "the day he visits us," and how will the pagans glorify God on that day?
- (2:13) "Submit" does not imply superiority or inferiority. It does, however, imply authority. The Greek word was originally a military term meaning "to arrange [troops] under the command of a leader." This word also occurs in 2:18, 3:1 (where we will discuss it further), 3:5, 3:22, and 5:5.
70. (2:13-14) Recalling the time and place where this letter is being written, explain why these words might be alarming (cf. Romans 13).

What is the application for our lives?

71. (2:14) What is the primary role God has given to government?



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1 Peter 2:16-17

¹⁶ Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

1 Peter 2:18-23

¹⁸ Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. ¹⁹ For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. ²⁰ But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

72. (2:16) This verse describes the tension that exists in our lives as Christians. Martin Luther wrote, "A Christian is a perfectly free lord, subject to no one; a Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." How is it possible that we are both?
73. (2:17) What are some practical ways in which we can honor those in government?
74. (2:18-20) As Pastor Mark Jeske points out, "Peter...neither endorses the practice [of slavery] nor calls for its violent overthrow. [He] simply worked with it as an inescapable feature of life everywhere in the Roman empire. Involuntary servitude has existed throughout human history...It should be noted that slavery as practiced in the first century was far removed from the ugly racial slavery of the Americas...Christianity spread rapidly among the huge slave population of the empire." What advice does Peter give to slaves? Why? (cf. v. 12,15)

What is the application for us today?

75. (2:21-23) Christ is the perfect example of submission, even in difficult circumstances (proving that submission does not mean inferiority). List some things that made Christ's submission to the worldly authorities so remarkable.
76. (2:23) When we suffer injustice and persecution at the hands of a sinful world, what is our comfort?
77. (2:18-23) Agree or disagree: It is wrong for Christians to leave a situation (e.g., unfair employer, oppressive government, abusive relationship) because they are suffering.



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1 Peter 2:24-25

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 3:1-6

Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, ² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. ³ Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. ⁴ Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. ⁵ For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, ⁶ like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

78. (2:22-25) At least three times in these verses, Peter refers to Isaiah 53, the Old Testament prophecy of Jesus as the Suffering Servant. Jesus' willing submission is more than just an example for us to follow. It is the motivation for our willing submission. How?

79. (2:25) What comfort do we have in knowing Christ as "the Shepherd and Overseer of [our] souls"?

80. (3:1) "In the same way" as what?

81. (3:1) Agree or disagree: If a Christian woman has an unbelieving husband, she is not expected to submit to him.

82. (3:3) List ways that the world defines beauty in women today.

83. (3:2-4) List ways that God defines beauty in women.

84. (3:4) Why is "the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit" "of great worth in God's sight"?

85. (3:5) Instead of worldly beauty or power or fame, in whom or what do Christian women put their hope?

Note: Verse 6 is the only place in the Bible where "obey" is used in the context of the marital relationship.

86. (3:6) Explain Peter's encouragement not to "give way to fear."



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Here again Peter says, “in the same way,” referring to the same respect and love for God and others that leads slaves to submit to masters and wives to submit to husbands (2:17; see also question #80).

1 Peter 3:7

⁷ Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Peter now applies the truths he has been teaching to “all of you” instead of to specific groups (like slaves, wives, and husbands).

1 Peter 3:8

⁸ Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

87. (3:7) What in this verse makes it clear that Peter does not mean that wives are *spiritually* weaker than their husbands?

88. (3:7) The word translated “partner” is literally “object” or “vessel.” Professor Armin Panning pointed out that this word suggests “something that is useful in accomplishing a task, completing an assignment, fulfilling a role, etc....that which is useful and helpful, even essential, for accomplishing some preparation or carrying out some task.” It is important to note that both husband and wife are called “vessels”; both have been given a specific and important role. Peter calls the wife the “weaker partner.” Many suggestions have been offered as to the sense in which Peter means to say that the wives are “weaker.” Here are two possibilities:

- a. Generally speaking, women have certain emotional and physical needs that men do not have.
- b. The woman’s weakness lies in God’s enforced submission of her will to that of the man. By following God’s will and submitting to her husband, she is making herself vulnerable and “weak.”

Which understanding do you prefer, and why?

89. (3:7) Too often there are times husbands fail to treat wives with the respect Peter talks about. Explain how seriously that affects their relationship with God.

90. (3:8) Give definitions for each of the following terms that are to characterize our lives as Christians:

- a. harmony
- b. sympathy
- c. love
- d. compassion
- e. humility



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1 Peter 3:9-14

⁹ Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

¹⁰ For,
“Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.

¹¹ He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.”

1 Peter 3:15

¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

91. (3:9) Why don't Christians need to seek revenge or “payback”?
92. (3:10-12) Peter quotes Psalm 34:12-16 to remind his readers that what they are experiencing is nothing new. What blessings can Christians anticipate when they pursue good in word and speech?
93. (3:12) What comfort do Christians have, if they suffer for doing good?
94. (3:13) What other blessing generally results from doing good?
95. (3:9-14) Think back to Peter's life. Through what event in Peter's life had Jesus taught him this lesson?
96. (3:14) If a Christian takes such a gentle approach to those who cause them suffering, repaying evil with good, our reason tells us he might be making himself vulnerable to even worse evils. How can Peter write what he does (quoting Isaiah 8:12b) to these Christians, calling them “blessed” and telling them not to fear?
97. (3:15) What does it mean to “set apart Christ as Lord,” and how does this encouragement fit into this context?
98. (3:15) In this context, what is leading someone to ask the Christian to give the reason for his hope?
99. (3:15) How does a Christian stay prepared to give an answer?



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1 Peter 3:15-17

¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

1 Peter 3:18-20a

¹⁸ For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison ²⁰ who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.

(3:15) Explain why Peter adds the qualifier, "But do this with gentleness and respect."

Describe examples of witnessing *with* gentleness and respect and *without* gentleness and respect.

100.(3:16) How could a failure to "keep a clear conscience" as we share our faith interfere with our witnessing?

101.(3:17) While gentle and respectful witnessing (v. 15-16) and godly living (v. 8-9) may deflect some persecution and prevent some suffering, the reality is that we may still "suffer for doing good." What comfort does Peter provide in this verse?

102.(3:18) Read **2 Corinthians 5:14**. What is the motivation for our witnessing? How does this affect our approach?

103.(3:18) Pastor Mark Jeske writes, "The center of hope and joy for any Christian is the gospel, and the gospel is articulated here as clearly and forcefully as anywhere in the Scriptures." Unpack the beauty of each phrase in this verse.

The end of verse 18 is, literally, "He was put to death in flesh, made alive in spirit"—a reference to Jesus' humiliation ("fleshly" existence) and exaltation ("spiritual" existence). For more on this, see "The Christological Flesh-Spirit Antithesis," by Siegbert Becker (www.wlsessays.net/node/99).

104.(3:19) Read **Colossians 2:15**. Describe the purpose of Christ's descent into hell.

105.(3:20) Read **Genesis 6:3**. How was God patient in the days of Noah?



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1 Peter 3:20b-22

In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,²² who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

- 106.(3:20) How were the flood waters both destructive and saving?
- 107.(3:21) Agree or disagree: This verse shows that the flood was just a parable used to teach a point, not an actual event.
- 108.(3:21) Explain: Baptism is not just a symbolic ritual, but a powerful gift.
- 109.(3:21) The word “pledge” is actually a courtroom term for “a legal claim on something.” Through Baptism, what can we now claim?
- 110.(3:21) Read **Romans 6:4**. For centuries, Christian churches have seen and celebrated the connection between baptism and Easter. How does the Bible connect the two? How might we, in practical ways, recognize and remember that connection?
- 111.(3:22) This verse reminds us of the assurance that Christ’s ascension gives to us—his power and reign in victory. Read **Matthew 28:18-20**. Which angels, authorities and powers are in submission to Jesus? List ways that this truth is comforting to Christians.
- 112.List and share thoughts or insights do you hope to take away from our study of 1 Peter 1-3.

Note: We plan to complete our study of 1 Peter in the fall of 2010.



Bold Faith in Trying Times

A Study of 1 Peter

1 Peter 4:1-6

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.² As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.³ For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.⁴ They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.⁶ For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

113.(4:1) Chapter four begins with “therefore,” which always points back to something that preceded it and draws a conclusion or makes an application on the basis of that. Look back at chapter 3. To what does this “therefore” point?

“In his body” (twice in v. 1) and “in regard to the body” (v. 6) are both, literally, “in flesh.” Both refer to “fleshly” existence (Jesus’ state of humiliation, humans’ bodies on earth).

“In regard to spirit” (v. 6) is, literally, “in spirit.” It refers to “spiritual” existence (Jesus’ state of exaltation, Christians’ glorified bodies in heaven).

Compare also 1 Peter 3:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:40-49. For more on this, see “The Christological Flesh-Spirit Antithesis,” by Siegbert Becker (www.wlssays.net/node/99).

114.(4:1-3) What leads Christians to want to stand out from others?

115.(4:4) Share any specific stories about times when you had abuse heaped on you for refusing to join in the sins of others.

116.(4:5) What sad truth faces those who believe they don’t have to answer to anyone?

117.(4:6) “Dead” could refer to those physically dead or spiritually dead. Which do you prefer, and why?

118.(4:6) Explain what it means to be “judged according to men” in our “fleshly” existence and “live according to God” in our “spiritual” existence. How is thought of verse 6 encouraging for Christians?



Bold Faith in Trying Times

A Study of 1 Peter

1 Peter 4:7-11

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:12-13

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

119.(4:7) Describe what effect the nearness of “the end of all things” has on our Christian life.

120.(4:8) Read **Matthew 18:15** and **1 Corinthians 13:6**. What can “love covers over a multitude of sins” NOT mean?

Read **1 John 4:10**, **Luke 17:3-4** and **Ephesians 4:32**. What does “love covers over a multitude of sins” mean?

121.(4:9) Identify obstacles to offering hospitality today. Why is it important for us to overcome those obstacles?

122.(4:10-11) List things we can learn about spiritual gifts from these two verses.

123.(4:12) To our human thinking, what seems “strange” about trials and suffering?

124.(4:13) Read **Acts 9:1-4**. How do Christians “participate in the sufferings of Christ”?

125.(4:13) Read **Romans 8:17-18**. Why can we rejoice that we participate in the sufferings of Christ?

126.(4:13) In what way can we look forward to our joy changing “when his glory is revealed”?



Bold Faith in Trying Times

A Study of 1 Peter

1 Peter 4:14-19

¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶

However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And,

“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

1 Peter 5:1-2a

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—

127.(4:14-16) Read **Matthew 5:10-12**. Why can we be considered blessed and even “praise God” when we are “insulted because of the name of Christ”?

128.(4:15,19) Why do you think Peter even mentions suffering for doing wrong here?

129.(4:17) Read **Matthew 24:9-14**. In what sense does judgment begin with the family of God?

130.(4:17-19) What answer does Peter give us for the question, “Why do Christians suffer while the wicked prosper”?

131.(4:19) Read **John 15:18-21**. How is our suffering as Christians “according to God’s will”?

132.(4:19) Read **Romans 12:19** and **1 Corinthians 10:13**. For what purpose(s) do we commit ourselves to our faithful Creator when we suffer?

133.(5:1) How does this verse emphasize the theme of this entire book and how it applies to Peter’s life?

134.(5:1-2) Peter uses three terms here to describe the role of pastors or spiritual leaders. What are those terms, and what is the significance of each term?

135.(5:2) To whom does the flock belong? What is the significance of this?



1 Peter 5:2-4

² Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

1 Peter 5:5-6

⁵ Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Note: “those who are older” (v. 5) is exactly the same word as “elders” (v. 1).

136.(5:2-3) Peter lists some expectations of those who are pastors or spiritual leaders:

- a. They must serve in ministry willingly, compelled only by Christ's love (2 Corinthians 5:14), not out of guilt, obligation, or any other compulsion.
- b. They must not be in it for the money, but to serve eagerly.
- c. They must lead by example, not by a domineering attitude.

Every pastor will admit failings in one or more of these expectations from time to time.

Read **Hebrews 13:7,15-18**. What are some ways that God's people can help pastors and spiritual leaders?

137.(5:4) Why, in this dog-eat-dog world, do pastors and spiritual leaders (and all Christians, for that matter) not need to “watch out for number one”?

138.(5:4) Read **Luke 17:10**. How are we NOT to understand Peter's promise of a crown of glory?

139.(5:4) How is our “crown of glory” in heaven different from our suffering in this world?

140.(5:5) “In the same way” as what?

141.(5:5-6) Before whom are we called to be humble?

142. Why is humility so difficult? Why is humility so important?

143.(5:5-6) Why don't Christians have to be afraid of being humble?



Bold Faith in Trying Times

A Study of 1 Peter

1 Peter 5:7-11

⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

144.(5:7) What is the connection between this statement and what Peter just wrote in verse 6?

145.(5:7) Explain how Christians can be calm, even when trouble strikes.

146.(5:8) “Enemy” here means an adversary who takes someone to court and uses the law against him. How does the devil do this?

147.(5:8) Read and react to this quote about this verse:

Do you wonder why your life is often a struggle? Do you wonder why your problems don't just evaporate even though you go to church and pray? Do you groan because of the carelessness, lovelessness, or recklessness of people in your family? Do you wonder why you still find certain sins so fascinating even when you've been burned by them before? Well, says Peter, wake up and realize what you're up against in your life: you have a fearsome enemy, one of the greatest of the spirit world...What a dreadful thought—this evil, worldwide, powerful spirit is committed to dragging you off to hell too. (Jeske, 128-129)

148.(5:9) How does the reminder that we are not alone in our suffering help and encourage us?

149.(5:10) Explain why “the God of all grace” is such a beautiful name for God and why Peter would use that name in this context.

150.(5:10) “Eternal...a little while.” Describe the effect of this contrast.

151.(5:10-11) If we are to resist temptation and stand firm in our faith, where should we turn for strength and who gets the credit?



1 Peter 5:12-14

¹² With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

¹³ She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Silas

Possible ways in which Silas helped Peter with this letter:

- a. Serving as a scribe, writing the letter as Peter dictated it (relatively common in that day and *may* account for some of the rather formal Greek style in a letter by uneducated Peter)
- b. Delivering the letter to the churches (see Acts 15:27)

Background Information on Silas:

- a. A prophet sent by the church in Jerusalem to encourage the Christians in Antioch (Acts 15:15-35)
- b. Chosen by Paul to accompany him on his 2nd missionary journey (Acts 15:36-41)
 - i. Arrested with Paul in Philippi (Acts 16:16-40)
 - ii. Escaped a mob attack in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)
 - iii. Stayed behind with Timothy in Berea when Paul went to Athens (Acts 17:10-15)
 - iv. Rejoined Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1-5)
- c. Co-authored both letters to the Thessalonians, likely while they were in Corinth (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1)

Mark: called “my son” by Peter as a close companion in the faith

Background Information on Mark:

- a. Cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10)
- b. Accompanied Paul and Barnabas on part of Paul’s 1st missionary journey, but later left (Acts 12:25; 15:37-38)
- c. Became Barnabas’ missionary companion (Acts 15:39)
- d. Regained Paul’s trust and was helpful to him later in his life (2 Timothy 4:11)
- e. Some think he was the young man who fled naked in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:51-52)
- f. Author of the 2nd Gospel, likely based on Peter’s eyewitness account

152.(5:12) What does Peter himself identify as the purpose of his letter?

153.(5:13-14) “She who is in Babylon” likely means the church at Rome. What can we learn from such greetings between Christians?

154.(5:14) Where is the only true peace found?