

Zion's Temple



5 Weeks Self-Study Guide

1 Peter 1:1-16

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Whether you're using this Study Guide with your family, in a discipleship relationship, or as a Small Group, our hope is that it will help you dive deeper into 1 Peter in the context of community. This guide is designed to be a helpful tool in your study, meditation, and application of God's Word. You don't have to use every part and it's not meant to be a checklist document where you get each section finished for the sake of crossing it off—use what's helpful to you.

WEEKLY STUDY

The text. Each week we've put the text in the book so that you can mark it up with observations or notes. Spend time studying the text and making observations either prior to the sermon that week or at the beginning of your Small Group.

Application & Discussion Questions. These questions are meant to be a tool to help get into God's Word as well as to apply the sermon. Use the ones that fit best with your group's situation and needs.

Questions for Kids. For those with children in your life in some capacity, these questions are designed to help you talk about the sermon with younger children.

Response. Each week there are one or two possible next steps. Whether you use these or find other ways to respond, the key is to intentionally act on and obey what God's Word says.

EXTRAS

10 Things to Know about 1 Peter. As you start 1 Peter, this section helps introduce you to the author, recipients, historical context, and key ideas.

Resources. We've suggested a few books and articles for commentary on 1 Peter or to read more about how to live in exile.

Appendix 1: How to Make Observations. We encourage you to spend time making observations and studying the passage so this appendix provides a short primer on how to make good observations.

Appendix 2: Prayers & Praises. This blank page is a space for writing down prayer requests and praises either for yourself or for those in your community as you walk through 1 Peter.

Appendix 3: Actions, Promises, and Characteristics of God. This blank page offers a space to keep a list of where you see God in action, the promises of God we can cling to, or the attributes and characteristics of God in 1 Peter. This list can be used as a reminder of who God is and what He has done for us to fuel our thoughts and prayers.

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT 1 PETER

- ▶ Peter, the Apostle, wrote the book and refers to it in his second letter (2 Peter 3:1).
- ▶ The letter was likely written while Peter was in Rome (“Babylon” in 5:13) around AD 62-63.
- ▶ At the time of Peter’s writing, the famous Emperor Nero was ruling Rome. Within a couple of years, he would have Peter killed.
- ▶ Although persecution at the time of writing was not yet widespread or officially sanctioned by the Empire, it was taking place on a local level.
- ▶ Peter wrote to believers scattered throughout Asia-Minor (1:1), now modern-day Turkey.
- ▶ Most likely, the audience primarily consisted of Gentiles (see 1:14, 18; 2:10) who seemed to have been instructed in the Old Testament after their conversion.
- ▶ The word “exile” and themes associated with exiles show up throughout the book. Whether the people were literal exiles or spiritual exiles experiencing hostility from the world, this major theme provides the backdrop to the book.
- ▶ The purpose of the letter is to encourage believers to both endure suffering and pursue holiness in an evil and hostile culture.
- ▶ Another primary theme of the letter is that while we don’t belong to this world we do belong to God, who has redeemed us to Himself (1:1-2, 18-19; 2:9-10, 25; 3:18).
- ▶ At the end of the letter we see that Peter was with John Mark. This is the same Mark who participated in ministry with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25; 13:5, Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11), whose mother hosted a church (Acts 12:12), and who most likely wrote the Gospel of Mark through the direction and influence of Peter.

¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. (1 Pet. 1:1-2)

We encourage you to read the passage and make observations together. See Appendix 1 for help on how to make observations.

APPLICATION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Make sure you are looking into the Bible itself so that your observations, interpretations, and applications are from the text. The questions below are meant to be a tool to help get into God's Word, but don't feel bound to them or make getting through all of them a concern.

- 1** What's one observation (not interpretation or application yet) you have when reading this passage? For instance, do you notice any key words, repetition, connecting thoughts, mentions of God, or important themes?
- 2** Context is important for helping us interpret the Bible correctly, so what do you know about the context of this book (author, recipients, historical background, themes, etc.)?
- 3** What might this passage teach us about the triune God? What do we learn about each person (Father, Son, and Spirit) specifically?
- 4** Peter calls the people he's writing to "elect exiles." What is significant about each word? What is significant about the way Peter puts them together?
- 5** What do you think it means to be sanctified by the Spirit? What does this tell us about our relationship to God or how we are to view our own lives? (Also see: 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11; Heb. 10:10)
- 6** How are grace and peace multiplied to us (1:2) through the Word?
- 7** How can you pray verse 2 back to God in praise and thanksgiving? How can you use verse 2 to pray for your own requests?

- 8** What's one thing you learned about God or the gospel in this text? How can you apply it or walk in it this week (be specific)? Consider praying over these applications together.
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QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

For those of with young children in your life, here are a couple of questions to ask them as you read the Bible together.

- 1** Using a Bible dictionary or thesaurus talk with your children about the meaning of words like exiles, foreknowledge, grace, and sanctification. (Seen in verses 1-2)
- 2** Ask your children to list some characteristics of God they learned from the text.

RESPONSE

It is important that we be doers of the Word and not hearers only, so whether you use these specific applications or not, please obey what God puts on your heart through the reading, preaching, and discussing of God's Word.

As you meditate on verses 1-2, let it create thankfulness in your heart towards God. Consider keeping a list (see Appendix 2) of the actions, promises, or characteristics of God that you see in 1 Peter. Refer to this list to remember who God is and what He's provided for you, and use the list to pray.

Think back to Question 8 and what was shared. Allow God to change you through His Word by applying or living in light of the realities that stood out to you in 1 Peter 1:1-2. Pray specifically about it. Consider praying for your group members, and reaching out to encourage them or let them know how you're praying for them.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Pet. 1:3-5)

We encourage you to read the passage and make observations together. See Appendix 1 for help on how to make observations.

APPLICATION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- 1** What is one observation (not interpretation or application yet) you notice when reading this passage? For instance, do you notice any key words, repetition, connecting thoughts, mentions of God, or important themes?
- 2** Peter begins with a "doxology" (glorifying words). What characteristics of God does Peter directly or indirectly point to in verses 3-5?
- 3** In Scripture, hope means "expectation" or "anticipation" of something that is certain. How does a Christian's hope differ from hope found in other faiths or hope in our culture? Discuss some of the "hopes" a Christian has.
- 4** Because of God's mercy, a believer is not only blessed with a living hope, but also with an inheritance. How does Peter describe this inheritance?
- 5** Due to our current refugee crisis, the number of people displaced by war, conflict, or persecution is at a record high. Refugees know first-hand that things and possessions of this world do not last. How would Peter's words be comforting to this displaced and exiled audience? How do they offer comfort to you in your life today?
- 6** Peter assures his readers that God's power guards them and will enable them to persevere. Look up other verses about God's power: Gen. 18:14; Jer. 10:12;

32:17-19; 2 Cor. 13:4; Eph. 3:16; 6:10. How does God's power give you hope? What's an area in your life where you need to lean into God's power?

- 7 How does having a living hope cause us to live differently as we plan, receive bad news, walk through trials or disappointment, or even enjoy earthly blessings?
- 8 In light of reading this text and the group discussion, what is one specific way you want to apply this passage and obey God this week? How can this group help you or pray for you as you live this out?

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

For those of you who wish young children in your life, here are a couple of questions to ask them as you read the Bible together.

- 1 God says when you hope in Him for what He has for you, you will not be disappointed. What does the Bible say that God has for you?
- 2 Peter starts his letter by praising God. Praise is saying what you really like or admire about someone. What are some things about God that you would like to praise?

RESPONSE

It is important that we be doers of the Word and not hearers only, so whether you use these specific applications or not, please obey what God puts on your heart through the reading, preaching, and discussing of God's Word.

Peter began his letter to a suffering people by first praising God for what He has done for them. As you wake each morning this next week, begin with praising God before thinking of the day's agenda. Praise Him for His mercy and power, for giving you a living hope of a future with Him, and for being held by a faith that is guarded by Him.

Update your list in Appendix 2 with promises, actions, and characteristics from 1 Peter. This week, pick one attribute to meditate on and pray into. Look for ways to encourage others in your world with this reality.

⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining with the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1 Pet. 1:6-9)

We encourage you to read the passage and make observations together. See Appendix 1 for help on how to make observations.

APPLICATION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Make sure you are looking into the Bible itself so that your observations, interpretations, and applications are from the text. The questions below are meant to be a tool to help get into God's Word, but don't feel bound to them or make getting through all of them a concern.

- 1** What is one observation (not interpretation or application yet) you notice when reading this passage? For instance, do you notice any key words, repetition, connecting thoughts, mentions of God, or important themes?
- 2** Read verses 6-7 together. What does Peter tell us about trials?
- 3** How do you usually respond when you face trials of various kinds? How do you walk through the trial?
- 4** Read verses 3-5 again. How does 1:3-5 connect to 1:6-9? Are there any areas of overlap?
- 5** What is the danger of trying to avoid or minimize trials and hard things in your life? What are the benefits of trials in our lives?
- 6** What are some specific ways you can bring praise, glory, and honor to Christ today as you endure trials in this life? Is there something specific you are walking through that you need to have a different perspective on?

- 7 How might lessons we learned during the recent Heaven and Lament series help us live joyfully in the midst of trials? (See Col. 3:1-4, Rom. 8:18; Rev. 22:1-5.)?
 - 8 How do these verses (1:6-9) change the way you experience trials? What is one specific way you can apply this text right now or this week?
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QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

For those of you with young children in your life, here are a couple of questions to ask them as you read the Bible together.

- 1 What are some hard things that you have to go through?
- 2 How does Jesus help us through these hard things? What can we learn through hard things? How do we know God loves us and is still with us even when we go through hard things—like trials or pain?

RESPONSE

It is important that we be doers of the Word and not hearers only, so whether you use these specific applications or not, please obey what God puts on your heart through the reading, preaching, and discussing of God's Word.

Trials are not meant to be endured alone. If you are walking through a trial, ask someone to be praying for you and with you this week. Be specific and honest about what it is and consider asking them to use Scripture to encourage you. Or, take 1 Peter 1:3-9 and use it to speak into the life of someone around you who is going through a trial. Part of applying the Scripture is sharing it with others.

Sing *When Trials Come* by Keith and Kristyn Getty together as a group. Find a couple of other songs you can sing that give a proper perspective through trials.

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. ¹³ Therefore, preparing your minds for action,² and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:10-13)

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APPLICATION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- 1** What is one observation (not interpretation or application yet) you notice when reading this passage? For instance, do you notice any key words, repetition, connecting thoughts, mentions of God, or important themes?
- 2** How does your perspective on the prophets change after considering that they lived for the benefit of those, including you, who would not even be born for hundreds of years? How might you read the Old Testament differently in light of this?
- 3** The prophets worked for the benefit of future generations. If God asked you to dedicate your life to something that primarily benefits others, or to walk through hard circumstances for the good of others, how would you respond? Would you be satisfied? Why or why not?
- 4** What are some places in the Old Testament that the message of "grace" or "the sufferings of Christ" are predicted? How does seeing the promise of the gospel and its pattern in the Old Testament strengthen your faith?

- 5 How does the context of 1:1-12 (especially verses 6-9) lead Peter to call his readers to be prepared, ready, and future-minded?
 - 6 What might it mean to make sure we stay alert, are prepared for action, and are “sober-minded”? What things in our culture pull us into a different mindset? How do we fight those cultural pulls and have minds ready for action?
 - 7 It’s hard not to be focused only on the here-and-now, but to set our hope on future grace. How can setting our hope on the grace that will be ours and living as exiles change the way we live now?
 - 8 What’s one way you can apply 1:13 to your life this week? How can this group then encourage and pray for you as you do so?
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QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

For those of you with young children in your life, here are a couple of questions to ask them as you read the Bible together.

- 1 What kinds of things do you search for intently? How can we search the Bible intently?
- 2 What is something you’ve had to wait on to receive (a gift, reward, vacation)? What did you learn by waiting? Was it worth waiting for?

RESPONSE

It is important that we be doers of the Word and not hearers only, so whether you use these specific applications or not, please obey what God puts on your heart through the reading, preaching, and discussing of God’s Word.

Think about ways you might focus too much on the things of earth rather than eternal things. Here are some questions that might help: Is there something I’m demanding from God now? Are there ways I’m sinning by seeking to obtain, experience, or gain things because I feel like God hasn’t provided? Am I being impatient and leaning into other things instead of waiting? Spend time confessing and repenting of any areas of sin God reveals and ask for His help.

¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” (1 Pet. 1:14-16)

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APPLICATION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Make sure you are looking into the Bible itself so that your observations, interpretations, and applications are from the text. The questions below are meant to be a tool to help get into God’s Word, but don’t feel bound to them or make getting through all of them a concern.

- 1** What is one observation (not interpretation or application yet) you notice when reading this passage? For instance, do you notice any key words, repetition, connecting thoughts, mentions of God, or important themes?
- 2** In your opinion, what value is holiness given in our culture? What about in the church’s history or in your own church background?
- 3** As Christians, what does it mean to be obedient children? How often do you think of your Christian walk in terms of “obedience” as God’s child?
- 4** What do you think is meant by “do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance” in verse 14? What are some habits, struggles, patterns, or sins from your life before Christ that you have to be aware of so you can intentionally fight them? How can you apply this verse?
- 5** Why is the gospel important to remember as we pursue holiness? How can we encourage each other to remember the gospel as we pursue holiness?
- 6** What conduct in your life would not be considered holy? What conduct in your life would be considered holy—honoring and pleasing to God? How should you respond in light of this text?

- 7 Read Romans 12:2. What are 1-2 ways this week we can set ourselves up to avoid conforming to former passions or the pattern of this world? How can we help each other in this matter?
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QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

For those of you with young children in your life, here are a couple of questions to ask them as you read the Bible together.

- 1 Why should we obey God and be holy?
- 2 What is one way one way that you can be holy this week?

RESPONSE

It is important that we be doers of the Word and not hearers only, so whether you use these or not please obey what God puts on your heart through the reading, preaching, and discussing of God's Word.

What passions of your former ignorance are you still entertaining and participating in? Commit to prayerfully seeking God's help to put to death that old way of life. Invite two people in your Small Group to pray for you this month in regards to this former passion. If you are married or live with your family, invite them to pray with you as you ask God to free you from this former life.

As a family or Small Group, think of one area of holiness that you would like to grow in as a group. Commit a relevant Bible verse to memory and pray together regularly for the next month as you seek to imitate God's holiness in this area.

RESOURCES

BOOKS & COMMENTARIES

1 Peter (Tyndale Commentary Series) by Wayne Grudem

1, 2 Peter, & Jude (New American Commentary Series) by Thomas Schreiner

1 Peter for You by Juan Sanchez

The Message of 1 Peter by Edmund Clowney

1 Peter: A Living Hope (Bible Study) by Jen Wilkin

Everyday Church by Tim Chester & Steve Timmis // A book on 1 Peter and the Christian Life

Onward! by Russell Moore

ARTICLES & MESSAGES

The Gospel Coalition 2016 Women's Conference, Plenary Sessions on 1 Peter // Search on thegospelcoalition.org

Are We Exiles? // Search on russellmoore.com

Christian Exiles // Search on ligonier.org

In Exile at Babylon U. // Search on theologyofwork.org

The Church in a Politicized World // Search on ftc.co

College park church #cpcThisExiledLife Search on yourchurch.com

If you have any questions about these resources or any additional resources, contact Pastor G. Lancaster at ztcogministries2@gmail.com

APPENDIX 1: HOW TO MAKE OBSERVATIONS

When reading Scripture on your own or in a group it's natural to quickly jump to ways we can apply the passage to our lives. While this is not a bad instinct, in doing so we often miss the author's main purpose of the text. We need to take time to *observe* what literary devices and emphasis the biblical author has used to communicate to his audience.

Below are some helpful tips to help you and your group make helpful observations that lead to correct interpretation and application.

1. **Read the passage out loud.** Often times when we read the Bible silently, we can miss things. The Scriptures were actually meant to be read out loud, and if we only read the it silently we can miss some of the emotion and emphasis in the text.
2. **Read the passage both quickly and slowly.** There is good reason to read large amounts of Scripture for a season but there is also a good reason to slow down and spend weeks or months in one book. A healthy diet of both types of reading will help to see the grand theme of the Scriptures and to allow truth to ruminate in your soul.
3. **Keep track of the words or ideas that are repeated.** If you're reading a short passage you may not see much repeated but when you study a whole book it's easier to see repetition and ideas that the author continues to address.
4. **Highlight transition words/phrases.** The biblical writers often help us track their thought process by using words and phrases like: for, therefore, but, because, in order that, so then, likewise, etc. Especially in the New Testament letters, we are able to track to main points, purposes, results, and reasons by following these literary devices.
5. **Pay attention to the verbs.** Pay attention to see if the author is describing a former way of life (past tense), a present commendation or rebuke (present tense), or what promises are awaiting fulfillment (future tense). Also, look to see if the verb is *describing* something (indicative) or *commanding* something (imperative).
6. **Be aware of assuming understanding in familiar texts.** When we have read a passage many times before we often fail to see the glorious truths and surprising ways in which God reveals Himself to His people. Careful reading, prayer, and meditation on the text will help fight against the temptations of familiarity.
7. **Pray for illumination.** We are dependent upon the Holy Spirit to illumine our minds and hearts to understand and love the texts that we are studying.

APPENDIX 2: PRAYERS & PRAISES

APPENDIX 3: ACTIONS, PROMISES &
CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD
