

Welcome

Dear sister in Christ:

I am so blessed you chose to study the epistles of 1 & 2 Peter with me over the next 10 weeks. When women gather to study God's word together, something life transforming happens. The Bible tells us God desires to transform us into the image of His Son Jesus Christ. In other words, God desires us to become Holy as He is holy (Leviticus 19:2, 1 Peter 1:16). Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we strive to live our lives in a way that we become more like our Savior Jesus Christ. This process is called sanctification. We know this through the scripture. By reading God's word, we learn more about the Holiness of God and how we can transform the renewing of our mind. Romans 12:2 says, ***"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."***

Spiritual transformation should not always take place in isolation. It is good for God's people to study His living word together. As we hear God's Word preached and when we discuss it with other believers, God uses his Word to transform us into the reflection of his Son, Jesus Christ.

So welcome aboard! It is my personal prayer we will all become better disciples for the Lord Jesus. I pray your journey in God's word will be lifechanging. I pray you will be encouraged by our discussions each week. I pray you will also develop new relationships with your fellow sisters in Christ. I also pray that our time together will glorify our Lord Jesus Christ.

To God be the glory forever and ever, Amen!

Your sister in Christ,

Kathy Jorgensen

How to Benefit from Your Bible Study

Prayer

Before you sit down to read God's word and complete your study questions, you should begin with prayer. Seek help from the Holy Spirit to guide you. In John 14:26 (ESV), Jesus encourages his eleven disciples, saying to them, ***“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”*** The late theologian Charles Spurgeon explained, “If you do not understand a book by a departed writer you are unable to ask him his meaning, but the Spirit, who inspired Holy Scripture, lives forever, and He delights to open the Word to those who see His instruction.”

As you approach our study of God's Word with joy and eagerness—the Holy Spirit will illuminate your heart to comprehend, embrace, and apply the truths you are studying. This does not mean you will have an answer for every question, or the scriptures will be crystal clear each time. That is the beauty of studying God's word in a community. The Bible says, “iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another”. (Proverbs 27:7)

Personal Study

Purpose

The purpose of Bible study is not a journey of self-discovery. It is a journey to discover what the Bible says about God and His promises. We will accomplish our purpose as we study a book of the Bible from beginning to end. As you learn more about the character of God, you will understand who God is and how to grow in your relationship with Him.

Approach

It is important you read the scripture passage each week before starting your study. If you do not already have a daily routine for reading God's word, now is a good time to start. You will need at least 1-2 hours in your week to complete all the study questions. Divide your study time throughout the week, rather than putting your study off to one day. Life gets busy and comes with many distractions. If you are unable to do your study, please still come. Your absence would be greatly missed.

Bible Translations

Your teacher will framework all questions and verses from the English Standard Version (ESV) translation. You are welcome to use any translation you desire; however, it is recommended for consistent translation, you use the ESV Bible or New International Version (NIV) or New King James Version (NKJV). Free translations are found at www.biblegateway.com. Translations such as the Message Bible (MSG) or the New Living Translation (NLT) are paraphrased versions of the original languages of scripture and are not recommended for this study.

It is also important you do not refer to other commentaries, until after you have completed your study. In addition, do not share your pastor's teaching or comments from popular authors or blogs. Instead, invite the Holy Spirit to lead your heart and mind during your personal study time.

Study Questions

Each week, you will have study questions to complete. There will be interpretative questions to help you think about the meaning of the passage. These questions will help you learn new facts about the scripture. Application questions will ask you to reflect on ways you can apply what you learn into your own life. Ask yourself, "How will the scripture transform the way I will live?" There will be a section of personal reflection. You are not obligated to share your personal thoughts with the group; however, they may encourage others. We will begin our discussion each week with a review of the Personalize Your Lesson section from the preceding lesson.

Teaching Time

Each week, your teacher will present a 15-20-minute lesson to help reinforce what you have discussed in your group. Teaching time will examine the context of the passage as it relates to the rest of scripture, church history, doctrine, and implications for daily living.

Goals and Gifts

Spiritual transformation is about changing from the inside out. If we are to be transformed into the image of Christ, we must allow our hearts and minds to grow spiritually. God wants us to pursue after His holiness, by becoming more like Him in our attitudes, behaviors, and goals. If we plan to enjoy God in eternity, we need to be enjoying Him now in the present.

I pray you will see the scriptures as a precious gift from your Heavenly Father. James 1: 17 says, ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change"***. May you labor well to see the precious gift before you.

To God be the glory for ever and ever Amen!

1 & 2 PETER

Tuesday Mornings 9 -10:30 am & Tuesday Evenings 7-8:30 pm

Kathy Jorgensen, Lead Teacher

Email: kjorgey@comcast.net Cell: 484-363-7137

Meeting Day	Lesson & Passages
September 14	Week-1 Introduction
September 21	Week-2: 1 st Peter 1:1-13, 2:1-3
September 28	Week-3: 1 st Peter 2:4-25
October 5	Week-4: 1 st Peter 3
October 12 (Fellowship)	Week-5: 1 st Peter 4
October 19	Week-6: 1 st Peter 5
October 26	Week-7: 2 nd Peter 1
November 2 nd	*****No Class*****
November 9	Week-8: 2 nd Peter 2
November 16 (Fellowship)	Week-9: 2 nd Peter 3

1 & 2 PETER

Week 1-Introduction

2 Timothy 3:16 states, "All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness." ...

There is absolutely no substitute for submission to Scripture. Your spiritual health depends on placing the utmost value on the Word of God and obeying it with an eager heart. If you want to walk with Jesus and you want to grow in your relationship with Him, then you need to invest time in that relationship. One of the best ways to invest that time, is by reading and studying God's word.

Like all things in life, if you want to get good at reading God's word, you must make a commitment to spend time in it. Studying God's word is a lifetime pursuit. We will never become perfect at understanding its beautiful and mysterious truth in this lifetime. I also believe when we are at home in glory with Jesus, we will be spending an eternity learning about our Savior. However, let us not wait until then to nurture our relationship with our Lord.

Before beginning any in-depth study of scripture, it helps to do some investigative work into the book of the Bible you will study. It is important to read the bible in its proper context. Each book of scripture has an original author with an original audience, with an original message. If we bounce around the Bible, we take God's word out of context and we miss hearing and seeing God's original message. It is important that we know what is happening in our passage historically. Where does our passage take place? Who are the main characters? What is happening politically in history? Where is your text in the timeline of the Bible? Are you seeing any major biblical themes taking shape? Preparation helps us resist the risk of getting the text wrong. Context also helps us understand where our passage of study fits into God's bigger storyline of the Bible. Context is also important if we want to understand how our text applies to us today.

Before you begin your study, we need to establish the context of 1 & 2 Peter. The following questions will help you in your preparatory work. So, pull up a comfortable chair, open or turn on your Bible and let's begin!



Week One Study Questions

1. Who is the author of 1 Peter? (1 Peter 1:1, 1 Peter 5:1)

2. Describe what you learn about the Apostle Peter from the following verses?
 - Mark 1:16-18

 - John 1:42

 - Matthew 14:22-33

 - John 18:1-11

 - Luke 22:54-62

 - John 21:15-17

 - Acts 2:14-41

How does Peter confess Jesus in the following passages?

- Matthew 16:16

- Mark 8:29

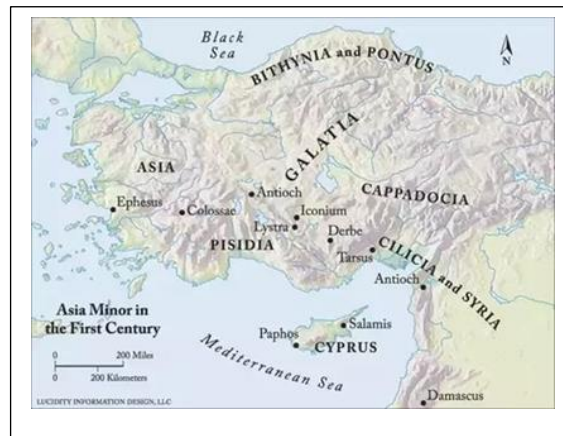
- Luke 9:20

- John 6:67-71

First & Second Peter

It is accepted that 1 Peter was written between A.D. 64-65, just before or shortly after the burning of Rome under the rule of Emperor Nero. Roman citizens blamed their emperor for the devastating fire. They believed Nero's lust for power and his desire to rebuild a new improved Rome was the motivation behind the fire that destroyed their city. In his bitter rage, Nero used the early Christians as a scapegoat to redirect his citizens' hostility. As a result, a vicious season of persecution began against the early Christian church.

3. Who was the original audience and recipients of 1 Peter? (1 Peter 1:1, 2:11-12)
4. Using the map, circle the locations of the dispersed churches in exile. What country now occupies the location of these early churches?



5. Bible scholars believe Peter wrote his letter to the “elect exiles” while he was in Rome, using the name “Babylon” as a code word for the imperial city (see 1 Peter 5:13). It was not unusual for Peter to protect the identity of the letter and its recipients during such a violent time of the church's persecution. How might Peter's letter be relevant for God's church 2,000 years later?

Read through all of 1 & 2 Peter.

6. Identify what you believe to be the central themes of the letters.

First & Second Peter

7. Is there a particular section of the letter that challenges you?
8. Was there a particular passage that gripped your heart as you were reading through 1 & 2 Peter?
9. What do you hope to accomplish from your study of 1 Peter?

1 PETER

Week Two – 1 Peter 1: 1-13, 2:1-3

Before you begin your questions this week, be sure to pray to God and seek His wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit. He will be your personal guide and helper through this study. “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you”. (John 14:26). After praying, read through the entire book of 1 Peter. Then, reread chapter 1 and 2:1-3. The translation used for our questions will be taken from the English Standard Version (ESV).



Week Two Study Questions

In the Old Testament, God often revealed things by the name He gave for Himself. For example, Jehovah-Jireh means “the Lord provides.” In fact, the name Jehovah is derived from YHWH, the name God revealed to Moses. It is from a root word translated as “I AM” in the title “I AM WHO I AM” (Exodus 3:14). God is also known as Creator and Redeemer, but rarely is He called Father in the Old Testament. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus always addressed God as His Father.

1. Read John 5:16-18 and John 14:6-14. In light of 1 Peter 1:2 and these verses from John’s gospel, how might Peter’s greeting be of comfort to suffering Christians?

2. Peter begins his letter with some important doctrine. Christian doctrine teaches us to see God as the one from whom and through whom and to whom all things exist. Doctrine also directs our lives to reflect God’s glory (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6). Simply put, doctrine explains what we believe and why we believe it. In verse 2, Peter illustrates several important doctrines of the Christian faith. Identify these key doctrines by filling in the blanks below:

According to the foreknowledge of _____

In the sanctification of _____

For obedience to _____ and for sprinkling of his blood

3. What important doctrine is summarized by Peter in v 2? _____

4. Peter, at the beginning of his epistle starts with a doxology in v 3. A doxology is simply a hymn of praise to God. In what is Peter calling us to rejoice?
5. What does it mean to be “born again to a living hope” in v 3? Read the following passages. How do they help you understand the meaning of this phrase?

John 1: 12-14

John 3:3-6

Psalm 43:5

6. What three words does Peter use to describe a believer’s “inheritance” in heaven? Which of these words are most meaningful to you and why?
i. _____ ii. _____ iii. _____

How is this “inheritance” kept secure (v.5) ?

7. According to verses 6 and 7, what is the purpose behind temporary trials?
8. According to 1 Peter 7, James 1:2-4 and Job 1:20-22, what should be our response to trials?
9. Why does Peter describe our faith as “more precious than gold”? Feel free to share additional scripture references in your answer.

10. How do you normally respond to trials? How does 1 Peter 1:6-9 encourage you?

The prophets of the Old Testament were the mouthpieces for the Holy Spirit. They studied their own writings to know more about the salvation to come through the promised Messiah. The prophets did not understand fully the things they taught, however they were saved from their sins by trusting in God and putting their faith in His promises.

11. According to verses 10-12, what did the Spirit of God reveal to the Old Testament prophets?

12. Using a dictionary, define the word "holiness".

13. Why is Peter telling his readers in v 16 "you shall be Holy, for I am Holy"? See also: Leviticus 11: 44-45, 20:7-8 and Ephesians 5:1.

14. The Bible is full of instructions God intends for its readers to heed and obey. These instructions are called *imperatives*. God also fills His scripture with *indicatives*. These are beautiful truths about God that He chooses to share with His people. Use the chart to list the indicatives (truths about God) and imperatives (instructions from God) from verses 13-16.

Indicatives	Imperatives

15. What do believe was the reason for Peter using the word “fear” in context of verse 17? See Romans 12:2 & John 14:5.

16. Identify the truths Peter writes about Christ from verse 20 and 21.

17. How does Peter say our souls become purified in verse 22 and what is your understanding of the meaning of this verse?

18. How does Peter describe God’s word in verses 24,25?

19. In verses 24, 25 Peter refers to Isaiah 40:6-8. In addition, read Hebrews 5:11-14. Now, rewrite I Peter 1:22-25 in your own words.

20. Chapter 2 begins with “So” in the ESV translation or “Therefore” in other translations. After Peter makes mention of our having been born again, he immediately proceeds into chapter 2 noting the consequences and implications of our salvation. List the five sins Peter tells believers to “put away” in 2:1.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Which of these sins are you still struggling to “put away” and why? Share with your group if you feel lead.

20. What is conveyed by using the image of a newborn baby in 1 Peter: 2:1-3?



Reflect and Discuss

Peter concluded chapter one by telling us we are to “love one another earnestly from a pure heart”. Peter uses two different words for love: *philadelphia*, which is “brotherly love” and *agape*, which is a sacrificial love. It is important that God’s children demonstrate both kinds of love. Sadly, this is not always the picture the outside world sees when they look at God’s church. Instead, they see a church divided and sometimes at war, rather than a people loving each other with a pure heart. We have the capacity for brotherly and sisterly love in the body of Christ because God has changed our hearts. God, through the power of the Holy Spirit has made you a new creation. Regeneration is the beginning of the Christian life.

If you have been regenerated, you are not of “perishable seed”. Peter tells us in verse 20 that we are living in “the last times”. This doctrine of Christ’s second coming is a key component of the Gospel and one of the primary motivations for Godly living.

① How does the true teaching of Christ’s return challenge you to love others and pursue a life that reflects God’s holiness?

There is no substitute for the Word of God. It is the most important Truth you will ever hear. All of God’s children should be in submission to Scripture in view of Christ’s return. The power of the Holy Spirit helps us hunger and thirst after God’s truth. Being a part of a Bible study with other believers is a terrific way to ensure we are accountable to God’s word and we are applying it into every aspect of our lives. It also ensures we are maintaining a diet of spiritual food that is solid and not only milk.

② How has God’s word helped you in your own spiritual growth? Share with your group if you feel lead.

I PETER

Week Three: 1 Peter 2:4 – 25

This week Peter addresses the doctrine of sanctification. Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit transforms believers to become more like Jesus Christ. We are united to Christ by our faith which also means we are united to each other through Christ's universal church. As part of sanctification, we are to live in fellowship with other Christians. Peter describes building a house to help us understand how Christians are spiritually bound to one another. There will be references to the Old Testament in this week's lesson, which will help you understand the concepts Peter is describing in our passage.



Week Three Study Questions

1. What metaphors does Peter use to describe the following in our passage this week? Please note the verses where you locate your answers.
 - a. Christ
 - b. Christians (Believers)
 - c. The Church
2. Why did Peter call Jesus "a living stone" in v. 4?
3. The primary role and privilege of an Old Testament priest was to offer to God physical sacrifices in keeping with the sacrificial system of the old covenant. These sacrifices were animals or grain offerings. Today, each believer is a member of a different kind of priesthood and called by God to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Read the following passages. Note the spiritual sacrifices believers are to present to God under the direction of the Holy Spirit and Word of God.
 - a. Romans 12:1,2
 - b. Hebrews 13:15,16

- c. Romans 15:16
 - d. Ephesians 5:2
4. Peter uses three Old Testament verses in our passage this week.
- Verse 6 quotes Isaiah 28:16.
 - Verse 7 quotes Psalm 118:22 and refers to Ephesians 2:20.
 - Verse 8 quotes Isaiah 8:14.

What does Peter want his readers to understand from I Peter 2:6-8?

5. Write down the six descriptions Peter uses to identify the church in verse 9:

Note the similarities of Peter's description to God's description of Israel in Exodus 19:5-6 and Deuteronomy 7:6.

6. According to verse 9, what does God expect from His children?
7. Read John 3:16-21 and refer to 1 Peter 2:9 to answer the following?
- a. What does "the darkness" represent?
 - b. What does the light" represent?
 - c. What is the purpose of "the light"?

8. According to verses 9 and 10, what was your **past** condition before you accepted Jesus as your Savior and what is your **present** spiritual condition?

past:_____ present:_____

9. How does Peter address his readers in verse 11? Why do you think Peter chose these words to describe his readers? (see Philippians 3:20, Luke 12:32-34)

10. According to verses 11 and 12, how are you to conduct yourself if you have accepted Jesus as your Savior?

11. Why does Peter refer to the original audience of his letter as “sojourners and exiles”?

12. How does knowing that we are also “sojourners and exiles” help you to wage war with the passions Peter described?

13. Jesus said “What would it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his soul?” (Mark 8:36). In a rapidly changing world full of temptations and conflict, we must ask this question, “How much is your spiritual integrity worth to you”? To paraphrase Jesus, “What would you give in exchange for your soul”?

14. What do you think Peter meant in v.12 by the “day of visitation”?

15. What main idea do you think Peter is attempting to communicate to his readers in verses 13-25?

16. In the following verses, why does Peter tell us to submit ourselves to human authorities?

a. 2:13

b. 2:15

17. What do you think of when you hear the word submission? Why?

The idea of enslaving any man, woman or child is repugnant to God and should be to us today. The Bible condemns all forms of slavery (see Exodus 21:16). In the ancient world however, slavery was often voluntary and used to pay off a debt. Many early Christians were slaves and were welcomed members of God's church. Feel free to read the tiny book of Philemon. Here, the Apostle Paul addresses a conflict with his friend Philemon who owned a runaway slave named Onesimus. The Apostle Paul found himself in the company of Onesimus and lead him to the Lord. It is a beautiful letter of friendship and forgiveness.

18. Why do you think in verse 19 Peter said that a servant's willingness to endure unjust suffering is "a gracious thing"?

Peter's letter does not to address the horrors of slavery nor does he single out sinful masters. Peter's purpose is to draw attention to Jesus Christ who is known as the suffering servant. To help you gain a better understanding of our passage this week, please take some time to read Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

19. List all the characteristics of Christ, the ultimate suffering servant as described by Peter in the following verses.

v. 21

v. 22

v. 23

v. 24

20. How does Peter describe Jesus in v. 25?

21. Why do you think Peter's description of Jesus in verse 25 would be a comfort to those reading his letter?

Reflect and Discuss

This week, Peter wants us to understand how to live godly lives and how to submit to others in times of suffering. We are to follow Christ's example as we pursue His holiness and grow more spiritually mature. We submit and obey, not only for our sake but for the sake of lost souls who do not know Jesus as their lord. The unsaved world is watching God's children. Peter tells us to "keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:12).

② How can God's people and the local church be a model for honest and honorable living? Why is this important?

FIRST PETER

Week Four: 1 Peter Chapter 3

Much of our life lessons come from way of imitation. We all have role models we look up to. When we imitate positive role models, we in turn can learn from their example and become better people, but if we imitate the wrong models, we can cripple our walk with Christ and possibly ruin our character and witness. Before we begin this week's lesson, think about the role models who have influenced you in your own life. Take time to thank the Lord for the lessons you have learned from their example.



Week Four Study Questions

In the ancient world, it was acceptable practice for women to accept the religion of their husbands. The Greek historian Plutarch (AD. 46 – 127) said, “A wife should not acquire her own friends, but should make her husband’s friends her own. It was proper for a wife to recognize only those gods her husband worships”. However, the 1st century church was predominantly comprised of women, many of whom were married to non-Christian husbands. Peter’s message and the peace of one’s salvation should offer hope to anyone living in a similar position today.

1. What do you believe Peter wants to communicate in 1 Peter 3:1-12? Write down three to four points and share them with your group.

2. What reason does Peter give for wives to submit to their husbands in verse 1?

3. How are wives to conduct themselves in marriage?

4. What is your understanding of submission in marriage?

5. What is your understanding of what Peter is asking of women in verses 3 and 4?

6. What are some personal practices you implement in your own life to enhance your “imperishable beauty”?
7. The Bible is filled with examples of women who adorned themselves in the beauty of Christ and lived as Holy women. There was Ruth, Esther and Mary, the mother of Christ. No doubt, Peter had these women in mind as he was writing chapter three. Peter used Sarah an example many Jewish Christians would have been familiar with. From your understanding of Genesis 18, what about Sarah’s story singles her out as an example of a holy woman?
8. Read an excerpt from the Apostle Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus from Ephesians 5:15-33. How does the Apostle Paul’s comments help you better understand about submission in marriage?
9. What is the significance of Peter using the word “Likewise” to begin verse 7?
10. Verse 7 indicates that women are a “weaker vessel”. What do you think the Apostle Peter means by this statement? Do you agree with this description?
11. According to verse 7, how should a husband care for his wife’s wellbeing? Why?
12. What is significant about the mention of prayers in verse 7?
13. Peter lists five characteristics Christians must demonstrate to in their relationships with each other. List these characteristics and explain your understanding of each.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

14. Which of these characteristics is difficult for you to demonstrate to others? Which is easiest?

15. How is verse 9 similar to what Peter wrote in 2:19-21?

16. Psalm 34 played a significant influence on Peter. Now read through all of Psalm 34. How might Peter's words from 3:10-12 be an encouragement to Christians who were under persecution?

The last section of chapter three is full of instructions for Holy living, including how we are to respond to authority figures. There may be difficult topics in this week's passage. Since we believe all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16), we cannot ignore or skip these passages. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you clarity of the scripture and ask Him to help you see how you can apply Peter's instructions into your own life.

17. How will God respond to Christians who endure suffering (v.14)? See also Romans 8:31.

18. How does Peter instruct Christians to respond to suffering in verse 14?

19. How does Peter instruct us to share the Gospel message with others in verse 15-16?

20. How do the following verses help you better understand Peter's instructions?

Colossians 4:5-6

Romans 2: 14-15

Verses 18-22 in our passage may pose more questions than answers for you. Fear not, you are not alone. These are some of the more difficult passages in the New Testament. They have been wrestled with by Theologians for centuries. We will not try to resolve their interpretation this week. More importantly, we want to see the practical advice Peter offers to Christians who are suffering in trials.

21. How do the following verses help you understand what Peter meant by "spirits in prison" (v 19).

Ephesians 6:12

Jude 1: 4-6

Luke 8: 30,31

Revelation 20:10

22. **Typology** is a method of biblical interpretation whereby an element found in the Old Testament is seen to prefigure one found in the New Testament. The initial one is called the *type* and the fulfillment is designated the *antitype*. Either type or antitype may be a person, thing, or event, which are often related to the idea of salvation. Noah's ark is a "type" of Christ or "foreshadowing" of Christ (antitype). From your understanding of Noah, why would Peter have used him as an example of encouragement to his readers? Review Genesis 6-10 and familiarize yourself with Noah and God's role for him in His plan of redemption.

23. Read Romans 6: 1-4. What is baptism a picture of?

24. What does Peter mean when he says baptism saves us in verse 3:21? Read Hebrews 9:14, 10:22 and Romans 10:9 to help with your answer.

25. According to the following verses, what does it mean in v. 22 that Jesus Christ “is at the right hand of God”?

Ephesians 1:18-23

1 Corinthians 15: 20-28

26. How does Christ’s victory over death and the truths written in v.22 encourage you personally?

Reflect and Discuss

What does it mean to you personally that you know “the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers, But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil”? (1 Peter 3:12).

① Share a time when the Lord’s presence comforted you in a time of great need.

The Bible makes is clear that death ends the opportunity for salvation (Hebrews 9:24-28).

① How does this truth motivate you to share the Gospel with others?

① Describe a time when you shared the hope of salvation in Christ. Did you respond with “gentleness and respect” as advised by the Apostle Peter in v. 15?

① What are some of the challenges and obstacles we face when sharing Christ with unbelievers in our present time?

FIRST PETER

Week Five 1 Peter: Chapter 4

Suffering is a repeated theme in Peter's letter. We find it again here in chapter 4. Peter helps us see how our suffering is part of our identity as Christians. While our normal response to suffering is to avoid it, Peter helps us understand God's purpose for suffering. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart to embrace what you learn in this week's lesson.



Week Five Study Questions

1. In his letter to the church of Ephesus, the Apostle Paul wrote about the spiritual battle against "the rulers of the darkness of this age". From Ephesians 6:12-17, list the armor of warfare Christians are called to implement in this spiritual battle.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
2. What does Peter tell Christians to arm themselves with in 4:1? Why would this illustration be an encouragement to the original readers of Peter's letter?
3. Why do you think Peter tells us, "whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin"? (refer back to 3:18)
4. In verse 2, Peter tells followers of Christ to "live for the will of God". List the overindulgences that do *not* align with God's will as described in verse 3. Then, list the opposite virtues identified in verse 7.

<i>“Un-Christlike Overindulgences”</i>	<i>“Christlike Virtues”</i>

5. What kind of response should Christians expect to receive from unbelievers when we flee from sin according to verses 4,5?
6. It is never easy to accept when people speak evil of us. What hope and encouragement for Christians does Peter offer in verses 5 and 6?
7. Biblical *eschatology* is the study of the future, which includes the return of Christ, the restoration of the new heaven/earth and the last judgement. Considering verse 7, how are Christians to prepare themselves for Christ’s return?
8. What do you believe Peter meant in verse 7 by the “end of all things”? Feel free to share additional scripture or commentary from personal research to assist you in your application.
9. According to verses 8-10, how should God’s children live in light of the future?

10. The Old Testament contains 613 laws. In the New Testament, Jesus provides us priorities for God's law. In Matthew 6:33, what does Jesus tell us to prioritize? How are you prioritizing this command into your own life? Share an example with your group if you feel lead.
11. In verse 8, Peter quotes from Proverbs 10:12. What priority does Peter tell His readers to address? How are you prioritizing this command into your own life? Share an example with your group if you feel lead.
12. How will people know we are disciples of Jesus Christ according to John 13:35?
13. How is love lived out in the church according to verses 9-11? Provide some examples from your own local church or personal ministry if you feel lead.
14. Ecclesiastes 9:19 says, *"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might"*. Every talent and gift come from God and we have the responsibility to use our gifts for God's glory. What gifts or talents has God gifted to you for service in His Kingdom? How are others blessed when you use your gifts to serve God?

15. According to verse 11, how is God glorified? Refer also to John 12:27-37 & 17:24.

16. If the glory of God is the goal of everything as Peter notes in v. 11, explain what this truth means to you personally?

17. According to verses 12 - 14, how does Peter instruct Christians to respond to trials?

v.12

v.13

v.14

18. Why do you believe Peter described trials as “fiery” in v. 12? Read Malachi 3:1-5 and John 15: 18-21 to help with your answer.

19. Why does Peter say we should rejoice in persecution (4:13-14)?

As a general rule, a Christian who is living in a non-Christian culture is to live his life faithfully in all aspects of his life, so that Jesus would be glorified. In verses 15 and 16, the Apostle Peter addresses sins all believers should avoid because they can hurt their witness for Christ.

20. What are these sins Peter addresses?

21. What is your definition of a meddler? Why do you believe Peter mentions this sin in verse 15? How are some ways we can hurt Christ's witness through meddling?
22. Why might we be ashamed to suffer for Christ (v. 16)?
23. Back in 1 Peter 2:4-10, Peter referred to God's people who are now considered His "spiritual house". Why do you believe Peter said God's judgment will "begin at the household of God"? Refer to Ezekiel 9:1-6.
24. How would you personally answer Peter's question in v. 17?
25. In v. 18, Peter quotes from Proverbs 11:31. What is your understanding of this verse?
26. How does the message in v. 19 serve as an encouragement to you personally?



Reflect and Discuss

The preaching of the gospel not only offers a blessing (3:10), a ceasing from sin (4:1) and a good conscience (3:21), it also offers an escape from final judgement (4:6). Judgement is not talked about much in Christian conversations. “The last days” (Hebrews 1:1-2) began at the time of Christ.

Jesus was the fulfillment of God’s promise to send a Messiah, a Savior who would die for our sins. The death and resurrection of Jesus in history was a turning point for the entire world. Yet, Jesus told us the mission of His first coming was not to judge the world (John 12:47). Judgement will be Christ’s mission in His second coming (Matthew 13:40-43). Some believe this day of judgement is rapidly approaching, but the scriptures say it could arrive at any time.

① How does this truth shape the way you live your day-to-day life?

Peter discussed the importance of Believers using their gifts and talents to serve and love the church. If you still struggle to identify your gifts, consider taking this online survey to help. Share your findings with your group if you feel lead.

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FIRST PETER

Week Six 1 Peter: Chapter 5

Peter begins chapter 5 with instructions for the ministry of church leaders, specifically those who are called “elders”.



Week Six Study Questions

1. Chapter 4 ends with Peter telling us judgement will begin in the household of God. Why do you believe Peter concludes his letter by addressing church leaders?
2. Peter appeals to his readers by describing his personal experience. What three characteristics about himself does Peter describe in v. 1?

The terms disciple and Apostle are often used interchangeably; however they are not synonymous. A disciple is a student. Jesus referred to those who studied at his feet as a disciple. An Apostle however is one sent as a delegate to speak with the authority of Christ Himself. When Jesus appointed his Apostles, He said, “He who receives you receives Me and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me” (Matthew 10:40). Therefore, we can make the conclusion the Apostle Peter’s letter to the early church is no casual correspondence. Peter’s letter speaks the truth of one who was present on the Mount of Transfiguration and witnessed the resurrection of Christ. The Apostle Peter has earned the right to teach us all.

3. How does Peter instruct elders to lead?
4. What are three incorrect reasons Peter gives one might accept the position of leadership in the church?

5. According to Christ's words to Peter in John 21:17, what is the principal task of a shepherd?
6. Based on what you have just read in verses 1-3, would you say it is difficult or easy to be a leader in the church today? Why or why not?
7. Who is the "chief shepherd (Isaiah 40:11; John 10:2,11,12,16) and what does he promise?
8. According to v. 5, how are the sheep to respond to the shepherd?
9. What two encouragements does Peter offer in verses 6-7 for those who are willing to humble themselves?
10. What is the metaphor Peter uses to describe Satan in v. 8? Do you believe this is a fitting description?
11. How does Peter say we can resist the devil in 5:8-9?

12. List the four aspects of deliverance from suffering Peter promises in verse 10.
13. What does it mean to you personally to know suffering is followed by “eternal glory”?
14. From your research on Peter from Lesson One, what have you learned that may have served as motivation for Peter to remind his readers about the armor of God and warn his reader’s that we are no match for the Devil?
15. How is the Satan described in the following passages of scripture?
- Matthew 12:24
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:5
 - Matthew 13:19,38
 - John 12:31
 - 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - Ephesians 2:2
 - 2 Corinthians 11:14; 12:7
 - Revelation 12:9,10
 - Genesis 3:1
16. How does v. 11 offer you hope in a time of trial or suffering?

17. How does Peter describe his two friends at the conclusion of his letter?

Silvanus-

Mark-

18. What is your understanding of Peter's reference to "she who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen"? See 2 John 1,13 and Revelation 18 to help with your answer.

19. While this is not customary here in America, what are some ways we can greet each other in the absence of a holy kiss?

20. Compare the end of 1 Peter 5:12 – 14 with the beginning in 1:1-2. What similarities do you notice? Why is it fitting Peter chose to begin and end his letter in this fashion?



Reflect and Discuss

Peter's letter encourages God's people to hope in the Lord no matter how trying the times may be. Through the centuries, God's church and His people have experienced various fiery trials, and yet Satan has not been able to destroy them. The late theologian, R.C. Sproul once said, "The fundamental deception of Satan is the lie that obedience can never bring happiness."

- ① What steps of obedience will you take in order that you may live out what you have learned from 1 Peter and enjoy the happiness of your salvation?
- ② How has Peter's letter helped you see that God cares deeply for you? If you are struggling to accept God's love, what hinders you from fully believing this truth?

Peter ends his letter by offering "Peace to all of you who are in Christ". Peter taught us that if we depend on God's grace when we suffer, our suffering will result in glory (1 Peter 4:13-16). The Apostle Paul tells us suffering also increases our hope. "Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Romans 5:3-4). If you are going through a trial at present, ask yourself the following:

- ③ Am I depending on God's grace?
- ④ Do I feel the Peace of Christ in my suffering?
- ⑤ Do you see God developing your character through your suffering?
- ⑥ How can you rejoice and give God glory in your suffering?

SECOND PETER

Week 7: 2 Peter: Chapter 1

Introduction

No other book in the history of the church has been debated over its rightful place in the Canon of Scripture than 2 Peter. One of the subjects of debate addresses Peter's philosophical and cultural differences between his two epistles. The Apostle Peter wrote his first epistle to help suffering Christians find hope in their salvation and peace in knowing Christ's return and final judgement is imminent. The central theme of Peter's second epistle deals with the threat of Gnostic heresy that was infiltrating the early church. Second Peter was written to expose these false teachers who posed a serious threat to the life of the church.

The largest threat to the church in the first two-hundred years came from *Gnosticism*. Gnostics believed the truth of God could only be obtained through mystical experiences that go beyond reason and eyewitness testimonies. A Gnostic claimed they had a special pipeline to God. They believed only a few chosen people had special knowledge revealed to them by God alone. They disputed the witness of the Apostles and claimed to have superior knowledge to the absolute truth the Apostles taught. Gnostics also believed that all matter was evil, therefore God could not have taken on the form of man as demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Therefore, they did not believe in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, nor did they accept the truth of Christ's resurrection and return.

Gnosticism still exists today, but it takes on various forms. Second Peter was written to warn Christians of the dangers when they do not take doctrine seriously. Theologian John MacArthur describes doctrine as "the teaching of Scripture which serves as the yardstick, gauge, standard, paradigm pattern, measure, and plumb line by which all other teaching on any given subject is determined to be true or false, received or rejected, sound or unsound, orthodox or heretical" (*Systematic Summary of Biblical Truth-Biblical Doctrine*, 41).

Simply put, if we want to guard the Gospel and be a positive witness for Christ in the world, we must know what we believe and why we believe it. It is a Christian's duty to understand the God we love and worship. The Bible is the tool God has gifted us with to help us grow in our love and knowledge of Him. The word knowledge appears sixteen times in Peter's second epistle. Peter's solution to false teaching is the knowledge of true doctrine. With the power and help of the Holy Spirit to guide us, we too can learn to know God with all our heart and mind.



Week Seven Study Questions

1. How does the author describe himself in v. 1?
2. Who are the letter's recipients and how does Peter's description reveal his feelings towards them?
3. According to v.2, how do believers experience God's grace and peace?
4. What does God's grace and peace mean to you personally?
5. According to verse 3, what does God ultimately desire for His children? See also Romans 8:29 and Genesis 1:27
6. Peter tells us the resource necessary for living like Jesus is "his divine power". Read Ephesians 1:19,20 and Colossians 3:10. How is God's divine power working through you?
7. According to v. 4, what will all believers in Christ ultimately inherit and what does this inheritance mean to you personally? See also 1 John 3:1-3; Revelation 21:4

8. In our first three verses, Peter defined God's calling for His children. In verses 3-11 Peter tells us how to steward this glorious calling. Identify the "qualities" (v.8) Peter lists in verses 5-7 which characterize a life of one who is partaking in the divine nature of God.

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____
- v. _____
- vi. _____
- vii. _____

9. What is the positive outcome if a believer is "increasing" in these "qualities" as described in verse 8?

10. What is the negative outcome if one "lacks these qualities" (v.9)?

11. What is the ultimate, desired outcome if you "practice these qualities" (v.10)?

12. Why is a fruitless Christian walk both problematic and dangerous?

13. At what point would you consider it appropriate to judge whether someone else is saved? Is it appropriate for believers to confront a person with what they believe to be a false salvation? Why or why not?

As a parent or caregiver to young children, don't you feel like a scratched record which is constantly repeating instructions? Even though repetition can be awkward and frustrating, it is helpful. Peter also knew something about the importance of repeating fundamental truths. His second letter to the church was intended to remind its readers of the Gospel they already knew (see 1:12-15; 3:1-2). Peter was concerned with false teachers who infiltrated the church. He was also aware that his life would soon end. Considering this context, Peter's letter reminds his readers of the Gospel truths and instructs them to protect and preserve them after his life was over. The importance of remembrance makes 2 Peter a timely and critical letter for today's age of spiritual warfare which attacks the message of the Gospel.

14. Identify some ways in our present age in which heretical teaching is easily accessed and received?

15. What do the following passages add to your understanding of false teachers?

Jeremiah 23:16

Isiah 56:10,11

Matthew 15: 13,14

16. How does Peter know his time on earth is short? See also John 21:18-19.

17. Do you agree with this comment? Why or why not? *"Living a godly life is optional, to say the least, if one's heavenly destiny is not involved".* (Schreiner, Thomas 1 and 2 Peter, Jude. *New American Commentary*. Nashville: B & H, 2003)

18. What two sources do Peter's readers have available to remind them of Christ's second coming?

19. The transfiguration of Christ serves as the backdrop of 2 Peter 1:16-18. Please read the following passages to assist you with your memory of this important truth. Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9: 28-36. Why do you think Peter recalls this event in his letter?
20. In verses 16-17 Peter describes the radiance and magnificence of the transfiguration. List the three descriptions Peter uses to display the greatness of Christ that the apostles saw and heard on that day.
- i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____
21. What imagery does Peter use to describe God's word in v. 19? How is Peter's imagery used to reinforce his teaching point?
22. In v.19, Peter says the Scriptures serve as a "strongly confirmed" source of authority. Looking at today's culture both in and outside the church, do you believe Scripture is placed on a higher plane of authority than personal experience? Why or why not?
23. What is the "morning star" Peter mentions in v.19? (See Numbers 24:17; Matthew 2:2 and Revelation 22:16)
24. According to verses 20-21, what is the origin of scripture?

25. What is Peter teaching in verses 20-21?

26. How does God feel towards false prophets in the Old Testament? See Jeremiah 23:16; Ezekiel 13:3)

27. Describe some ways in which we can unravel Scripture incorrectly and undermine its divine author.



Reflect and Discuss

Peter was inspired to remind his readers of the importance of the Gospel truths. Peter makes no apology by reminding us the Bible is a book of repetition. According to Peter, “you will do well to pay attention to it (v.19). We obey the Scriptures because it will benefit us. We obey the Bible because obedience to God is what He commands and it gives Him all the glory. However, the Bible most certainly does benefit us in ways we can never measure fully. While we navigate the ups and downs of our journey through this world, may we forever set our eyes towards the east and think of Christ’s return.

⑦ Based on what you have read this week, how would you encourage a brother or sister who is struggling with assurance in their salvation?

While experience played a part in Peter’s witness to Christ, an even more reliable witness for God is his “prophetic word”, which is the Scriptures. What Peter and the other Biblical authors wrote was not penned by “the will of man”, but through the will of God. King David’s testimony stated, “The Spirit of the Lord speaks by me; his word is on my tongue” (2 Samuel: 23:2). The original copies of the Scriptures are therefore God breathed (2 Timothy 3:16) and *inerrant*, which means without error (John 10:34,35; 17:17; Titus 1:2).

Peter defined for us the doctrine of divine inspiration, which created an inerrant (without error), original text (Proverbs 30:5; 1 Corinthians 14:36; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). While the doctrine of *inerrancy* of Scripture and *inspiration* are important, they are not necessary for salvation. Only the sinless death of Christ has satisfied God's wrath towards sin.

Therefore, it is the work of Christ that makes our salvation possible, through faith in this glorious truth. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast". (Ephesians 2:8-9)

① What implications do the doctrines of divine inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture carry, specifically in how we read and apply the Bible?

SECOND PETER

Week Eight: Chapter 2

We ended chapter one of First Peter with an understanding that the word of God is not the result of cleverly devised myths or fables but comes from the testimony of eyewitnesses who had seen the glory of Christ. This week, Peter speaks concern towards false prophets and teachers who have infiltrated the church. False teaching is profoundly destructive to the lives of God's children. If God's children are going to live by the foundation of God's word, we must know what this foundation is. Knowledge of God's word is only part of the battle. Living out God's truth in a hostile world is the greater challenge set before us.

This week, read through the entire book of Second Peter again. Then, read Jeremiah 23. The entire book of Jeremiah demonstrates how the people of the Old Testament continuously fell prey to false prophets. Jeremiah was given God's word to warn the people unless they repented, judgment would come upon them and upon all of Judea, Jerusalem, and the temple itself. Chapter 23 of Jeremiah provides one of the most vivid accounts of the conflict between Old Testament Israel and false prophets. As you begin your lessons this week, pray the Holy Spirit will guide you and convict your heart and mind to see how doctrine is foundational to your faith.



Week Eight Study Questions

1. Summarize God's attitude towards false prophets as note in Jeremiah 23.
2. The term "Master" in v. 1 means "sovereign Lord" and is often used in the New Testament to refer to God (Acts 4:24). What is the outcome for those who deny the Master?
3. Refer back to 1 Peter 1:4,5. Do you believe the false teachers Peter is identifying in our passage were ever saved? Why or why not?

4. How does Peter describe the conduct of false teachers in verses 2,7 and 18? Does Peter's language surprise you?
5. What does v.2 mean by "the way of truth"? (See Acts 9:2; 18:25)
6. What motivates false teachers to blaspheme the word of God in v. 3? (See also Jeremiah 6:13, 8:10; Jude 11,16).
7. In what way does false teaching destroy the credibility of the Gospel?

The false teachers of the ancient world concluded judgement from God would never come. This same skepticism about God's judgment exists today. These skeptics pose questions such as "Why do bad things happen to good people?" or "Why does a loving God allow suffering in the world?". Peter continues to offer reassurance of God's righteous judgement as it has existed in the past and will continue into the future.

8. What three Old Testament examples does Peter offer of God's judgement throughout history?
9. How do Peter's examples of God's past judgement further his argument? Can we use the same argument today?

10. How is the example of Lot living in a godless environment an encouragement for us today? Why should it concern us?
11. According to James 1:2-4,12, how does God use our external circumstances?
12. Do you believe God rescues us from every trial (v.9)? Why or why not?
13. How does Peter describe false teachers in verses 10 and 12?
14. Who are the “glorious ones” in v.10?
15. According to v. 14, what is at the heart of a false teacher’s motivation?
16. Read Numbers 22-24 for background on the account of the false prophet Balaam. How does Balaam serve as a prototype for Peter’s rebuke of false teachers?

17. How can God's children protect their hearts from following the path of Balaam?
18. Rewrite v. 19 in your own words.
19. What is your understanding of v. 20?
20. Peter draws from the teaching of Jesus as he concludes chapter 2. Read Matthew 12:43-45; Luke 12:41-48. How does Christ's teaching help you understand Peter's message in verses 20 and 21?
21. How might Peter's choice of illustrations in v.22 been received by the original Hebrew recipients of his letter?
22. Verse 22 quotes Proverbs 26:11. How is the meaning of this verse similar to Christ's words in Matthew 7:6?



Reflect and Discuss

As we have learned from our lesson this week, one of the greatest threats to God's church are the false teachers in its midst. Peter's language towards false teachers is harsh, referring to them as predators (v.14). These false teachers are "accursed children" (v.14) who are not in the protection of God's blessing. The modern term for "accursed children" is *apostate*. Theologian R.C. Sproul defines apostates as unbelievers amid believers. These men and women had joined the church for every reason except for the right one. Sadly, they were never true believers. The Apostle John tells us, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us" (1 John 2:19).

Peter described false teachers as "waterless springs and mists driven by a storm". But what is even more alarming is their punishment which "utter darkness has been reserved" (1 Peter 2:17). The book of Hebrews 10:26,27 says, "²⁶ *If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left,* ²⁷ *but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God*". This is apostasy. People who have heard the true Gospel and moved toward it, but then rejected the Christ of the Gospel. A true conversion to Christ never occurred in an apostate. How many people at some point in time found Jesus and the Gospel message an appealing escape from the world, but were never genuinely converted by grace? Instead, the scriptures say they returned to their own vomit to wallow in the mire.



Considering this week's serious message and its warnings about false doctrine, how would you respond to someone who says, "I don't need doctrine or theology. All I need is Jesus"?



Peter says the hearts of false teachers' is rooted in greed. How can true believers and teachers of God's word protect their hearts from greed?

SECOND PETER

Week 9: Chapter 3

While a true believer can never lose their salvation, followers of Christ must take the Scriptures seriously. Even true believers can temporarily lose assurance if they follow false teaching and flirt with false doctrine. Warnings like the one found in today's passage are used by the Holy Spirit to keep us in faith. Pray that you would be receptive to the warnings of Scripture so you may not fall prey to error.

1. How does Peter address his readers in v. 1 and again in verses 8, 14,17? What are your thoughts on his description?

2. How would you summarize in your own words the purpose and motivation behind Peter's two letters?

3. What is Peter asking his readers to remember?

4. What does Peter mean by "scoffers" (v.3)? See Proverbs 1:22; 9:8,13:1, 22:10; 29:8

5. What is your understanding of "the last days" (v.3)?

6. Twenty-three of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament reference the return of Christ. Only the books of Philemon and 3 John don't mention it. Since we believe in the supremacy of Scripture, we can believe in Christ's return because the Bible testifies to this truth repeatedly. However, even today there are "scoffers". What is the agenda and arguments of these "scoffers" according to verses 3-5,6?
7. Jesus warned us scoffers would be the order of the day. What does Jesus warn in Matthew 24:3-5? What are Paul's warnings in Acts 20:29-31?
8. According to Genesis 8:13-17, what happened to the earth after the great flood?
9. What does Peter claim the "scoffers" have forgotten? See also Genesis 1:6-8 and Genesis 1:9-17?
10. What does 2 Peter 3:7 reveal about what will happen "by the same word"?
11. What do verses 8 and 9 reveal about how God's perspective on time differs from ours?
12. What does Peter reveal in v. 9 that gives us a reason for the Lord's delay in His promised return? What is your understanding of this verse?

13. How does Peter describe how “the day of the Lord” will come? See also the words of Christ from Matthew 24:42-44.
14. Exodus 34:6 describes, “The LORD-the Lord is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth”. Moses appealed to this nature of God when he interceded in prayer asking God to forgive Israel: “The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in faithful love, forgiving iniquity and rebellion” (Numbers 14:18). What does this character trait of God mean to you? Do you consider yourself to be patient and slow to anger? Share your thoughts with your group if you feel lead.
15. What will be the outcome when “the day of the Lord” comes and how does Peter say we should we live our lives considering this knowledge?
16. Peter describes three effects “The day of the Lord” will have on creation. What are they?
- i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____
17. What does Revelation 21:1-5 reveal about the “promise we are waiting for” as Peter mentions in v. 13?
18. How do verses 17,18 instruct us to respond to God’s promises as we wait for His return?

19. Peter concludes 2 Peter with a doxology. What three things are said about Jesus in v.18?



Reflect and Discuss

Waiting is difficult and it takes lots of patience. This is one attribute of God's character the Apostle Peter highlights for us in our final passage this week. Patience is necessary as we wait on God to fulfill the promise of Christ's return.

① Is there something you have waited and prayed for over the years and are still in a season of waiting? How has this week's passage encouraged you?

② As we conclude our time in 1 & 2 Peter this week, how would you summarize the importance of Peter's writing and how it relates to the larger story of the entire Bible?

③ What have you learned about the character of God in Peter's epistles?

④ How has this study helped you remember the message of the Gospel and your salvation in Christ?

⑤ How will you apply what you have learned from your study in 1 & 2 Peter?