

1 PETER

CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS TO THE WORLD

**GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
COLLEGE STATION, TX**

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BIBLE STUDY METHODS

OBSERVE // *what do I see?*

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, “**What do I see?**” This is the crucial skill of **observation**, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are four tasks involved in observation which should be performed in the order below:

OBSERVATION TASK 1: MARK UP THE PASSAGE BY VISUALLY IDENTIFYING THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC ELEMENTS:

- **Underline all verbs.** A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action takes place (“*I urge you*”) or that a state or condition exists (“*such is the will of God*”). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.
- **Circle key words or phrases.** These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like “*bore our sins in His body*” in 2:24) or thematically set the theme or main idea for the passage (like “*submissive*” in 3:1-6).
- **Highlight repeated words or phrases.** Include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “*slandered*” and “*reviled*”). You will want to highlight things repeated in other places (such as “*suffer*” found in 1:11; 2:19-21; 4:1, 13; 5:1, 9-10).
- **Box connecting words.** These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. Here are eight types of common connecting words to look for:
 1. **COMPARISON:** either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: **and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so** (e.g., “*arm yourselves also with the same purpose*” 4:1).
 2. **CONTRAST:** points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include: **but, rather, yet, however** (e.g., “*they malign you ... but they will give account to Him*” 4:4-5).
 3. **PURPOSE:** indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include: **that, so that, in order that** (e.g., “*the gospel has ... been preached ... that ... they may live in the spirit*” 4:6).
 4. **RESULT:** very similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include: **that, so that, as a result, with the result that** (e.g., “*whoever serves is to do so ... so that in all things God may be glorified ...*” 4:11).

5. **CAUSE:** expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include: **because, since,** and sometimes **for** (e.g., “you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you” 4:14).

6. **EXPLANATION:** what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word **for** (e.g., “for it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God” 4:17).

7. **INFERENCE:** provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include: **therefore, for this reason** (e.g., “therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls” 4:19).

8. **CONDITION:** presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is **if** (e.g., “if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome of those who do not obey the gospel” 4:17).

OBSERVATION TASK 2: LIST 2-3 PRIMARY THEMES YOU SEE IN THE PASSAGE EACH WEEK.

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “living stone” and “priesthood” in 2:1-10. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

OBSERVATION TASK 3: WRITE TWO OR MORE OBSERVATIONS PER VERSE.

Our observations might identify people, places, or events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences, or even point out something missing that we expected to see.

OBSERVATION TASK 4: RECORD YOUR OWN INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS.

Here are a few examples:

WHO is ...

... Peter talking about?

... accomplishing the action?

... benefiting from the action?

WHY did Peter ...

... choose this word?

... include this phrase, statement, or command?

... not say _____ ?

WHAT is the ...

... meaning of this word?

... significance of this phrase?

... implication of this statement?

... relationship between these phrases?

HOW ...

... was this action accomplished?

... will this situation occur?

INTERPRET // *what does it mean?*

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: **interpretation**. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). Use the following six methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions. Also, make sure to familiarize yourself with the three “Principles of Interpretation” that appear in the Appendix at the end of this study.

INTERPRETATION METHOD 1: USE THE CONTEXT.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author’s flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may need to read ahead in 1 Peter for clues.

INTERPRETATION METHOD 2: STUDY CROSS-REFERENCES (XREFS).

XRefs are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as we seek to understand your passage. A few such XRefs can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting the online reference www.biblestudytools.com. Simply type in “1 Peter 2” in the box to the left of the “Search” button and then click “Search.” All of 1 Peter 2 will appear on the screen. Be sure that “New American Standard” is your selected Bible in the drop down box and then click the box next to “Cross References” so that numbers appear throughout the passage. Clicking any of these will move your screen to the bottom of the page where you will find a series of XRefs for specific verses within the passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

INTERPRETATION METHOD 3: LOOK UP KEY WORDS.

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek is far better and is surprisingly easy, thanks to the internet. Simply log onto www.biblestudytools.com, and as an example, type in “1 Peter 2” in the box to the left of the “Search” button and then click “Search.” All of 1 Peter 2 will appear on the screen. Be sure that “New American Standard” is your selected Bible in the drop down box and then click the box next to “Strong’s Numbers” so that most of the words will be highlighted in blue. Clicking on any of these will bring up a new screen that will tell you the Greek word used here, its possible definitions, and the total number of times it is used in each book of the New Testament (NT). Click on any of the other NT books (under the title “NAS Verse Count”), and get a list of every verse in that book that uses this Greek word. What used to take hours now takes seconds!

INTERPRETATION METHOD 4: LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is

The New Bible Dictionary by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

INTERPRETATION METHOD 5: TACKLE TOUGH QUESTIONS STEP-BY-STEP.

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this four-step process:

- (1) List all the options.** Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
- (2) List pros and cons for each option.** See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology.
- (3) Choose the most likely option.** Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books of the Bible, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight unless the solution contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you must eliminate that option.
- (4) Decide on your certainty level.** Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

INTERPRETATION METHOD 6: COMPARE MULTIPLE TRANSLATIONS.

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at net.bible.org. You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.

APPLY // *how does it work?*

Our Bible study is not over until we apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. And lest we underestimate the value of this last step, remember that in God's eyes it is the person who does not just know His Word, but also obeys His Word that truly loves Him (see John 14:21). So how do we apply a passage to our lives? Application involves the following two tasks:

APPLICATION TASK 1: LIST POTENTIAL PRINCIPLES FROM YOUR PASSAGE.

A "principle" is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Legitimate principles are not specific to a particular person (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:23 is just for Timothy) nor a particular time (e.g., "do not leave Jerusalem" in Acts 1:4). An example from 1 Peter would be, "God has made every believer a royal priest so that we would proclaim His greatness to those not yet reconciled to Him." It is often helpful when listing principles to consider the following questions:

- *Is there something to worship or thank God for?*
- *Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?*
- *Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?*
- *Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?*
- *Is there any relationship I need to work on?*

APPLICATION TASK 2: CHOOSE ONE PRINCIPLE, AND CREATE A PLAN TO APPLY IT TO YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK.

Once you complete your principle list, prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on (Do not just choose the easiest to apply!). If you felt deeply convicted about one in particular, that is probably the principle God is leading you to apply. Once you have chosen a specific principle, answer these two questions:

- **What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.**
- **Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?**

MY NOTES

MY NOTES



SURVEY: WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA?

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

Surveying a book like 1 Peter allows you to grasp the big picture and the overall story line of the book before getting caught up in the details. This survey provides a helpful road map to guide your study during the coming weeks. Begin this crucial first step by taking the next 30 minutes to read straight through 1 Peter without stopping. Then, answer the questions on the next page before moving on.

How would you describe Peter's audience? Are they believers or unbelievers? Are they spiritually mature or immature? What issues are they facing?

What are the major themes or big ideas in this book? (Hint: Look for repeated words and ideas.)

Now that you have read through the entire book, what are Peter's purposes in writing it? Be as specific as you can.

What specific ways does Peter call these people to live distinctly from their culture? In addition, how does Peter provide Christ as an example for such a lifestyle throughout the book?

BACKGROUND

Once you have completed the introductory questions on the previous page, read this background article on the book of 1 Peter (portions compiled primarily from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*).

AUTHORSHIP

The author identifies himself as “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1:1) who was a “witness of Christ’s suffering” (5:1). Peter’s given name was Simon, but Jesus gave him a new name to reflect the boldness and strength he would eventually have – “Cephas” in Aramaic (or “Petros” in Greek) which means “rock.” From the earliest days of the church 1 Peter was recognized as the authentic work of the apostle Peter and was often quoted by key church fathers. Despite the claim of some modern scholars that the sophisticated Greek of the letter and the situation of the recipients do not fit Peter, the contents and the character of the epistle clearly support his authorship. The letter reflects the history and terminology of the gospels and Acts (particularly Peter’s speeches in Acts 2, 4, and 10) and its themes fit Peter’s experiences and challenges.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Peter wrote this epistle apparently just before or shortly after the beginning of Nero’s persecution of the church in A.D. 64. The letter suggests that repressive laws had not yet been enacted specifically against Christians. It was still possible for Peter’s readers to “honor the king” (2:17). The persecution and suffering that Peter did refer to was primarily social and religious rather than legal. A hostile pagan society would slander, ridicule, discriminate against, and even inflict physical abuse on those whose lifestyles had radically changed because of their faith in Christ. However, Peter seemed to indicate that greater persecution was imminent. He assured his readers that they could rejoice though they “may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.” So perhaps Nero’s severe persecution had already begun in Rome and was spreading to the provinces to which Peter was writing. This would place the date of the letter in late A.D. 64 or early 65.

In 5:13 Peter says that he writes from Babylon. While this could refer literally to the ancient Mesopotamian capital, it seems unlikely that Peter would be visiting what was during his time a sparsely inhabited ruin of the once great city (though there was a small but flourishing Jewish community present there in Peter’s day). Other possible referents of “Babylon” include (1) an Egyptian military post called Babylon, (2) the city of Jerusalem, or (3) the city of Rome. Many commentators prefer the final option because Peter was in Rome during the last decade of his life (he was martyred in Rome about A.D. 67). If this is true, then he probably referred to Rome figuratively as “Babylon” as a security precaution to disguise the church’s location from a hostile Roman government.

RECIPIENTS

1 Peter is addressed to Christians scattered throughout five Roman provinces of the peninsula of Asia Minor (1:1), modern day northern Turkey. The churches in those provinces were made up of both Jews and Gentiles. This epistle is rich in references to and quotations from the Old Testament. Jewish Christians would have found special significance in the term diasporas, translated “scattered,” used in the salutation (1:1). Jews who lived outside of Jerusalem were referred to as living in the diaspora. Gentile readers would have noted Peter’s exhortation to holy living in light of their background of complete ignorance of God’s Word (1:14). Gentile Christians also would have been greatly encouraged by the fact that though they were in ignorance, they were now considered “the people of God” (2:10). Clearly Peter carefully included both Jewish and Gentile Christians in his letter of encouragement to the churches of Asia Minor.

PURPOSE

This epistle could be understood as a handbook written for ambassadors to a hostile foreign land. The author, knowing persecution would arise, carefully prescribed conduct designed to bring honor to the One they represented. The purpose then of 1 Peter was to encourage Christians to face persecution so that the true grace of Jesus Christ would be evidenced in them (5:12). This epistle gives a theology of practical exhortation and comfort for believers’ daily needs. Peter concretely linked doctrine with practice. The new birth gives a living hope to those in the midst of persecution. New conduct is prescribed because Christ endured unjust suffering. New behavior is required to demonstrate the grace of God to an unbelieving and hostile world. And new responsibilities are placed on the leaders and members of the body of Christ since they should stand together as living stones against the onrushing tide of persecution.

OUTLINE

Having read the background article on the book, now skim through 1 Peter one more time and create your own title for each of the major sections below (you can divide these into smaller sections, each with its own title, if you wish). Try not to use the titles in this packet or in your Bible. Create your own titles that capture your understanding of the main idea of each section.

MY 1 PETER OUTLINE ...

- 1:1-12
- 1:13-25
- 2:1-10
- 2:11-25
- 3:1-12
- 3:13-22
- 4:1-11
- 4:12-19
- 5:1-14

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES



LESSON

OUR GREAT SALVATION

1 PETER 1:1-12

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” — 1 PETER 1:3

OBSERVE

what do I see?

OUR GREAT SALVATION

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, “**What do I see?**”. This is the crucial skill of **observation**, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. **We will learn a new observation skill each week** to practice with the others we have already learned. This week, simply read the passage below, and then write one or two observations for each verse in the box that follows. Our observations might identify **people, places, or events**, point out **repeated words or key terms**, record important **connections between words and sentences**, or even point out **something missing** that we expected to see. The first few have been done for you.

1 PETER 1:1-12

¹Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ⁸and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, ¹¹seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. ¹²It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven things into which angels long to look.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

Summarize the activity of each member of the Trinity as described in 1:2. What is the end or goal of this activity?

Father:

Son:

Spirit:

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 1-3

- Peter is an apostle belonging to Jesus Christ.
- God the Father chooses people according to His foreknowledge.
- The main verb of these verses is "blessed be" in v3.

vv 4-6

vv 7-9

vv 10-12

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: USE THE CONTEXT

Our observation of 1 Peter each week will stir up some of the most interesting and challenging questions encountered in Bible study. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for the answer (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). God desires all of us to become approved workmen, “accurately handling the Word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). To that end, **we will learn a new interpretive skill each week** to practice along with the others we have already learned. This week’s interpretive skill greatly improves our understanding of what a passage meant to its original readers—**USE THE CONTEXT**. Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow Peter’s flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may also need to read ahead in 1 Peter for clues.

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

Why do you think Peter refers to his audience as “aliens” (notice same word used in 2:11)? How does this fit with the purposes and situation of the letter?

“That which we have turned into a puzzle to our minds was originally intended to be a pillow for our hearts”

What does it mean to be “chosen” or “elect” in 1:1-2 (see John 15:16; Acts 13:17; Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:3-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)?

Why does Peter in verse 4 describe the believer’s “inheritance” as “imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away?” In light of their situation, why would these believers need to focus upon their heavenly inheritance?

What kind of “salvation” is Peter referring to in verses 5, 9 and 10? First, look at the following verses to see what different ways this Greek word can be used. (Hint: See “Three Stages of Salvation” chart at end of this lesson).

Acts 4:12; 14:9; 27:20

Romans 5:9-10; 15:30-32

Ephesians 2:8

Philippians 2:12-13

Hebrews 9:28; 11:7

Jude 5

In what ways is the testing of our faith in trials similar to the testing of gold in fire (see James 1:3-4 and 1 Corinthians 3:13)?

What do you learn about the Old Testament from verses 10-12?

MY SUMMARY TITLE _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week's passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

List the reasons given in verses 3-12 for a believer to maintain hope in the midst of difficult circumstances.

Is it possible to have hope regardless of circumstances? Is it reasonable?

How can you maintain hope even in the dark times?

After praying to God for conviction and insight, what concrete changes do you feel you should make this week to live a life of hope and joy regardless of circumstances? What exactly will you do differently this week than last week—get specific and be realistic!

Who will hold you accountable next week to see if you've followed through?

THE THREE STAGES OF SALVATION

The concept of salvation in the New Testament can be somewhat confusing. This is because salvation is actually a process that begins at the moment of conversion (justification) when God declares us forgiven and righteous. It continues until the believer is transferred into the presence of the Lord and endowed with moral perfection and an immortal resurrected body (glorification). All during this process the believer is being “saved” (sanctification) from the terrible effects of sin as we are transformed more and more into His likeness.

Perhaps this chart will be helpful in thinking through each stage and its relationship to the others:

STAGES OF SALVATION		
JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION	GLORIFICATION
This stage of salvation begins at the moment of faith in the gospel where-in God declares the sinner to be righteous before Him based on the death of Christ.	The present experiential or progressive work of continuing to be set apart unto the things of God during the whole of our Christian lives. Every command and exhortation to holy living concerns this stage of salvation.	The final stage of salvation occurs at death or Rapture where perfected immortality is bestowed upon all those who have been justified.
Salvation PAST	Salvation PRESENT	Salvation FUTURE
Conversion	Christian living	Heaven (in God's presence)
Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:5-8; Rom. 3:21-26; 5:1; 8:30; 2 Cor. 5:21	1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15, 3:18; 5:17; Rom. 5:2; 6:19; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:12-13	Rom. 8:30; 13:11; Phil. 1:6, 3:21; Eph. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; 1 Jn. 3:2; Rev. 7:9
Legal righteousness imputed	Personal righteousness imparted	Moral perfection and resurrected body imparted
Establishes position	Transforms condition	Matches condition with position
One act of faith	Many acts of faith	Act of God's faithfulness
Once-for-all-time	Progressive, dynamic, neverending in this life	Once-for-all-time
Distinct event at moment of "salvation"	Process of spiritual growth in the life of the Christian	Distinct event at either death or Rapture
Inevitable to the elect	Expected but not inevitable to the justified	Inevitable to the justified
<i>Delivered from the PENALTY of Sin</i>	<i>Delivered from the POWER of Sin</i>	<i>Delievered from the PRESENCE of Sin</i>

MY NOTES

MY NOTES

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.



LESSON

2

HOLY LIVING

1 PETER 1:13-25

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

OBSERVATION SKILL: ASKING INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

Like last week, read the passage below and write down your observations in the box on the following page. This week, we will begin to write our own questions as well. Try to write out eight questions next to the relevant verses on the following page. This is probably the simplest skill of all. Just record the questions that naturally come to mind as you try to understand and apply the passage! If you need help getting started, you can use these examples:

WHO is ...

- ... Peter talking about?
- ... accomplishing the action?
- ... benefiting from the action?

WHAT is the ...

- ... meaning of this word?
- ... significance of this phrase?
- ... implication of this statement?
- ... relationship between these phrases?

WHY did Peter ...

- ... choose this word?
- ... include this phrase, statement, or command?
- ... not say _____?

HOW ...

- ... was this action accomplished?
- ... will this situation occur?

OBSERVE

what do I see?

MEMORY VERSE:

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;”

— 1 PETER 1:14-15

HOLY LIVING

1 PETER 1:13-25

¹³Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, ¹⁵but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; ¹⁶because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

¹⁷If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; ¹⁸knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. ²⁰For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you ²¹who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

²²Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, ²³for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴For, “ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF, ²⁵BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER.” And this is the word which was preached to you.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

How does Peter describe the following in verses 13-25 ...

... the life Peter calls us to live?

... Christ and the redemption He provides?

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 13-16

vv 17-19

vv 20-22

vv 23-25

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: CROSS REFERENCES

Last week we learned to use the context to help us answer our interpretive questions. This week we will add our second interpretive skill — **STUDY CROSS REFERENCES (XRefs)**. XRefs are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such XRefs can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by logging again onto www.biblestudytools.com. Simply type in “1 Peter 1” in the box to the left of the “Search” button and then click “Search.” All of 1 Peter 1 will appear on the screen. Be sure that “New American Standard” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then click the box next to “Cross References” so that numbers appear throughout the passage. Clicking any of these will move your screen to the bottom of the page where you will find a series of XRefs for specific verses within the passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

What is the significance of “therefore” in v13? How does this passage relate to the previous passage? (Hint: notice the change in the types of verbs Peter uses from last week to this week.)

Define “holiness” (see Leviticus 11:44-47; 1 Samuel 21:4-5; Psalm 24:3-4; Isaiah 6:1-7). What other terms or descriptions help us to define “holy?”

What is the role of “fear” in our lives (see 1:17; Exodus 20:20; Deuteronomy 5:29; Proverbs 1:7; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Revelations 14:7)? What reasons does Peter give that we should “conduct ourselves in fear during the time of our stay upon earth?”

To answer the following questions, first refer to the article below that defines “redemption,” and then read Matthew 20:28; Romans 3:23-26; Ephesians 1:7.

“Redemption” means deliverance from some evil by payment of a price. It is more than simple deliverance. Thus prisoners of war [and slaves] might be released on payment of a price which was called a ‘ransom’... It is this which makes the concept so useful for the early Christians. Jesus had taught them that ‘everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin’ (Jn 8:34)... Sinners are slaves. Sinners are doomed to death... Failing redemption, the slavery would continue, the sentence of death would be carried out. The cross of Christ is seen against this background. It is the price paid to release the slaves, to let the condemned go free. [from New Bible Dictionary]

From what were we delivered?

What was the payment by which we were delivered?

For what purpose were we delivered?

What similarities and differences does Peter reveal between the “word of God” and “seed” in verses 23-25?

MY SUMMARY TITLE _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week’s passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

As in the previous lesson, complete the reflection questions. Then, **step back and look at the passage as a whole and list potential principles**. A “principle” is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Legitimate principles are not specific to a particular person (e.g. 1 Timothy 5:23 is just for Timothy) nor a particular time (e.g. “do not leave Jerusalem” in Acts 1:4). A couple of examples are provided for you on the next page.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

In what areas of your life are you still struggling to walk in holiness? Are there any circumstances that make this struggle particularly difficult?

Jesus Christ paid a great cost so that you could be redeemed! How does this fact motivate you toward holy living?

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 1:13-25. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. *Every arena of our lives should reflect the holiness of God Himself.*
2. *We should submit our lives to the Word of God because it is living and enduring.*
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES



LESSON

3

OUR PRIESTLY CALLING

1 PETER 2:1-10

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORY VERSE:

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”

— 1 PETER 2:9

OBSERVE
what do I see?

OUR PRIESTLY CALLING

OBSERVATION SKILL: LIST PRIMARY THEMES

A primary theme is the big idea, central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “living stone” and “priesthood” in 2:1-10. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

1 PETER 2:1-10

¹Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ²like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

⁴And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For this is contained in Scripture: “Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, And he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.”

⁷This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, “The stone which the builders rejected, This became the very corner stone,” ⁸and, “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

List all figurative imagery in this passage.

List all the specific references for Old Testament quotes in this section.

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 1-3

vv 4-5

vv 6-8

vv 9-10

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: LOOK UP KEY WORDS

As you answer the questions below, continue using your first two interpretive skills (use the context and cross references), and add this third one — **LOOK UP KEY WORDS** (such as “living stone,” “corner stone,” or “priesthood” in this passage). While doing so in English is helpful, looking them up in Greek is far better and is surprisingly easy thanks to the internet. Simply log onto www.biblestudytools.com, type in “1 Peter 2” in the box to the left of the “Search” button and then click “Search.” All of 1 Peter 2 will appear on the screen. Be sure that “New American Standard” is your selected Bible in the drop down box and then click the box next to “Strong’s Numbers” so that most of the words will be highlighted in blue. Clicking on any of these will bring up a new screen that will tell you the Greek word used here, its possible definitions, and the total number of times it is used in each book of the New Testament! You can even click on any of the other NT books (under the title “NAS Verse Count”) and get a list of every verse in that book that uses this Greek word. What used to take hours now takes seconds!

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

Create and answer any three of your own interpretation questions from this passage:

a.

b.

c.

How does this passage relate to the previous passage (look for common themes and ideas)?

According to verses 1-3, what is necessary for us to “grow in respect to salvation (cf. Colossians 3:8-10; James 1:21; 2 Peter 1:3-9)?

Why does Peter use the imagery of an “infant” in verses 2-3? What is his point?

What is the significance of Peter’s description of Jesus in verse 4 as a “living stone” and in verse 7 as the “corner stone” (cf. Ephesians 2:20)?

“Cornerstone” refers to the large stone placed in the foundation at the principal corner of ancient buildings. It provided visible support on which the rest of the building relied for strength and stability. Peter quotes from Isaiah 28:16 and the same imagery is used by Paul in Ephesians 2:20.

What implications can we draw from Peter’s reference to us as “living stones ... being built up as a spiritual house” in verse 5 (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:6-9; Philippians 1:3-5)?

What does it mean that we are a “holy priesthood?” For what two purposes does a priest exist (hint: see verses 5 and 9)?

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week’s passage.

APPLY
how does it work?

As in the previous lesson, complete the reflection questions and then list a few principles you learned from the passage.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Prayerfully look back over your study this week and then use the following chart to help you apply what you’ve learned in 1 Peter 2:1-10.

TIMELESS PRINCIPLES List some timeless truths or commands you discovered in this week’s passage that apply to ALL Christians:	HOW ARE YOU DOING? Do YOU consistently live out this principle? If not, when do you struggle to obey it? Be honest and specific!

PROCLAIM HIS EXCELLENCIES

In this passage, Peter encourages the people of God to proclaim or speak out about our excellent God who has rescued us from darkness and shown us great mercy. Our lives are a living story of God's grace ... and everyone loves a story. God uses these stories to draw people to Himself and to offer hope and encouragement to the body of Christ.



YOUR TESTIMONY

Are you prepared to share your rescue story, the story of how you trusted in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins? This is often called a personal testimony, and whoever hears it should know exactly how he or she can make a decision to become a Christian. Here are a few tips on how to effectively communicate it:

Think back on the period of time leading up to your belief in Jesus Christ for eternal life. What were the primary influences that caused you to believe in Jesus? Were they intellectual, circumstantial, relational?

Move quickly to the main point, the gospel, and make it clear. Share a couple of key Bible verses to clarify the main points of the gospel (such as John 3:16; Romans 3:23; 6:23; or Ephesians 2:8-9).

Avoid Christian jargon (e.g., “justified” or “atonement”) and negative statements about other Christian denominations or groups.

Take a few minutes to write out a short version of your testimony (3-4 minutes). Refer to Paul's conversion testimony found in Acts 22:1-21 for a great example. In general, you can use a three-point chronological outline:

1. Life before knowing Christ (Acts 22:1-5)
2. How you came to know Christ (Acts 22:6-11)
3. Life after you received Christ—changes He has made, what He means to you now (Acts 22:12-21)

OTHER GOD STORIES

God is constantly at work in our lives, and this work can be the subject of many stories that proclaim His excellence. Are you paying attention?

Consider the following examples and questions. Choose one or more, and write a brief answer telling a story of how you have experienced God's hand in a specific way in your life.

- A story of redemption: How have you seen God bring something good out of a hard situation?
- A story of comfort: How have you experienced God's care and gentleness during a painful or difficult season?
- A tale of victory: How has God helped you overcome a weakness?
- A story of provision: Describe a time God met a pressing need in His providential way.
- A tale of reconciliation: When have you seen God heal a relationship that seemed damaged beyond repair?
- An unfinished story: How have you seen God work in a situation that is not resolved? What are some fresh insights into God's character have you gained?

(Other God Stories section adapted from Told Any Good Stories Lately? By Elizabeth Turnage, Discipleship Journal, January/February 2004)

MY NOTES



LESSON

4

SUBMISSION IN THE WORLD

1 PETER 2:11–25

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

OBSERVATION SKILL: UNDERLINE ALL VERBS

As in previous weeks, read the passage below, and write down your observations, questions, and themes on the following page. This week, we will begin to **UNDERLINE ALL OF THE VERBS**. Quick review: a verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place (“I urge you”) or that a state or condition exists (“such is the will of God”). Because verbs express the action of the passage, they are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought within the passage.

OBSERVE
what do I see?

MEMORY VERSE:

“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,”

— 1 PETER 2:21

SUBMISSION TO THE WORLD

1 PETER 2:11-25

¹¹Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. ¹²Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may be-cause of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visita-tion.

¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him for the punish-ment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. ¹⁵For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. ¹⁶Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond-slaves of God. ¹⁷Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

¹⁸Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. ¹⁹For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sor-rows when suffering unjustly. ²⁰For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

²¹For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, ²²who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; ²³and while being reviled, He did not re-vile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. ²⁵For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

Underline all verbs in this passage.

Circle every individual or group that Peter references in this passage.

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 11-14

vv 15-18

vv 19-22

vv 23-25

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This week's interpretive skill greatly improves our understanding of what a passage meant to its original readers—**LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION**. You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

Create and answer any three of your own interpretation questions from this passage:

a.

b.

c.

How do the exhortations of 2:11-20 relate to the truths of 2:4-10?

Peter addresses his readers as “aliens and strangers” (cf. 1:1; 2:4-10). Why does Peter connect abstaining from fleshly lusts with living as aliens in verse 11?

In each of these passages determine who submits to whom and why they are exhorted to do so:

Luke 2:48-51

Romans 13:1-7

Ephesians 5:21-24

Titus 2:9-10

1 Peter 5:5

Using the above passages, define the biblical concept of “submission.” Is it based on the worthiness of the one submitted to? Does it imply inferiority of the one submitting (1 Corinthians 15:28; Philippians 2:5-11)?

How does Peter’s discussion of “submission” impact our exercise of freedom according to verses 16-17 (cf. 1 Corinthians 8:9)?

In verses 18-20, how does Peter motivate us to submit in all circumstances? How does the example of Christ in verses 21-25 further his point?

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week’s passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

As in the previous lesson, complete the reflection questions and then list a few principles you learned from the passage. This week adds a third application step - **choose one principle and create a plan** to apply it to your life this week. Once you have completed your principle list, *prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on* (do not just choose the easiest to apply). If you felt deeply convicted about one in particular, that is probably the one God is leading you to apply! Once you have chosen a specific principle, follow the directions on the next page to develop a realistic and specific plan to apply it to your life.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How do you respond to authorities in your life who appear unjust, incompetent, or insensitive?

Are there areas in your life that you struggle to use your freedoms in God-honoring ways?

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 2:11-25. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES



LESSON

5

SUBMISSION IN THE HOME

1 PETER 3:1-12

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORY VERSE:

“To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.” — 1 PETER 3:8-9

OBSERVE
what do I see?

SUBMISSION IN THE HOME

OBSERVATION SKILL: CIRCLE KEY WORDS OR PHRASES

Read the passage below, write down your observations, questions, and themes, and underline all verbs. This week we will begin to **CIRCLE ALL OF THE KEY WORDS OR PHRASES**. These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like “bore our sins in His body” in 2:24) or thematically set the theme or main idea for the passage (like “submissive” in 3:1-6).

1 PETER 3:1-12

¹In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, ²as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. ³Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; ⁴but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. ⁵For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; ⁶just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

⁷You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

⁸To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; ⁹not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. ¹⁰For, “The one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹“He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it. ¹²“For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer, But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

Circle key words within this passage.

Box all descriptions or terms for a wife in 3:7.

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 1-3

vv 4-6

vv 7-9

vv 10-12

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: TOUGH QUESTIONS

PART 1 - LIST OPTIONS, PROS & CONS

How do we answer difficult interpretive questions when more than one option seems possible? This requires two skills, the first of which is ... **LIST ALL THE OPTIONS WITH PROS AND CONS.** Always start by brainstorming, listing every possible answer to your question. Be open-minded and creative, and do not rush this process. You will often find that your third option proves better than your first. Once you have created a list of possible options, list both pros and cons for each one. You are looking for all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology. Once you have thought about it for a while individually, feel free to talk with others and to check commentaries or references to see if you have missed any options (However, do not just assume that their favorite option is necessarily correct!).

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

How does this passage relate to the previous (notice that it starts with “in the same way” or “likewise”)?

Submission today isn’t a popular concept, but read Ephesians 5:21-33 and Colossians 3:18-19 along with this passage to answer the following questions ...

a) What does it mean for a wife to “submit” to her husband?

b) What positive results come from a wife’s willing submission to her husband?

From verses 3-4, what “adornment” is valued by God Himself (cf. 1 Samuel 16:7; Proverbs 31:30; 1 Timothy 2:9-10)? Furthermore, how do these verses extend His instructions to wives regarding submission?

What does it mean that a wife is a “weaker vessel” according to the overall context of this passage? Specifically, does Peter seem to add further support to the argument that a woman’s call to submit to her husband means that she is less important or less valuable (cf. 1 Peter 3:8; Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:4; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 5:21)? Why or why not?

What does it mean for husbands to live with their wives “in an understanding way?” In other words, how does Peter’s description of wives in verse 7 help inform husbands how to live with their wives “in an understanding way?”

In verses 8-12, how does Peter summarize his instructions on submission that began in 2:11 (Hint: look for reoccurring patterns and principles in 3:8-12)?

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week’s passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

This week's application section involves the same three steps as last week's, which we will continue to use throughout our study: reflect on your own life, list principles, and choose one to apply this week. It is often helpful when working through the second and third steps to consider the following list of questions:

- *Is there something to worship or thank God for?*
- *Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?*
- *Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?*
- *Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?*
- *Is there any relationship I need to work on?*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Why do we as 21st century Americans have such disdain for the concept of “submission”?

What are some ways you can live with greater harmony and sympathy for others in your community this week?

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 3:1-12. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES



LESSON

6

VINDICATION IN SUFFERING

1 PETER 3:13-22

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORY VERSE:

“For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong. For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;” — 1 PETER 3:17-18

OBSERVE
what do I see?

VINDICATION IN SUFFERING

OBSERVATION SKILL: HIGHLIGHT REPEATED WORDS OR PHRASES

Read the passage below, write down your observations, questions, and themes, and underline all verbs. This week we will begin to **HIGHLIGHT REPEATED WORDS OR PHRASES**. Include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “slandered” and “reviled”). You will want to highlight things repeated in other places (such as “suffer” found in 1:11; 2:19-21; 4:1, 13; 5:1, 9-10).

1 PETER 3:13-22

¹³Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, ¹⁵but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; ¹⁶and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong. ¹⁸For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; ¹⁹in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, ²⁰who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. ²¹Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you— not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 13-14

vv 15-17

vv 18-19

vv 20-22

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: TOUGH QUESTIONS

PART 2 - CHOOSE THE MOST LIKELY OPTION AND DECIDE ON CERTAINTY

The second skill needed to answer difficult interpretive questions is CHOOSE THE MOST LIKELY OPTION AND DECIDE ON CERTAINTY. Look back at all of your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight, unless the solution you are looking at contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you know that option is invalid. Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

How do verses 13-14 relate to Peter's continued discussion on submission and suffering?

What does Peter mean when he says to "sanctify (or 'set apart') Christ as Lord in your hearts" in verse 15? How should this help a person in the midst of unjust suffering (cf. 4:19; 5:10; Isaiah 8:11-14 which Peter quotes in 3:14)?

What is the role of "hope" in the midst of suffering (1:3, 13, 21; 3:5, 15) in 1 Peter?

What is God's perspective on suffering as seen in verse 17 (cf. 2:20; 4:12, 14, 16)? How does this differ from the world's common view of suffering?

Verse 18 is one of the New Testament's most succinct and yet profound descriptions of Christ's atoning death. Explain in your own words the theological truths we learn in this verse.

Why does Peter bring up the historical account of Noah in verses 19-20 (Hint: be sure to read the commentary at the end of this lesson)? How does this event fit into his discussion in this passage?

What does Peter mean in verse 21 by "corresponding to that, baptism now saves you?" What type of baptism is he referring to and in what sense does it "save" us?

List all of the interpretive options you can think of along with pros and cons for each. *[To answer this question you will have to wrestle with two corresponding questions: "How are baptism and Noah's ark related?" and "What is an appeal to God for a good conscience (cf. 3:16; 2:19; Acts 24:16; 1 Timothy 1:18-19)?"]*

Then choose the most likely option and determine your certainty level.

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week's passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

This week's application section involves the same three steps as last week's, which we will continue to use throughout our study: reflect on your own life, list principles, and choose one to apply this week. It is often helpful when working through the second and third steps to consider the following list of questions:

- *Is there something to worship or thank God for?*
- *Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?*
- *Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?*
- *Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?*
- *Is there any relationship I need to work on?*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How do you typically respond to being mistreated, slandered, or insulted?

“Experience cannot be allowed to have the final word [on suffering] – it must be judged and shown as deceptive and misleading. The theology of the cross draws our attention to the sheer unreliability of experience as a guide to the presence and activity of God. God is active and present in this world, quite independently of whether we experience him as being so. Experience declared that God was absent from Calvary, only to have its verdict humiliatingly overturned on the third day.”

— Alister McGrath

How does this week's passage encourage you to entrust yourself to Christ in those situations?

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 3:13-22. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES

AID YOUR STUDY

To further aid your understanding of v19, read the following commentary from the IVPBBC ...

While there are many views on this verse, the three main ones are (1) that between his death and resurrection, Jesus preached to the unrighteous dead in Hades, perhaps specifically to those who lived before the flood of Noah (the view of many church fathers); (2) that in line with Peter's description of Noah as a "preacher of righteousness" in 2 Pet 2:5, Christ preached through Noah to disobedient people in Noah's day (the view of many Reformers); (3) that before or after his resurrection, Jesus proclaimed triumph over the fallen angels referred to in 2 Peter 2:4-5 where Peter equates them with "the sons of God" from Genesis 6:1-2 (the view of most scholars today). This third view is supported by the direct mention of angelic beings in v22 and by the fact that in early Christian literature, "spirits" nearly always refers to angelic spirits rather than human spirits, except when explicit statements are made to the contrary.



LESSON

SOUND JUDGMENT

1 PETER 4:1-11

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

OBSERVATION SKILL: BOX CONNECTING WORDS (PART ONE)

As in previous weeks, read the passage below and write down your observations, questions, and themes on the following page. Also, circle all key words and highlight all repeated words or phrases. This week, we will begin to **BOX CONNECTING WORDS**. These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. We will learn four types of connecting words this week:

COMPARISON: either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so (e.g., “arm yourselves also with the same purpose” 4:1).

CONTRAST: points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include: but, rather, yet, however (e.g., “they malign you ... but they will give account to Him” 4:4-5).

PURPOSE: indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include: that, so that, in order that (e.g., “the gospel has ... been preached ... that ... they may live in the spirit” 4:6).

RESULT: very similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include: that, so that, as a result, with the result that (e.g., “whoever serves is to do so ... so that in all things God may be glorified ...” 4:11).

OBSERVE

what do I see?

MEMORY VERSE:

“The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.”

— 1 PETER 4:7-8

SOUND JUDGMENT

1 PETER 4:1-11

¹Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ²so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. ⁴In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you; ⁵but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.

⁷The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. ⁸Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹Be hospitable to one another without complaint. ¹⁰As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

Box all connecting words.

Underline all repeated words.

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 1-3

vv 4-6

vv 7-9

vv 10-11

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

PRINCIPLE #1 - DISCERN THE AUTHOR'S INTENDED MEANING

For the next few weeks, we will learn three fundamental **PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION** that help us to use our interpretive skills accurately. **Principle #1 - Your goal is to discern the author's intended meaning to the original audience.** Unfortunately, most people begin their Bible study by asking, "What does this passage mean to me?" While there may be multiple possible applications to my life, there is only one meaning, the author's intended meaning; and we must first seek this out. This involves three important steps:

1. Always **start your study with prayer**, asking the same God who composed Scripture through these ancient authors to give you insight to understand His intended meaning.
2. Be very careful to **avoid reading your 21st century circumstances and theological issues** into the text as they will skew your understanding.
3. Work diligently to see the text **from the point of view of the original readers**. To do this: (a) dig into the historical and cultural background using Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and (b) spend a few moments thinking about the original audience's religious understanding by asking, "What books of the Bible did they have access to? What did they know about God? about Jesus? about salvation? etc."

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

Create and answer any three of your own interpretation questions from this passage:

a.

b.

c.

How does this passage relate back to the previous sections (Hint: notice the "therefore")?

What does Peter mean in verse 1 when he says that “he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin” (cf. Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 6:5-7; 1 John 1:8-9; 3:9)? How do Peter’s instructions in verses 2-5 further support your answer?

What does Peter mean in verse 6 when he says that the gospel has been preached “even to the dead,” to those who have been “judged in the flesh as/by men”? Does he mean that there is a second chance for those who do not respond to the gospel in this lifetime (cf. Hebrews 9:27)? List any other interpretive options and then support your answer from context (Hint: look for similar words in surrounding verses and trace Peter’s flow of thought).

How do each of Peter’s commands in verses 7-11 relate to the end of all things being near? In addition, do you see any reoccurring themes in these commands? Furthermore, do you see any contrasts with Gentiles actions and motivations in verses 2-5?

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week’s passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

This week's application section involves the same three steps as last week's, which we will continue to use throughout our study: reflect on your own life, list principles, and choose one to apply this week. It is often helpful when working through the second and third steps to consider the following list of questions:

- *Is there something to worship or thank God for?*
- *Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?*
- *Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?*
- *Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?*
- *Is there any relationship I need to work on?*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Peter declares that each one of us has received a spiritual gift (cf. 1 Corinthians 12; 14; Romans 12). Do you know what gift(s) the Lord has given you to serve Him? If so, what are they? If not, how can you discover them?

How have you seen love cover a multitude of sins in your own life?

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 4:1-11. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES



LESSON

8

THE BLESSING OF SUFFERING

1 PETER 4:12-19

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORY VERSE:

“If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”

— 1 PETER 4:14

OBSERVE

what do I see?

THE BLESSING OF SUFFERING

OBSERVATION SKILL: BOX CONNECTING WORDS (PART TWO)

Read the passage below, record your observations, questions, and themes on the following page. Also, circle all key words and highlight all repeated words or phrases and continue to **BOX CONNECTING WORDS**. Here are four types to box this week:

CAUSE: expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include: because, since, and sometimes for (e.g., “*you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you*” 4:14).

EXPLANATION: what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word for (e.g., “*for it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God*” 4:17).

INFERENCE: provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include: therefore, for this reason (e.g., “*therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls*” 4:19).

CONDITION: presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is if (e.g., “*if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome of those who do not obey the gospel*” 4:17).

1 PETER 4:12-19

¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; ¹³but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; ¹⁶but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. ¹⁷For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner? ¹⁹Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

Box all connecting words in this passage.

List all references in this passage that describe suffering is part of the normal Christian life.

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 12-13

vv 14-15

vv 16-17

vv 18-19

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

PRINCIPLE #2 - ASSUME A "NORMAL" USE OF LANGUAGE

This week we will learn our second of three **PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION**. **Principle #2 - Assume a "normal" use of language.** The Bible was given to us because God desired to communicate with us, not to hide Himself from us. Therefore, we should not be looking for hidden meanings as we study. Instead, we should use the normal techniques we would use to understand any piece of literature:

1. **Study the grammar.** For most of us, grammar isn't our favorite thing. Yet, it really is helpful for understanding Scripture! Pay attention to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Think through any figures of speech. Observe how phrases and clauses are connected into sentences and how sentences are linked together into paragraphs.
2. **Remember that chapters came later.** When Paul wrote Ephesians or Luke wrote the book of Acts, they wrote single, unified stories without verse or chapter divisions. These books were meant to be read just like you would read a letter or a novel. Always keep the overall story in mind as you study each passage.

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

Create and answer any three of your own interpretation questions from this passage:

a.

b.

c.

1 Peter 4:12-19 presents one of the most powerful and concise presentations regarding suffering in the Christian life. As a result, answer the following questions which look at the passage as a whole ...

What is God's perspective on suffering?

What are often some of man's natural responses to suffering?

How should a Christian respond appropriately in the midst of suffering?

What "judgment" is Peter referring to in verse 17? In what sense has it begun with us already? Furthermore, how does Peter describe the future aspects of God's judgment as he quotes the Old Testament in verse 18?

How does verse 19 summarize this entire passage?

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week's passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

“How we mature as a Christian largely depends on the attitude we have when we’re faced with suffering... When people malign you, rejoice and be glad. When they curse you, bless them in return. When you walk through a painful experience, embrace it and you will be free! When you learn these lessons, there is nothing left that the world can do to you.”

— Brother Yun

This week’s application section involves the same three steps as last week’s, which we will continue to use throughout our study: reflect on your own life, list principles, and choose one to apply this week. It is often helpful when working through the second and third steps to consider the following list of questions:

- *Is there something to worship or thank God for?*
- *Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?*
- *Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?*
- *Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?*
- *Is there any relationship I need to work on?*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

When was the last time you were surprised by a trial in your life? How did you respond at the time?

In light of this passage, how could you have responded more from God’s perspective?

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 4:12-19. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES



LESSON

9

STANDING UP

1 PETER 5:1-14

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.” — 1 PETER 5:8-9

OBSERVE

what do I see?

STANDING UP

As in previous weeks, write down your observations, questions, and themes on the following page. Also, circle all key words, highlight all repeated words or phrases, and box connecting words. A new observational skill will be introduced after you have finished.

1 PETER 5:1-14

¹Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, ²shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. ⁵You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. ⁸Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. ¹⁰After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. ¹¹To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

¹²Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! ¹³She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, and so does my son, Mark. ¹⁴Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.

THEMES

List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage. _____

MY OBSERVATIONS

List at least one observation per verse in the space below.

vv 1-4

vv 5-8

vv 9-11

vv 12-14

OBSERVE

what do I see?

OBSERVATION SKILL: MAP THE PASSAGE

This week we will begin to **MAP THE PASSAGE**. This skill is a fantastic way to discover the author's intended meaning and flow of thought. It also will help you answer many of your interpretive questions. The first rule of mapping a passage is: **There is not one "right" way!** However you create your map, you should be able to discover the author's flow of thought by graphically laying out the passage. Before you complete the passage map on the next page, here are some rules to follow with examples from Ephesians 1:3-5 ...

1) First, identify the main subject and verb of the first sentence (These form the main clause of your sentence). Write the main clause at the top left of your paper. Think of your map as an outline: This would be your Roman number I.

1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

This is the main clause of Eph. 1:3

2. Continue writing the first sentence, placing any modifying phrases or words directly under the words they modify. A modifying phrase describes something in the main clause—how, why, when, to whom, etc. In an outline, this would be your first subheading.

1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ



who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing

"who" modifies, or is talking about, God in this sentence

3. If there are multiple modifiers (several phrases or words all talking about the same thing), line them up underneath each other, under the word or phrase they are modifying.

1:3 ... who has blessed us ...

4 just as He chose us ...

5 ... He predestined us ...

Both of the phrases in vv4-5 will have modifiers in your final map, but the phrases themselves should be lined up since they both modify God's act of blessing. This is like the a., b., c. in your outline.

4. Continue writing out the phrases in your sentence, each under whatever word(s) they modify, until you reach the end of the sentence or idea being discussed.

5. Your map will continue moving to the right of your paper until the author begins a new idea. At that point, you would put the next main clause back to the far left of your paper and begin at step one again. Ideally, you should be able to glance down to the left side of your paper and see the main ideas of the passage you are mapping.

6. As you work, box all connecting words, and note how they are being used.

1:4 just as He chose us ... (AS implies comparison)

MAP THE PASSAGE

INTERPRET

what does it mean?

INTERPRETATION SKILL: PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

PRINCIPLE #3 - LET SCRIPTURE INTERPRET SCRIPTURE

This week we will learn our last of three **PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION**. **Principle #3 - Let Scripture interpret Scripture.** Since God is unchangingly truthful and always consistent (John 17:17; Hebrews 3:6; James 1:17), we can, and should, expect the same of His Word. This has two practical applications:

1. **Check your conclusions.** Always compare your conclusions with the teachings of Scripture as a whole. If you find your interpretation of a passage contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture elsewhere, you probably need to revise your conclusions.
2. **Allow clear passages to illuminate ambiguous passages.** Whenever you encounter a passage that is confusing or open to multiple possible interpretations, use clearer passages of Scripture to guide you to the correct interpretation.

One last caution: remember that God revealed Scripture progressively, not all at once. Therefore, we should not be surprised by differences between how people related to and understood God at different times in the history of Scripture. For example, while Abraham needed only believe that God was faithful in order to be justified (Genesis 15:6), in the New Testament era, we must believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-7).

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

Create and answer any three of your own interpretation questions from this passage:

a.

b.

c.

How does Peter's exhortation to the elders in verses 1-4 relate back to the previous section (Hint: notice the "therefore")?

What principles for spiritual leadership do you find in verses 1-6? What motivations for leadership are to be carefully avoided? In what ways are leaders to be “examples” (cf. Ezekiel 34:1-22; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)?

Using the instructions on page 36, do a Greek word study of “crown” in verse 4 ...
What range of meanings can this word have in the New Testament?

What does it most likely mean here in 5:4?

How does the concept of “humility” weave throughout Peter’s discussion in verses 5-10?

How does Peter describe the person and activity of Satan in verses 8-9? How exactly are we to resist the devil’s attacks and methods (cf. Genesis 3:3-4; Job 1:6-12; James 4:7-10; Ephesians 6:10-20; 2 Corinthians 11:14)?

“In contemporary society our Adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry, and crowds. If he can keep us engaged in ‘muchness’ and ‘manyness’, he will rest satisfied.”
- Richard Foster

MY SUMMARY TITLE: _____

Use your own words to create a title that communicates the main idea of this week’s passage.

APPLY

how does it work?

This week's application section involves the same three steps as last week's, which we will continue to use throughout our study: reflect on your own life, list principles, and choose one to apply this week. It is often helpful when working through the second and third steps to consider the following list of questions:

- *Is there something to worship or thank God for?*
- *Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?*
- *Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?*
- *Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?*
- *Is there any relationship I need to work on?*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

As a leader or a follower, how does Jesus' example of humility in John 13:1-5 impact you?

In the last interpretive question, you identified a series of methods that Satan employs to tempt us. Which of these do you struggle with the most? How can you better resist him this week?

"Never forget that when we are dealing with any pleasure in its healthy and normal and satisfying form, we are, in a sense, on the Enemy's ground. I know we have won many a soul through pleasure. All the same, it is His invention, not ours. He made the pleasures: all our research so far has not enabled us to produce one. All we can do is to encourage the humans to take the pleasures which our Enemy has produced, at times, or in ways, or in degrees, which He has forbidden."

— Devil's training of apprentice demon in Screwtape Letters

LIST PRINCIPLES

List at least five principles from 1 Peter 5:1-14. Remember, a principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in the passage that is relevant to your own life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PLAN OF ACTION

Circle the one principle above you will seek to apply this week. Now create a plan to apply this principle by answering these two questions:

What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.

Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

MY NOTES

PUT IT BACK TOGETHER

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Review your memory verses for each of the previous lessons.

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| • 1:3 | • 2:21 | • 4:7-8 |
| • 1:14-15 | • 3:8-9 | • 4:14 |
| • 2:9 | • 3:17-18 | • 5:8-9 |

Before we get to the synthesis, one word of encouragement ... please realize how much you have grown as a student of God's Word through your study of 1 Peter! Each week, you've learned how to better observe, interpret, and apply the stories of Scripture. Those same three steps will serve you well as you continue to study God's story throughout the Bible. Continue to practice and refine these skills so that you become, "a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Now that you have studied the book of 1 Peter in detail, answer the following questions ...

Summarize what 1 Peter teaches us about the supremacy of Jesus Christ. List all of the reasons and resulting implications of Christ's supremacy found in 1 Peter below.

Summarize what 1 Peter teaches us about the sufficiency of Jesus Christ. List all of the reasons and resulting implications of Christ's sufficiency found in 1 Peter below.

SYNTHESIS

how does it all fit together?

During the past nine lessons, we have observed, interpreted, and applied the entire book of 1 Peter. That is no small task! Now it is time to draw our detailed study to a useful conclusion, a process known as **synthesis**. Our goal is to create an overall summary of the book of 1 Peter that we can quickly review any time in the future to remind us of the flow and content of the book.

OUTLINE THE BOOK

The first step of this synthesis is to CREATE YOUR OWN OUTLINE OF THE BOOK. Review the work you completed each week, especially the summary titles you created for each passage in the “My Summary Titles” section. Then, create your own brief outline on the next page. Feel free to use any outlining style, but here is an example of how you might start.

1. *Greeting (1:1-2)*
2. *Our Salvation (1:3-2:10)*
 - a. *Its praise (1:3-12)*
 - b. *Its products (1:13-25)*
 - c. *Its purposes (2:1-10)*

MY 1 PETER OUTLINE

SYNTHESIS

how does it all fit together?

The second step of this synthesis is to **RECORD WHAT YOU LEARNED OR WERE REMINDED OF**. This is more personal than your outline. Create a list of the theological truths and life lessons you have either learned for the first time or been reminded of from your study of 1 Peter.

As an example of a theological truth, you might write:

I was taught that all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Jesus.

An example of a life lesson would be:

This book reminded me that the church's goal is to present every man complete in Christ through a process that comes with great cost & struggle.

List at least ten theological truths and ten life lessons on this page that you learned from your study of 1 Peter, and record the verses where each is addressed.

THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS I'VE LEARNED

LIFE LESSONS I'VE LEARNED

The final step of this synthesis is to **PRAYERFULLY CHOOSE TWO APPLICATIONS TO PRACTICE**. These can be applications that you developed and began to practice during previous lessons, or you can create entirely new applications. Whatever your choice, two things must be true about them:

1. Both applications should touch on **areas of your life where you are currently in need of growth**. Do not choose “*be kind to others*” if this is already something you do very well.
2. Both should **be specific** with a clear plan for growth and the name of someone who will hold you accountable. “*Study the Word more*” is not sufficiently detailed. Instead, develop a specific plan such “*I will read through Romans this next month and write down my observations, interpretive questions, and applications in a journal. Steve will hold me accountable weekly.*”

APPLICATION #1

- Principle from 1 Peter:
- Verses where it's discussed:
- Plan of Action: *I will ...*

APPLICATION #2

- Principle from 1 Peter:
- Verses where it's discussed:
- Plan of Action: *I will ...*

SYNTHESIS

how does it all fit together?

MY NOTES

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principle you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow small group members.

APPENDIX

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

PRINCIPLE#1: YOUR GOAL IS TO DISCERN THE AUTHOR'S INTENDED MEANING TO THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCE. Unfortunately, most people begin their Bible study by asking, “What does this passage mean to me?” While there may be multiple possible applications to my life, there is only one meaning—the author’s intended meaning; and we must first seek this out. This involves three important steps.

1. Always **start your study with prayer**, asking the same God who composed Scripture through these ancient authors to give you insight to understand His intended meaning.
2. Be very careful to **avoid reading your 21st century circumstances and theological issues** into the text as they will skew your understanding.
3. Work diligently to see the text **from the point of view of the original readers**. To do this: [a] dig into the historical and cultural background using Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and [b] spend a few moments thinking about the original audience’s religious understanding by asking, “What books of the Bible did they have access to? What did they know about God? About Jesus? About salvation? Etc.”

PRINCIPLE #2 - ASSUME A “NORMAL” USE OF LANGUAGE. The Bible was given to us because God desired to communicate with us, not to hide Himself from us. Therefore, we should not be looking for “hidden” meanings as we study. Instead, we should use the “normal” techniques we would use to understand any piece of literature:

1. **Study the grammar.** For most of us, grammar isn’t our favorite thing. Yet, it really is helpful for understanding Scripture! Pay attention to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Think through any figures of speech. Observe how phrases and clauses are connected into sentences and how sentences are linked together into paragraphs.
2. **Remember that chapter divisions came later.** When Paul wrote Corinthians or Luke wrote the book of Acts, they wrote single, unified stories without verse or chapter divisions. These books were meant to be read just like you would read a letter or a novel. Always keep the overall story in mind as you study each passage.

PRINCIPLE #3 - LET SCRIPTURE INTERPRET SCRIPTURE. Since God is unchangingly truthful and always consistent (John 17:17; Hebrews 3:6; James 1:17), we can, and should, expect the same of His Word. This has two practical applications:

1. **Check your conclusions.** Always compare your conclusions with the teachings of Scripture as a whole. If you find that your interpretation of a passage contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture elsewhere, you probably need to revise your conclusions.
2. **Allow clear passages to illuminate ambiguous passages.** Whenever you encounter a passage that is confusing or open to multiple possible interpretations, use clearer passages of Scripture to guide you to the correct interpretation.

One last caution - remember that God revealed Scripture progressively, not all at once. Therefore, we should not be surprised by differences between how people related to and understood God at different times in the history of Scripture. For example, while Abraham needed only believe that God was faithful in order to be justified (Genesis 15:6), in the NT era, we must believe in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-7).

BONUS SKILL: CREATING LISTS

This skill involves identifying a key word, subject, person, place, or event in the passage and then listing every fact given about that word. For example, if you made a list on “God” from 2 Timothy 1, it might look like this:

GOD...

- 1. MADE PAUL AN APOSTLE BY HIS WILL (V1).**
- 2. GIVES GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE (V2).**
- 3. IS THE FATHER (V2).**
- 4. IS THANKED AND SERVED (V3).**
- 5. GIVES GIFTS (V6).**
- 6. DOESN'T GIVE SPIRIT OF TIMIDITY (V7).**
- 7. GIVES SPIRIT OF POWER, LOVE, AND SOUND MIND (V7).**
- 8. GIVES POWER FOR SUFFERING (V9).**
- 9. SAVED US (V9).**
- 10. CALLED US (V9).**

As you read this list, what jumps out at you? Perhaps you see that “God gives” is mentioned five times in this list. What a gracious and loving God we serve! You have discovered one of the characteristics of God: His generous grace toward men. By creating these lists, you will begin to see patterns of truth that you will want to study further. For example, this list about God may lead you to do a word study on give or find all the other references in Paul’s epistles to God’s giving nature. Furthermore, this list can now be used for meditation, to praise and worship God, to encourage others, and to proclaim the character of God to the lost.

One word of caution about lists, however. Just because you are able to create a list centered on a key word, such as “God” in 2 Timothy 1, does not mean that Paul’s main point in the passage is to talk about that key word. Paul’s emphasis in 2 Timothy 1, in fact, is not to discuss attributes about God; it is to encourage Timothy to press on in the ministry of the gospel. Make sure that before you create any lists, you complete the initial processes of observation: list themes, mark up the text, and record your most significant observations. However, after these initial tasks, creating lists is a great way to deepen your study of a passage!

DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES

One of the predominant themes throughout the book of 1 Corinthians is Paul's desire to present every man complete in Christ. It is important that we know the truth of the Bible and that our lives more and more begin to reflect Jesus Christ. Spiritual growth clearly involves study of God's word, but it also involves transformation of our character and life. This process is often called "discipleship" and refers to an intentional relationship between a mature believer and a younger believer, where the former trains the latter towards the goal of spiritual maturity. Paul's discipleship of Timothy (and Titus as well) is one of the greatest examples we have of this process in all of Scripture. And like Paul, we too can make a lasting impact for God's kingdom by spiritually reproducing ourselves in the lives of others.

Going through this Bible study was one of the best steps you could take to prepare you to disciple someone else because now you know how to explain and defend key biblical truths like the gospel, spiritual leadership, grace, and salvation. Just as important, you have now learned and practiced the basic method of Bible study - survey, observe, interpret, apply, synthesize. These are key steps towards spiritual maturity that you can now pass on to others! Where can you go from here to learn more about spiritual multiplication? Here are a few helpful resources:

THE MASTER PLAN OF EVANGELISM by Robert Coleman

This is a highly motivational analysis of Jesus' own principles of evangelism and discipleship.

THE LOST ART OF DISCIPLE MAKING by Leroy Eims

This very practical resource will give you a detailed structure to follow and great content to cover as you begin to disciple a new believer.

A SURVEY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE by Charles Ryrie

This is not a book about discipleship. It is, instead, an easy-to-read, relatively short systematic theology primer that you can walk a new believer through to ground them in the faith.

ESSENTIALS OF THE FAITH by Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX

This small group Bible study packet walks a new believer through the fundamental truths and practices of the Christian faith in ten self-paced lessons.

