
1 Peter

Author: Peter

Notice how Peter began his ministry as a bold, brash, in-your-face leader and concluded his ministry as a wise, winsome, convictional influencer.

Ambassadors

Believers are ambassadors in a hostile foreign land. We are to behave in ways that honor the One we represent.

Christ-like Suffering

The book of **1 Peter** is Peter's encouragement to early Jewish believers who were scattered far from their land (**1:1-2**). He wanted to help them understand and benefit from Christ-like suffering (**1:6-7, 2:18-21, 3:14-18, 4:12-19, 5:6-10**).

Peter's letter gives practical instruction and encouragement for believers who suffer trials or live in conflict with their culture.

Personal Reflection and Application

Read **1 Peter 1:3**. Notice how Peter blesses God. We should be truly amazed and thankful for God's mercy. We should be thanking and praising Him often. Try praying back the following scriptures to God: **1 Chronicles 29:13** and **Psalms 86:5**.

We are to hunger for God's Word as a baby hungers for milk. That's how we grow. Read **1 Peter 2:1-3**. Do you have a sincere desire to know and apply God's Word? Notice "if" in verse 3. Only **if** you have accepted Christ as Savior will you experience this hungering. Pray back **Psalms 9:10** to God and seek Him wholeheartedly.

There are two opposing lives and lifestyles that Peter mentions in **1 Peter 4:1-6**. Read this and ask yourself "which of these does my life reflect?"

In **1 Peter 4:1-11**, Peter describes four attitudes that can help us make the best use of the time God has given us. List those attitudes in the following table.

<i>toward</i>	<i>attitude should be</i>
sin (1Pet 4:1-3)	
the lost (1Pet 4:4-6)	
toward Christ (1Pet 4:7)	
toward other believers (1Pet 4:8-11)	

When you suffer, it may be because you disobey God or it may be because you are a faithful representative of Christ (**1Pet 4:15-18**). Your response to the suffering should be different depending on the cause. What is the appropriate response in each case? Write your thoughts in the table below.

<i>cause</i>	<i>appropriate response</i>
disobeyed God	
was faithful to Christ	

When you experience suffering, take a self-exam based on **1Peter 4:15-18**.

- ▶ Why am I suffering? Is it because I have disobeyed God or because I am suffering for Christ?
- ▶ Am I ashamed or am I glorifying Christ?
- ▶ Am I seeking to win the lost?

Read **1Peter 5:8-10**. Satan desires to destroy your testimony. Peter warns us to be alert and determined to stand firmly leaning on God. What can you do to increase your level of vigilance?

Small Group Conversation Guide

Peter begins by stating that we have a “living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (**1Peter 1:3**). When you hear of this “living hope” what do you think? What emotions stir in you? How can hope be living? Discuss this in your group.

While on earth, we have just the down payment of the Holy Spirit. It’s like putting something on lay away. Read **1Peter 1:4-7**. It’s difficult to imagine how wonderful it will be to get our full inheritance in heaven. In the meantime, we have those annoying trials of life here on earth. Though they are not enjoyable, they do serve a purpose. They test the genuineness of our faith. When you face trials, you have two options. You can let your trials DEFINE you or you can allow them to REFINE you. Discuss these options in light of this passage.

Imagine yourself laying aside an old piece of clothing [stained, frayed, faded] in exchange for a new one [clean, comfortable, attractive]. Peter advises us to lay aside the evil ways of the world and seek nourishment through the Word of God (**1Pet 2:1-3**).

- ▶ Discuss the behaviors that Peter describes in verse 1 and how they are likely to affect your relationships with other people.

- ▶ What would it take for you to crave the Word of God as much as a newborn craves milk?

Do you ever wonder where you fit? If you have accepted Christ as Savior, you are a living stone in a spiritual house (**1Pet 2:4-10**). That means there’s a place for you. Have you begun to explore what gifts God has given you and how you can use them to serve others and the church? Ask those in your group what gifts they have noticed in you. Consider which ministry opportunities may match your gifts.

Read **1Peter 2:11-12**. Since their real home is in heaven, believers are like strangers in a strange land. All these worldly temptations fight against our souls (**Rom 7:22-23**). Besides fighting to protect our own souls, what is the other reason Peter gives for godly behavior? Also see **Matt 5:16**.

According to **1Peter 2:13-15**, God’s plan is for believers to be submissive to laws and those in authority.

- ▶ Discuss whether it is easier to be submissive or be responsible for the welfare of another person.
- ▶ Think about all aspects of your daily life. To whom should you be submissive?

1Pet 5:6
Eph 5:21
Jas 1:22
Eph 6:1-3

▶ How does being submissive please God?

Read **1Peter 4:8-9**. Love covering a multitude of sins doesn't mean we ignore sin. It does mean we are patient to restore those who slip. Read **Galatians 6:1**.

For WOMEN ONLY: Peter says that your beauty must not be "merely outward...rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God" (**1Peter 3:3-4**). Discuss the meaning of this verse. How does it give you a fresh perspective on how God sees your beauty?

In **1Peter 5:8-9**, Peter warns us that Satan desires to destroy our testimony.

- ▶ What does Peter mean when he says, "be sober"?
- ▶ How does Peter describe the devil?
- ▶ Who is the devil seeking?
- ▶ Peter does NOT tell us to attack the devil. What does Peter tell us to do instead?

What types of dangers does the devil send our way? Fill in the following table.

Rom 16:17
Mat 26:41
Luke 12:15
Heb 2:1
1Pet 3:10

Leadership Principles from 1Peter

Set Apart

God wants to have complete control of your mind. Read **1Peter 1:13-16**. Consider how you can apply the following four suggestions for being a leader who is set apart from the crowd.

Gird your Mind prepare your mind	You answer to God [Job 38:3 and Eph 6:14].
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Give your Attention "be sober"	Pay attention to what's happening and cry out to God when you get off track [1The 5:6 and 1Pet 5:8].
Guard your Heart "rest your hope"	The more you focus on your future inheritance, the more joy you will have [Rom 15:12-13 and Php 4:7].
Guide your Lifestyle behave to please God	Every step you take toward becoming like Christ pleases Him [1The 2:12 and Eph 6:6].

Steward of Your Gifts

What is the purpose of the gifts God has given you? Read **1Peter 4:10-11**. What can you do to be certain you are being a good steward of the gifts God has given you?

Practice What You Preach

Peter could speak credibly about persecutions because he endured them himself. He **practiced** what he **preached** (**1Pet 4:12-14**). In **Acts 5** we can see how he suffered for his faith. **Acts 12** reports his imprisonment. Eventually, the Romans crucified him upside down instead of right-side up. Peter's message is more reliable because he backed it up with his life. Leader, do others take your requests seriously? If not, check your life to see if you are doing what you ask others to do. Do you have credibility?

Not About You

Read **1Peter 5:1-2** and compare to **John 21:16**. Notice the growth Peter had made as a leader. Valid reasons for being a leader are because you want to do God's will and because you want to please Him. It's not about you. What is your reason for being a leader? Now read **1Peter 5:3-4**. What should characterize your interaction with those under your care?

Good Role Model

There will be times when you influence others (leadership). Peter tells us to serve as good role models and not treat those in our care harshly (**1Pet 5:2-3**).

- ▶ Have you ever had someone "in charge" treat you unfairly or harshly? What thoughts and feelings did you have in that circumstance?
- ▶ Have you ever been "in charge" of a person or group? Did you enjoy the experience? Why/why not? Were you a good role model?
- ▶ What is a reason you might want to be a leader?

Earn a Reward?

If you serve the Lord well as a leader, what reward does Peter say you will earn (**1Pet 5:4**)? What is special about the reward?

Cooperate

Sometimes a leader's job is more difficult because the followers do not cooperate. What does Peter advise us to do as we interact with leaders (**1Pet 5:5-7**)?

Something to Find in Each Chapter

01. Why we are to cultivate a holy heart and conduct	04. Why we should not think it strange to suffer
02. What people need to grow spiritually	05. What attitudes Christian leaders should cultivate
03. What question we should be prepared to answer	