



a

AUTUMN
RIDGE
CHURCH

FIRST PETER

A STUDY GUIDE

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
GROUP ROSTER & MEETING DATES	4
HELPFUL SMALL GROUP INFO	5
HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE	6
FIRST MEETING PRAYER REQUESTS	7
INTRODUCTION TO THE 1 PETER SERIES	8
1 Peter week 1 February 4-5	10
1 Peter week 2 February 11-12	16
1 Peter week 3 February 18-19	22
1 Peter week 4 February 25-26	28
1 Peter week 5 March 4-5	34
1 Peter week 6 March 11-12	40
1 Peter week 7 March 18-19	46
1 Peter week 8 March 25-26	52
Appendix A	58
Appendix B	59
Appendix C	60
Appendix D	61
Appendix E	62
End Notes.	63

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®.
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan.

Copyright © 2023 by Autumn Ridge Church. All rights reserved.

Welcome! We are delighted to engage in a great study of 1 Peter with you. This letter in the Bible is as full of hope and practical wisdom for us today as when Peter wrote it to the suffering Christians in his day. We trust it will be a great encouragement to you.

This study guide is a gift we are excited to give the small group ministry of Autumn Ridge. We pray God will use it to enhance your small group experience while strengthening your understanding and application of Scripture.

I want to express sincere gratitude to the ARC Communications Department for their creative work on this study guide, and to the volunteers who contributed thoughts and helpful feedback. I also wish to thank Pastor Rick Henderson for his leadership and direction through this series, and my husband, Steve Merry, for his supportive contributions.

We commit this study to God, trusting in His strength, “so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.”
(1 Peter 4:11)

Svea Merry
Spiritual Formation Pastor
Winter 2023

GROUP ROSTER & DATES

Name	Phone	Email

SERMON DATE	1 PETER PASSAGE	MEETING DATE/TIME
NONE	FELLOWSHIP WEEK	
Feb 4-5	1:1-5	
Feb 11-12	1:6-25	
Feb 18-19	2:1-10	
Feb 25-26	2:11-25	
Mar 4-5	3:1-7	
Mar 11-12	3:8-22	
Mar 18-19	4:1-19	
Mar 25-26	5:1-14	

HELPFUL SMALL GROUP INFO

BEFORE THE STUDY BEGINS

The 1 Peter sermons and study begin during the weekend of Feb 4/5, but your group may want to meet prior to that. Your small group experience will benefit from taking opportunities from time to time to get to know each other better and to enjoy fellowship that deepens friendships.

IF YOUR GROUP IS NEW

We highly encourage you to meet a week prior to the beginning of the study to get to know each other. You may enjoy finding out a bit about each other such as how long you've attended Autumn Ridge, what brought you to Rochester, and how you'd describe your faith background in 3-4 sentences. It may also be helpful to discuss the hopes each person has for this small group experiences.

IF YOUR GROUP HAS BEEN TOGETHER A LITTLE WHILE

You'll still benefit from taking a week to get to know each other better. You may want to share what you have most valued in your small group so far, look through the series overview on page 9, and discuss which passages/topics most excite or intimidate you. Prepare for this material by discussing your thoughts on how emotional health relates to spiritual health.

HEALTHY SMALL GROUPS

- Deepen spiritual friendships
- Encourage each other to live out their faith
- Support each other through prayer and care

HEALTHY SMALL GROUP PARTICIPANTS

- Commit to attending
- Join in the discussion and listen well to others
- Are real about their thoughts and feelings
- Seek to care for others

HEALTHY SMALL GROUP LEADERS

- Provide a safe and welcoming atmosphere
- Facilitate good discussion
- Prompt everyone to take a next step in their faith

HOW TO BE A GREAT SMALL GROUP MEMBER

BE DEPENDABLE

I commit to make our gathering a priority. If there are times when I absolutely cannot come, I will let you know.

BE HONORABLE

I commit to make our group a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick fixes or snap judgements). Unless someone's health or safety is at risk, I will honor anything that is shared by keeping it confidential.

BE TRUSTING

I commit to have a positive attitude when you encourage me to be transparent and to take a next step in my faith. I trust that when you are seeking to help me grow, it's because you want something better for me.

BE CARING

I commit to care about the needs in our group. I will pray for you when I say I will and follow through on needs I agree to meet, whether it is providing snacks or supporting you in times of difficulty.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

BRING THIS GUIDE WITH YOU TO CHURCH EACH WEEKEND

There are dedicated places for you to record questions or thoughts from the sermon that you'd like to discuss with your group.

BEFORE YOUR SMALL GROUP MEETS, LOOK THROUGH THE BIBLE PASSAGE MATERIAL AND QUESTIONS

Though completing homework is not required for this study, your discussion will be richer if you've familiarized yourself with the week's passage. The optional personal study will get you thinking about the key points in each passage. While these questions are not intended for small group discussion, they will enhance your understanding and transformational experience.

BRING THIS GUIDE WITH YOU TO YOUR SMALL GROUP GATHERING

Discussion questions are provided for each week. As your group works through these questions, we believe that your comprehension and application of this Scripture and its concepts will be greatly strengthened.

There is also a page included each week for you to record your groups prayer requests and other needs. And new with this study, there is a place for you to update prayer requests with God's answers so that you can delight to see God working in the lives of the people in your group.



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR PASTOR RICK'S WEEKLY VIDEO

This brief introductory video for your small group gathering will be available just prior to the associated weekend service.

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK, USE WHAT YOU'VE RECORDED HERE TO STAY MINDFUL OF YOUR INTENTIONS

Reviewing what you've written will help you achieve your goals for what you'd like to apply to your daily life and will help you be a great small group member, as you faithfully pray for and follow up on the needs within your group.

PRAYER & CARE NOTES



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



THEME VERSE

*"But you are a chosen people,
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation,
God's special possession,
that you may declare the praises
of him who called you
out of darkness
into his wonderful light."*

1 Peter 2:9

SERIES THESIS

Your identity
drives your activity.

Passage:	Sermon Date:
1 Peter 1:1-5	Feb 4-5
1 Peter 1: 6–25	Feb 11-12
1 Peter 2:1–10	Feb 18-19
1 Peter 2:11–25	Feb 25-26
1 Peter 3:1–7	Mar 4-5
1 Peter 3:8–22	Mar 11-12
1 Peter 4:1–19	Mar 18-19
1 Peter 5:1–14	Mar 25-26

OVERVIEW

This letter was written by the apostle Simon Peter about 30 years after he became known as one of Jesus’s most impulsive, yet dearest, disciples. Jesus gave him both the name Peter (which means rock) and the honor of being the rock on which the church would be built (Matt 16:18). This letter displays the fruit of Peter’s three decades of ministry, spreading and deepening the impact of the gospel. Martin Luther called 1 Peter, “one of the noblest books in the New Testament”¹ claiming it contains all that is necessary for someone to know about how to live out the Christian life in an unbelieving society.

1 Peter offers examples of how we as believers in Christ engage culture, at times rejecting it, at times accommodating it, and at times transforming it. Its message is as relevant and thought-provoking today as it was for the original audience. Peter encourages Christians to view themselves as foreigners in society, and because of that, to not be surprised when we experience tension, even suffering, over conflicts between secular culture and our lives as followers of Jesus. Through it all, though, we have a living hope in Christ who has called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light as his chosen ones, and because of the identity we have in him, we would live in such a way that proclaims his excellency.

Week 1
SERMON THOUGHTS
FEBRUARY 4-5





*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,
To God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia,
Asia and Bithynia, 2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the
Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and
sprinkled with his blood:*

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

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

Week 1

COMMENTARY



Peter is writing this letter about 30 years after he followed Jesus as his disciple. After Jesus left, Peter served as the leader of the early church and watched the gospel explode throughout the region. This letter reveals his pastoral heart in his later years for God's people. He wants them to deeply understand their identity in Christ and how that impacts life. He wrote this to followers of Jesus across a wide region in what is now modern-day Turkey, intending for it to be shared freely. Its message is as relevant today as it was in the First Century.

This first passage introduces a key theme in Peter's letter: As God's chosen people, we are like foreign exiles in society. Drawing an analogy with Jewish exiles, Peter says as Christians we should think of ourselves like God's people of the old covenant who were scattered foreigners. In the opening sentence of his letter, Peter introduces a concept of Christian identity based first on relationship to God and then on relationship to the world.

Peter calls his readers God's elect meaning they are of God's chosen people. To be elect does not mean we are morally superior to others, but that, as verse 2 reveals, we were chosen by the foreknowledge of God, made holy by the Spirit, and called to live obediently to Jesus Christ because of the salvation he obtained for us. The encouragement Peter offers is based on these opening verses that being a foreigner in society is the result of being chosen to receive new birth in God's family.

Believers have a living hope and an inheritance that will be fully attained at the final revelation of Jesus Christ. Until then, we should expect that our Christian faith will bring us into conflict with the culture in which we live. This conflict causes us to struggle through various difficulties, not in spite of following Christ, but because of following Christ. We can be encouraged by this, though, because suffering for Christ is evidence of our faith. After all, we would not suffer for him if we did not believe him.

Our new birth in Christ is a remarkable thing. Generally speaking, people receive their citizenship and ethnic identity from their biological parents. But Christians born of God have a new citizenship and identity in God's kingdom that redefines their relationship with society and transforms how they interact with the world.

1. Peter (originally named Simon) identifies himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. If Peter's biography isn't fresh in your mind, skim the following passages from the Gospel of Matthew for a "highlight reel" of Peter's days with Jesus: Matt 4:18–20; 14:22–31; 16:13–23; 17:1–8; 26:31–56, 69–75; and finish with John chapter 21.

2. There are three important phrases in verse 2 that clarify the concept of being God's chosen people. According to this verse:
 - a. We were chosen according to:

 - b. Through the sanctifying work of:

 - c. To be obedient to:

3. Verses 3–4 reveal that God, in His great mercy, has given us "a new birth" into a living hope and an inheritance. What detail in verse 3 makes our hope a "living" hope? What do you understand by this?

4. Describe what you learn in verses 4–5 about the inheritance that is waiting for us.

5. How does our living hope and inheritance impact our life now?

Week 1

PERSONAL STUDY



1. **Icebreaker question:** Have you ever spent time in a foreign country?
What were some surprising or disorienting things about living cross-culturally?

2. How does thinking of ourselves as foreign exiles in society change the way we might interact with our culture?

3. Verse 2 contains incredible truths about our identity as God's "elect."
 - 1) We were chosen because of the foreknowledge of God,
 - 2) we are made holy in the Spirit (rather than because of what we do), and
 - 3) we obey Jesus Christ because we were saved by his blood (ie. his death and resurrection). How should these truths shape the way we view ourselves?

4. Why do you think Peter felt it important for suffering Christians to understand that they have a secure spiritual inheritance guaranteed for them?
How could this same good news encourage us today too?

5. What is your biggest takeaway this week from these verses and/or the sermon?

Week 1
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



Week 1
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 2
SERMON THOUGHTS
FEBRUARY 11-12





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

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Be Holy

13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

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

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

“All people are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall,
25 but the word of the Lord endures forever.”
And this is the word that was preached to you.

Week 2

COMMENTARY



Last week we saw the good news that as followers of Jesus our identity is secure in what He has done for us. We have a living hope and an inheritance awaiting us, because of our new birth in God's family.

Verses 6–9 explain our identity in Christ will cause us to suffer and be grieved, but there is great hope—living hope—in such suffering: it is an opportunity for joy. It's an opportunity for joy because it can deepen our faith and confirm the salvation awaiting us in the end. Peter wants us to keep this at the forefronts of our minds because what we believe about the future shapes how we live in the present. This truth enables us to live joyfully in the present, particularly when we're in conflict with our culture.

Verses 10–12 give us a glimpse into Peter's excitement over the implications of our salvation. He writes with the heart of a pastor, wanting us to understand how fortunate we are as those who received salvation after knowing the facts of Christ Jesus's death and resurrection, rather than speculating about it beforehand as the prophets did. We are so fortunate that even the angels are fascinated. Theologian Scot McKnight says of this fun detail in verse 12, "The angels are brought in here, not to invite us to speculate about their activities, but to press on our minds the privileges of salvation; neither the prophets nor the angels experience what the church assumes and enjoys. It is so great that even the angels are looking down to gain a view, like wedding attendees attempting to steal a glance at the bride before her appearance."²

Our series thesis, "Your identity drives your activity" is apparent in the rest of chapter 1. If verses 1–12 helped us see our identity as people of hope, verses 13–25 encourage us to live as people who are holy. Again, Peter reminds us in verse 13 that by preparing our minds and setting our hope fully on the grace to come at the revelation of Jesus Christ that by remaining fixed on our future hope, we have the right mindset to live in the here and now.

As verse 15 and 16 call us to holy living, it is important to understand that to be holy means to be "set apart." Your grandmother's china plates are holy compared to the everyday dishes that you put your PB&J on. Likewise, our status in God leads us to be holy, or set apart, for him. We are not to conduct ourselves as we may have done before coming to faith in Christ, we are to live in light of our privileged status as God's chosen ones and conduct ourselves accordingly. Yet read verses 13–16 through the lens of verses 17–21: we are not made holy by what we do, but because of what Christ did for us. We act holy because of who we are in God, NOT that we are who we are in God because of how we act.

The final verses in chapter 1 give us a specific command for how we are to live: we are to love one another deeply, from the heart. This command to love each other applies in good times and in hard, in the First Century and today. It's Peter's reminder to us of The Greatest Commandment: to love God and to love neighbor (Luke 10:27).

1. What benefits to suffering does Peter want us to realize in verses 6–9?
2. Peter was one of Jesus’s three closest disciples, and yet he denied even knowing Jesus when pressed by his persecutors. In light of that, read verse 8 and ponder what might have been in Peter’s heart as he wrote this to people suffering for their faith.
3. What do you see in verses 6–12 that can strengthen our hope?
4. What do you see in verses 13–25 that encourages us to be holy (ie. to live as people who have been set apart for God)?
5. In verses 22–25, we’re reminded that the word of God and its truths and promises last forever. How does keeping our minds on God’s word help us to obey this command to love each other well?

Week 2

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 2
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. What point from the sermon was most impactful to you this week?
2. How has your faith been affected by the trials you've faced?
3. Notice the powerful detail in verse 6 that says, "you may have had to suffer grief" (NIV translation) or "if necessary, you have been grieved" (ESV translation). How do you react to the idea that there is suffering for the sake of Christ that may be necessary?
4. Does knowing that our identity in Christ is secure, not because of what we do but because of what He did, impact how you choose to act? How should it?
5. The final point of chapter 1 is that we are to love one another deeply. Does this seem like a fitting conclusion to chapter 1 to you? Why or why not?

Week 2
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 3
SERMON THOUGHTS
FEBRUARY 18-19





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

4 As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For in Scripture it says:

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

7 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,
“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”

8 and,
“A stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”

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

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

Week 3

COMMENTARY



The first verses of chapter 2 contain the imperative to “crave pure spiritual milk.” Like a newborn baby greedily gulping away, Peter wants us to consume the things of God with equivalent desperation. By spiritual milk, Peter means that which feeds our spiritual formation. These are things such as growing in our knowledge of God, prayer, gospel application, faithful obedience to all that Jesus taught, and living out the truths in God’s word as we serve Him and others. In doing these things, we’ll shed the ungodly behaviors of verse 1 because of the excellent motivation of verse 3.

Christians who know who they are in Christ (see week 1) and crave the spiritual things that are life-giving are people God uses to build His church, His spiritual house. Peter quotes the Old Testament book of Isaiah in verses 6–8 as a reference to the Jews who did not recognize Jesus as Messiah when he was with them, but instead, they rejected him; they “tripped” over him.

However, as followers of Jesus, we are God’s chosen people, his royal priesthood, a holy nation, His special possession. These four phrases are not random. These are Old Testament descriptions of Israel (cf. Ex. 19:6; Isa. 43:20–21), now applied to followers of Jesus Christ, demonstrating that the church as a whole is the fulfillment and continuation of Israel. We are the living stones he is using to build his church.

As God’s people, we have an incredibly privileged position, even if it doesn’t always feel that way because of our tensions with the society around us. But this tension does not need to frustrate or overwhelm us. Just the opposite. Because of our identity in Christ, there is purpose in life as we overflow with praise for God’s bringing us out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

1. Chapter 2 starts with the word therefore, building on what was said in chapter 1. Look back over the past two weeks and record the main ideas of chapter 1 to help you correctly understand chapter 2.
2. Psalm 34 first uses the phrase “taste and see that the Lord is good” that Peter echoes here in verse 3. What does it mean to “taste” the Lord?
3. Look closely at the “the living Stone” (ie. Jesus) in verse 4. In what three ways is Jesus, the living stone, described?
4. Peter continues his “stone” metaphor with quotes from the Old Testament. Knowing that he is referring to Jesus, what observations can you make about our Lord from these verses?
5. Romans 11 may answer some questions about God’s original chosen people (ie. Israel) and our inclusion in His plan. After skimming this chapter, does it add to your recognition of the privileged position we have as God’s chosen people?

Week 3

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 3
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. In verse 2 Peter encourages us to “crave pure spiritual milk” to feed us in our spiritual growth. What increases your appetite for the things of God?
2. In verse 4, Peter describes “the living Stone” (ie. Jesus) as one who was rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him. In verse 5, we, as believers, are likened to him as living stones. Peter’s original readers, who were suffering greatly on account of their faith in Christ, likely felt validated and comforted by this. How do you react to it?
3. How might you update the way you live after having thought about 1 Peter 2:9, our theme verse for this series?
4. The end of 1 Peter 2:9 says that God’s people declare His praises for bringing us out of darkness and into light. Express your praise to God and share with your group at least one way that He has brought you from darkness to light.
5. Reflecting on this passage and message, what have you gained from this that has positively affected your identity this week? Your activity?

Week 3
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 4
SERMON THOUGHTS
FEBRUARY 25-26





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

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. 16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. 17 Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

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

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

23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 24 "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." 25 For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Week 4

COMMENTARY



This passage has much to say about how our identity as God’s “set apart” people drives our actions in the society around us. As you read these verses, remember this helpful principle from theologian/commentator/seminary professor Scot McKnight: “The entire sweep of the Bible teaches that Christians in non-Christian environments are not to be worried so much about changing their environments as they are to remain faithful in whatever kind of environment they find themselves.”³ This does not mean we shouldn’t seek to improve our environment for good, but our primary concern should be sharing our faith with the world, rather than changing the world to fit our faith.

Verses 11-12 are a key expansion of the book’s theme verse (2:9) recalling both our identity as foreigners and exiles and the resulting drive to live as ambassadors for Jesus Christ in our world. Could there be any greater motivation to live well than to be known as people of such goodness that our behavior causes people to recognize and give glory to God?! Scholars disagree whether Peter intends the end result to be that the people observing believers would themselves come to faith themselves on the day they recognize that God has visited them, or if he means that on an eventual judgment day suffering believers will be vindicated. Either way, Peter encourages us to live holy lives and let God control the outcome.

This sets the stage for interpreting the rest of the passage. Over the rest of chapter 2 and 3, Peter applies this principle to the “Household Code”—the common roles that people had in their culture. Similar Household Code applications are also found in Paul’s writings (cf. Eph 5:22–6:9; Col 3:18–4:1; Titus 2:1–10). Peter’s comments about how to regard government authorities in verses 13–17 are his first application of what it means to live a holy life as an exile in our own society. He sums it up well in verse 17: Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

The verses about slavery should grieve us as we recognize this form of suffering present among Peter’s audience. To be clear, the Bible does not condone slavery. Exodus 21:16 and 1 Tim 1:9–10 issue stern warnings against slave trading. Slavery was an unjust reality in Peter’s day, as it is in any other time. His words here do not condone abusive behavior. Rather, they empower believers to rise above it. Rather than meeting evil and unjust treatment with equivalent evil, believers can put their abusers to shame by their blamelessness. The best example of this is our Lord Jesus Christ. We are reminded in verses 21–25 that he suffered innocently and powerfully to accomplish our salvation. How comforting to remember that when we suffer for His sake, our sweet Shepherd understands and empathizes deeply with us.

1. In verses 13 and 15, what reasons does Peter give us for submitting to governing authorities?
2. How does this impact the way we show respect for the government?
3. List some Old Testament characters as examples of godly believers who influenced rulers because of their goodness. (If you aren't sure offhand, it's ok to do some internet research.)
4. Look closely at verse 17 and write a sentence for each phrase about how you might apply this in your own context this week.
5. What wisdom do you see in verse 23 that could be a practical tool for handling conflict?

Week 4

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 4
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. Have you ever been drawn to someone you wholeheartedly disagree with simply because of their kind, charitable behavior?
2. How do you find the strength to extend respect and goodness to people who do not treat you well?
3. Verse 17 is an important framework for how we relate to others. Which phrase of this verse do you feel you need to work on improving the most?
4. What point from the sermon challenged you most?
5. Identify a situation in your life where you could model such Christlikeness that it could compel nonbelievers to recognize God in you. Share your intent with your group if it is reasonable for you to do so.

Week 4
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 5
SERMON THOUGHTS
MARCH 4-5





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

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

Week 5

COMMENTARY



At first glance, it may seem this passage is about marriage, it really isn't. It is a continuation of the principle that our identity as God's chosen people drives our activity in all interactions. It's helpful to understand that the Bible was not originally broken into chapters and verses, and this letter we call 1 Peter was continuous in form like any letter we'd write today. This week's passage is deeply embedded in Peter's thoughts about submission which begins in 2:13–25 and concludes in 3:8–12.

In chapter 2, we saw Peter's encouragement to live in such a godly way that it could positively influence rulers and abusive masters. In chapter 3, he addresses Christian women married to non-Christian men (a rather common occurrence in Peter's time because Christianity was so liberating for women compared to other cultures) with the same idea: let your inner behavior, rather than your outward appearance, be so compelling that your husband is drawn to Christ in you.

This passage is easy to misunderstand because of Peter's citing of Sarah as a specific example. But if we do the work of proper Bible study, we can understand what he means. When he praises Sarah as the model of a godly, submissive wife where she called her husband "lord," it is crucial to understand the context of this reference. This does not happen in a place where Sarah acted submissively to ungodly things to which Abraham subjected her. Rather, the only time that Scripture records her calling Abraham "lord" is in Gen 18:12. Here Sarah laughed in response to overhearing God tell Abraham that they'd have a biological child together even though they were in their 90s. Sarah's example of submission was to the unexplainable power of God in her marriage. When she "did right and did not give way to fear," it was when she trusted God's plan for her life and marriage. So, wives who are living with non-Christian spouses should trust God to do what only He can do and simply focus on letting the light of Christ shine through their godly behavior without fear because God is at work.

Peter then speaks to the Christian husbands, calling them to demonstrate loving empathy for their wives. He makes it clear that men and women are co-equal heirs in God's gracious gift of life - a tremendous statement of role and status equality for women in that day- so the reference to women as the "weaker partner" cannot refer to her identity, status, or role. Rather, take his words at face value. In general, women are physically weaker than men, and so husbands are called to be compassionately understanding with their wives and not expect them to match strength for strength, a relevant factor in First Century living conditions. Husbands are given an extra warning if they fail to accommodate their wife's reality: their unbending behavior may result in their prayers being hindered.

1. Read 1 Peter 3:1–9, and review 2:13–25 from last week. From each paragraph (2:13–17; 2:18–25; 3:1; 3:7; and look ahead to 3:8–9), identify who is called to submission. Based on what you’ve observed in the text, is submission tied to class or gender?
2. In 1 Peter 3:1–6, what is the desired result of a wife’s behavior? Why might this win an unbelieving husband to Christ? Have you seen this happen?
3. What are your thoughts on the connection between doing what is right and not giving in to fear?
4. Peter’s description of women as the “weaker” vessel is not meant to be insulting. Note what you see from other verses that use this very same word: 1 Corinthians 9:22, 1 Corinthians 12:22, and Mark 14:38.
5. Peter instructed husbands to make the application “in the same way” as he just directed wives and slaves and gives a stern warning. Look up Isaiah 1:15 to see another example of when God may hinder the prayers of someone. What additional insight does this provide?

Week 5

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 5
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. Building on 1 Peter 2, chapter 3 encourages us to live in such a way that compels others to want to know Jesus too. What advantages and disadvantages are there to this style of evangelism?
2. It is implied that Sarah did not give way to fear because she learned to hope in God. Trusting God is essential for us too! Read Deuteronomy 31:8; Psalm 34:4–7; Isaiah 26:3–4; and/or 1 Peter 5:6–7. How do these verses encourage you in a specific fear you face?
3. Did this week's study and/or message change the way you viewed this passage if you had been familiar with it before?
4. How does the instruction given to husbands correspond to what is given to wives? Do you think these actions are gender exclusive?
5. What is your biggest takeaway from this week?

Week 5
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 6
SERMON THOUGHTS
MARCH 11-12





8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. 9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. 11 They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

13 Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? 14 But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." 15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 17 For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. 19 After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—20 to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

COMMENTARY



1 Peter 3:8–17 presents an inspiring picture of suffering well for Christ and continues the emphasis of living in a way that reveals Christ in us.

Determining what Peter meant in 3:18–22 is a notorious challenge in biblical studies, but the underlying point is clear. Jesus suffered for our sake, was victorious over death, and reigns at the right hand of God the Father. Peter emphasizes that though we suffer, our belief in Christ’s death and resurrection, which we identify with through the symbol of baptism, affirms we are saved and will be with God in the end. That said, many of us who enjoy Bible study like to understand all we can about tough passages. Theologian Thomas Schreiner offers the following explanation of what it means that Jesus spoke to imprisoned spirits:

“There is much debate about the identity of these spirits. The term “spirit” can mean either human spirits or angels, depending on the context. Among the three common interpretations, the first two fit best with the rest of Scripture and with orthodox Christian doctrine. These are:

(1) The first interpretation understands “spirits” as the unsaved (human spirits) of Noah’s day. Christ, “in the spirit” (3:18), proclaimed the gospel “in the days of Noah” through Noah. The unbelievers who heard Christ’s preaching “did not obey” and are now suffering judgment (they are “spirits in prison,” v. 19). Several reasons support this view: (a) Peter calls Noah a “herald of righteousness” (2 Pet. 2:5), where

“herald” represents “preacher,” which corresponds to “proclaim” in 1 Pet. 3:19. (b) Peter says the “Spirit of Christ” was speaking through the OT prophets (1:11); thus Christ could have been speaking through Noah as an OT prophet. (c) The context indicates that Christ was preaching through Noah, who was in a persecuted minority, and God saved Noah, which is similar to the situation in Peter’s time: Christ is now preaching the gospel through Peter to a persecuted minority, and God will save them.

(2) In the second interpretation, the spirits are fallen angels cast into hell to await final judgment. Reasons supporting this: (a) Some interpreters say the “sons of God” in Gen. 6:2–4 are angels who sinned by cohabiting with human women “when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah” (3:20). (b) Almost without exception in the NT, “spirits” refers to supernatural beings rather than people. (c) “Prison” is not used elsewhere in Scripture as a place of punishment after death for human beings, while it is used for Satan (Rev. 20:7) and other fallen angels (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). In this case the message Christ proclaimed is almost certainly one of triumph, after having been “put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit” (3:18).

(3) In a third view, some have advocated the idea that Christ offered a second chance of salvation to those in hell. This interpretation is in direct contradiction with other Scripture (cf. Luke 16:26; Heb. 9:27) and the rest of 1 Peter and must be rejected on biblical and theological grounds, leaving either of the first two views as the most likely interpretation.^{4”}

1. Peter quotes Psalm 34:12–16 in verses 10–12. How does this beautiful psalm illustrate his guidance in verses 8–9 for how all Christians should live, particularly in the face of suffering?
2. What is the implied answer to verse 13? Peter knows, though, that Christians will suffer. After all, suffering for the sake of Christ is one of 1 Peter's main themes. So how are Christians ultimately free from harm? (See Romans 8:31–39 for more on this idea.)
3. Verses 14–17 describe the attitude we should have when suffering for our faith. Identify what we are to do with our emotions, our minds, our words, and our actions.
4. Peter makes a fascinating connection with Noah and the Flood and baptism in 3:20–22. Read Romans 6:1–11. With this in mind, what parallels do you think Peter was drawing between the Flood story (skim Genesis 6–8 if you wish) and how we are saved through Jesus's death and resurrection as symbolized by baptism?
5. Chapter 3 ends with one more statement about submission. What do we learn about it this time? How does this inform every other expression of submission that Peter's already discussed in 2:13, 2:18, 3:1 (cf. 3:7 and 3:8)?

Week 6

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 6
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. Do you enjoy studying and discussing passages of Scripture that are difficult to interpret?
2. In 1 Peter 3:8, Peter lists five virtues we should all strive to display. Which of these is most or least natural for you? Does your answer change if you consider how you relate to Christians vs. non-Christians? Family vs. strangers? Or when life is calm vs. when life stinks?
3. 1 Peter 3:15 is a beautiful verse about being ready to tell others why we have hope in God, but don't forget its context about hope in God while suffering for Him. Why does someone suffering well have a particularly strong voice to testify to how their identity in Christ drives their activity?
4. Read verse 17 together and discuss if you have seen this to be true.
5. What truth from this passage and/or message will you carry into your coming week?

Week 6
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 7
SERMON THOUGHTS
MARCH 18-19





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

7 The end of all things is near. Therefore, be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. 17 For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

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

Week 7

COMMENTARY



Can suffering for the sake of Christ really be good for us, driving us deeper into Christ and helping us to act more like Him? Peter's answer in chapter 4 is, "Yes!" He argues that suffering has many benefits because by identifying with Christ and depending on his power and grace, we can shift from sin to love. If this hasn't been your experience yet, maybe this chapter will give you a fresh perspective.

Peter begins by saying we must arm ourselves with a Christ-like attitude. We've already seen in this letter that we do that by having hope in the grace we see when He returns (1:13), kindness and respect in all our interactions (2:18, 3:1-2, 15-16), and reverence (3:15) for Christ knowing that he will return to judge the world (4:5-6). As we avoid ugly behaviors because we are "done with sin" (4:1) and pursue obedience to the will of God, we will find ourselves in deeper fellowship with Christ. Indeed, the joy and hope we experience is great fuel for wanting to share Jesus with everyone, even if they never believe.

We are called, above all, to love each other deeply despite our differences or past offenses. In a time when political, social, and racial tensions run hot, this call to love above all is as powerful and necessary now as it was when Peter wrote it. Our limited lifetime is well spent being alert and intentionally seeking to nurture community with each other. As verses 7-11 suggest, we can do this by loving each other deeply, praying and caring for one another, spending time in each other's homes, using our gifts given us by God in His grace to serve each other with the strength God provides, and speaking positively to each other.

Peter points us towards many healthy instructions for life, especially life in community with other followers of Jesus. His instructions are life-giving, especially given the challenges that secular culture throws our way. When life gets difficult, as it certainly will from time to time, rather than shrinking back in self-protection or returning to past sins, embrace the Bible's wisdom for life.

1. Chapter 4 begins with “Therefore.” How do you see this chapter building on all we’ve studied to this point?
2. Verse 1 cannot mean that we’ll never sin any more. What do you understand this to mean? How does verse 2 help to explain it? If you’d like to read more about what Scripture says about this, Romans 6 and Galatians 5:13–26 may be helpful to you.
3. What practical tools could you gather from verses 7–11 that would serve you well when you walk through difficult times?
4. Verse 12 seems to be a bit of an oxymoron – shouldn’t it be a strange thing to be in a fiery ordeal?? And yet, how does expecting to suffer for the sake of Christ better equip us to live as God’s set-apart ones? If we are surprised when we suffer for Christ, what might that suggest to us about our faith?
5. Write out verse 19 in your own words.

Week 7

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 7
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. Pick a phrase from the message or this passage that resonates with you deeply and share why it does with your group.
2. If our identity drives our activity, what might we need to get honest about if we continue to tolerate ongoing sin in our own lives? What would it look like to preach the gospel to ourselves?
3. What practices mentioned in 4:7-11 would you like to develop more in your life? Which ones mentioned are going well for you? Which are missing?
4. Have you lost status at work, in your family, or in your community because of being a Christian? Did you welcome it as an opportunity to share in the sufferings of Christ and praise Him for the opportunity of being identified as His? (If you didn't, remember that Peter didn't at one point either, and God's grace is wonderful for us all!) How did that experience shape you, or how could it have?
5. Verse 19 is Peter's encouragement for us to continue pressing on in Christ. How can your small group help you do this today and in the coming weeks?

Week 7
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



Week 8
SERMON THOUGHTS
MARCH 25-26





To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

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

Final Greetings

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

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

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

Week 8

COMMENTARY



In this final chapter, Peter gives final instructions to the church elders, younger people of the church, and the entire church. His advice to elders is reasonably extended to anyone in a leadership position as “shepherds of God’s flock,” whether pastor, teacher, small group leader, or other ministry leader. He exhorts us to enthusiastically serve and guide others with Christlikeness. We should not lead because we must or for personal profit or as a power play, but as an example for others to follow. As Peter directs attention to younger people, he encourages them to “in the same way” have the same disposition as those in leadership and to submit to those in authority. We all are to clothe ourselves in humility. Our motivation for the latter is simple: God opposes pride.

Humble and submitted servants who lead like our Lord (who was sometimes called the Suffering Servant) will be lifted up in His time. We can, then, with all confidence, cry out to Him in all our anxieties because we do not have to fix everything ourselves. Rather, we get to trust in Him and expect His deliverance because He cares for us. He will ultimately make all things right. We must resist the natural tendency to give in to negativity, pride, or despair, recognizing this as a devil-scheme to destroy us, and instead remain clear-headed. We must stand firm against the devil, not giving him an inch, refusing to give in to fear. Instead, we can trust in God’s powerful goodness when times are tough. As a worldwide Church, we stand arm in arm, encouraged by brothers and sisters in the faith around the world who are being faithful to the end, many unto death.

Yes, we will struggle and suffer. But after suffering a little while (even a lifetime here is minuscule compared to an eternity in peaceful harmony with God in the life to come), we will enjoy eternal glory in Christ. Even now, though, our God strengthens us and gives us all we need to keep going. To Him be the power forever and ever. Amen!

As Peter ends his letter, he acknowledges Silas or Silvanus, mentioned in Acts 15-18 multiple times as the trusted co-laborer with Paul during his second missionary journey and now of Peter, who has helped him to write this letter. Second, he summarizes the intent of the letter – encouragement to keep going in God’s grace during suffering. Third, he sends greetings from “her” in “Babylon” (likely the church in Rome), as well as John Mark, Peter’s son in the faith and author of the second Gospel. His final admonition is that we greet one another affectionately (in culturally appropriate ways, which at that time was with a kiss). Finally, Peter gives a pastoral blessing of peace for all in Christ, a blessing we may receive as deeply as his original readers did.

1. What are some wrong motivations in leadership according to 5:2–3?
2. What are healthy characteristics for leaders as seen in 5:1–9?
3. In verse 3, leaders are called to be examples for others to follow—indeed, the apostle Paul said to his readers, “Follow me as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1)—but many of us feel inhibited from telling anyone to copy our lifestyle. Why do you think this is, and should it be that way?
4. How do we “resist the devil” according to verses 8–9?
5. Identify the final point that Peter chooses to drive home for these dear, suffering brothers and sisters in Christ in verses 10–11. Why do you think this was what he chose as his closing encouragement?

Week 8

PERSONAL STUDY



Week 8
**GROUP
DISCUSSION**



1. At ARC, we speak of leadership as a destination of discipleship. What do you see in this chapter that supports and explains that value?
2. What makes humility so healthy – answer both from what you see in 1 Peter 5 and what you’ve experienced. Over whom do you have authority? Whose authority are you under? How might you exhibit humility towards both categories?
3. Verse 7 is a beloved verse for many. Discuss what it means that “God cares for you.” What are some implications of this amazing statement?
4. What encouragement do you personally take from Peter’s final statement (before his final greetings) in verses 10–11?
5. What are your most significant takeaways from 1 Peter, this message series, and our small group experience?

Week 8
**PRAYER AND
CARE NOTES**



ANSWERED PRAYER NOTES



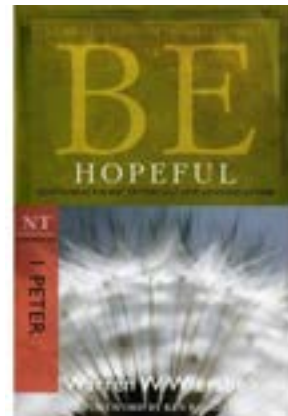
RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES ON 1 PETER

While certainly not necessary, if you'd like to go further in your study of 1 Peter with a commentary, here are three top commentaries recommended by Pastors Rick Henderson and Svea Merry:

APPENDIX A

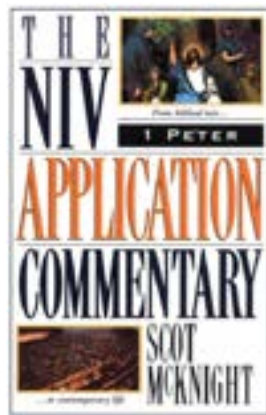
FOR A DEVOTIONAL, ENJOYABLE-TO-READ COMMENTARY:

WARREN WIERSBE'S BE HOPEFUL



FOR A MORE TECHNICAL, BUT STILL ACCESSIBLE, COMMENTARY:

SCOT MCKNIGHT'S 1 PETER FROM THE NIV APPLICATION COMMENTARY SERIES



FOR A ROBUST SCHOLARLY COMMENTARY:

KAREN JOBES' 1 PETER FROM THE BAKER EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT SERIES



ENGAGING WITH OTHERS AS AN EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY PERSON

APPENDIX B

AS A HEALTHY, GROWING PERSON I STRIVE TO:

1. Ask for what I need, want, or prefer — clearly, directly, honestly.
2. Recognize, manage, and take responsibility for my own thoughts and feelings.
3. When under stress, state my own beliefs and values without becoming adversarial.
4. Respect others without having to change them.
5. Give people room to make mistakes and not be perfect.
6. Appreciate people for who they are: the good, the bad, and the ugly.
7. Accurately assess my own limits, strengths, and weaknesses and freely discuss them with others.
8. Be deeply in tune with my own emotional world and to be able to enter into the feelings, needs, and concerns of others without losing myself.
9. Have the capacity to resolve conflict maturely and negotiate solutions that consider the perspectives of others.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

APPENDIX C

Study Aids

- Notes from a good study Bible
- Bible Dictionary
- **biblestudytools.com**
- **bibleproject.com**

Commentaries

- *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*
This 2-volume commentary on the entire Bible is a great resource for anyone desiring a comprehensive and accessible look at all of Scripture.
- *Life Application Commentaries*
These commentaries on individual books of the Bible are easily readable and suitable wherever you are on your faith journey. They shine in the aspect of helping us apply Scripture in our daily lives.
- *Warren Weirsbé's "Be Series" Commentaries*
Weirsbé's writing on each book of the Bible offers thought-provoking perspectives that are great for further contemplation of Scripture.
- *NIV Application Commentaries*
The NIVAC series strikes a great balance for the serious reader between a devotional and a scholarly approach to Scripture. If you are looking to increase your academic knowledge while still embracing the need for practical application, this is a great resource.

Spiritual Formation

- *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* by Donald Whitney
- *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer
- *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster

Theology/Church History

- *Basic Christianity* by John Stott
- *Christian Theology* by Millard Erickson
- *The Story of Scripture, Vols 1 and 2* by Justo Gonzalez

Small Groups

- *Leading Small Groups with Purpose* by Steve Gladen
- *Making Small Groups Work* by Cloud and Townsend
- *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups* by Bill Donahue

Leadership/Discipleship

- *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders
- *Emotionally Healthy Discipleship* by Pete Scazzero
- *Discipleship Essentials/Leadership Essentials* by Greg Ogden

Must-Reads

- *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis
- *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer
- *What's So Amazing About Grace?* by Philip Yancey

IDEAS FOR SMALL GROUPS WITH CHILDREN

Children benefit from seeing you prioritize spiritual growth and spending time in community with other Jesus followers. Groups with little kids have additional considerations to work out, but it is well worth it!

Some tips from successful small groups with young children:

- Hire babysitters from church who are raising funds for upcoming mission trips or camp opportunities
- Consider inviting an older couple missing or wishing for grandkids to enjoy sharing Bible stories and snuggles with your little ones
- If your children are school-aged or in daycare, consider meeting over a weekday lunch hour while they're occupied
- Include your children for part of your meeting time and talk through the material on their level with them before dismissing them to play. (Bonus – this is a great warm-up for grown-up discussion.)
- Meet at a playground or park so that children can play while the adults talk nearby
- There is a possibility for groups to meet at ARC on Sunday morning or Wednesday evening while the kids are in children's programming. Space is very limited, but if you're willing to be accommodating and flexible, so are we!
- Occasionally meeting on Zoom after kids go to bed might be useful on weeks when other options don't work

APPENDIX D

GETTING ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

FOR QUESTIONS AND SUPPORT

Scan the QR code for access to Small Group introductory videos.



SUBSCRIBE TO AUTUMN RIDGE CHURCH PODCASTS

Our podcasts are available on all the major platforms.

FOR QUESTIONS/CONCERNS/FEEDBACK

- Leader resources, leader training, small group curriculum, spiritual formation strategy, spiritually-focused classes:
Svea Merry, Spiritual Formation Pastor
Shannon Gladkowski, Spiritual Formation Assistant
email: grow@autumnridgechurch.org
- Getting connected in small groups and other opportunities at ARC including membership, Let's Connect, baptism, and serving teams:
Paul McDonald, Connections Pastor
Dorothy Morris, Connections Assistant
email: serving@autumnridgechurch.org
- Small group serving opportunities with local and global partners, care needs:
Otis Hall, Executive Pastor of Outreach
Kris Ollila, Outreach Assistant
email: outreach@autumnridgechurch.org
- Publications, website resources, social media:
Jacob Wessel, Communications Director
TJ Schultz, Communications
email: media@autumnridgechurch.org

END NOTES

OVERVIEW (page 9)

¹ Karen Jobes, *1 Peter in Baker Exegetical Commentary Series*.

WEEK 2 COMMENTARY (page 18)

² Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary on 1 Peter*, 74.

WEEK 4 COMMENTARY (page 30)

³ Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary*.

WEEK 6 COMMENTARY (page 42)

⁴ Thomas Schreiner, *ESV Study Bible Notes*, 1 Peter 3:19.

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT SMALL GROUP STUDY

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VISIT THE
SMALL GROUP HOMEPAGE



**AUTUMN RIDGE
CHURCH**

3611 Salem Road SW
Rochester, MN 55902
507.288.8880
autumnridge.church