**1 Peter - Introduction**

*"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1:13)*

**Book in a Nutshell**

Peter addresses the topics of submission and godliness within the context of the persecution afflicting his readers. In response to persecution, God’s people must live lives of godliness and steadfastness.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Discuss the Apostle Peter’s position among the Apostles.

2. Discuss the similarities and differences between the description of the “dispersion” in James and 1 Peter.

3. How does God “elect” individuals?

4. What is the significance of the term, “pilgrim” or “sojourner”?

5. Looking at an outline of the book, and reading it, please give a synopsis of Peter’s epistle.

*(Please put answers on back of page or another sheet of paper)*

**Authorship (1:1)**

* The apostle Peter identifies himself as the author of the epistle (1:1)
* Peter was a fisherman (Matt. 4:18), who was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew (John 1:40-42)
* In character, Peter was enthusiastic and energetic, though sometimes impulsive (cf. Matt. 14:22-33; 26:31-35, 69-75).
* Was an intimate friend of the Lord (Matt. 17:1; 26:37)
* Confessed Jesus as the Christ (Matthew 16:13-20)

**Written to: The Scattered Elect (1:1-2)**

* Elect – “picked out, chosen, selected. (see, 2:9). This choosing was by God, in His mercy (2)
* Sojourners or Pilgrims (indicating that they were on a spiritual journey, their home being with God (see 2:11).
* The specific regions mentioned, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, all existed in the general region covered by present day Turkey

**Date of Writing (64-65 A.D.)**

* Most scholars believe that Peter was killed by A.D. 68-70. Also, since there is no indication state involvement in the persecution (Domitian), it is generally believed that the persecution here mentioned was earlier, and less extensive than that experienced by Christians in the last third of the first century.
* There is no exact indication from scripture as to when the book was written. Conservative scholars generally concur it was written somewhere between 61-68 A.D.

**1 Peter - 1**

*“But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’” (15-16)*

**Chapter in a Nutshell**

Based upon the wonderful blessings (a heavenly inheritance) that we receive through Jesus Christ, the apostle Peter calls the elect to live holy lives before God the Father. The standard for holy living is found in the enduring word.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why does Peter describe our hope (in verse 3) as “living”?

2. Why is it possible for us to rejoice despite the persecutions and tribulations that beset us in life?

3. Explain the basis of God’s call for us to live holy lives.

4. What does it mean that God *“without partiality judges according to each one’s work”* (vs. 17)?

5. What does the scripture mean when it says that the word of God lives and abides forever?

*(Please put answers on back of page or another sheet of paper)*

**The Incorruptible Inheritance (3-12)**

* The elect of God have a living hope (an incorruptible inheritance) because of Christ’s resurrection from the dead (3-6)
* Our inheritance allows us to rejoice despite the temporary tribulations and persecutions we suffer in life. (Peter’s readers were being persecuted). (7-9)
* The salvation we have obtained was the object of the prophet’s inquiry in times past. The generations which followed the Lord’s life, death and resurrection have the mystery of redemption revealed! (10-12)

**Holy Living Before God (13-21)**

* The basis of God’s call to holiness. 1) The redemption secured through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ; 2) The nature of God*, “Be holy, for I am holy.”* (13-16)
* With blessing comes responsibility. Blessing – redemption; Responsibility – a fearfully and soberly lived life before God. (17-19)
* Our *“faith and hope”* are in God, accomplished in the foreordained exaltation of Christ as Lord. (20-21)

**The Enduring Word (22-25)**

* We are called to love one another fervently and purely (22)
* We have been born again, begotten through the word of God. (23)
* The word of God *“lives and abides forever”* (cf. Isaiah 40:6-8) (23-24)
* With Christ as Lord, the word of God is the gospel preached by the apostles. (25)

**1 Peter - 2**

*“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness in His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy” (9-10).*

**Chapter in a Nutshell**

Peter in this chapter gives practical admonitions to growth, righteous living, and submission to authority.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How is the word of God “sincere” or “pure”? What is indicated by the term?

2. Explain the significance of the cornerstone.

3. In what way can it be said that worldly lusts “war” against the soul?

4. Is there a limit to our obligations to be submissive to the governing authorities?

5. What is the significance of Christ’s sinless life? Why was it so important that He not sin?

*(Please put answers on back of page or another sheet of paper)*

**As Newborn Babes (1-3)**

* Certain practices interfere with Christian growth (1)
* The word of God causes growth to the zealous (2-3)

**The Chosen Stone & His People (4-10)**

* Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, rejected by men but accepted by God (4-8)
* Christians are to approach Him as living stones themselves, part of God’s building (5)
* Prophesy concerning the cornerstone (6-8)
* Men stumble by being disobedient (8)
* Descriptions of those called by God (9)
* When called by God, we obtain mercy (10)

**Living Before the World (11-12)**

* Christians are to abstain from lust (11)
* Christians must live honorably in the sight of all men, including non-Christians, to God’s glory (12)

**Peter on Submission (13-25)**

* Submission to Government (13), cf. Romans 13:1-7
* Freedom (liberty) is not to be used as a cloak for vice. (Note: Is this not a problem in our society, with our form of government?) (16)
* Needed general admonition (17)
* Submission to Masters (18)
* Question: Does this passage have application today? In what way?
* Suffering is commendable if it is borne by the guiltless man (19)
* Suffering is not commendable if it is borne by the guilty. Rather it is deserved. (20)
* Jesus Christ is the prime example of a guiltless man, who suffered patiently (21-24)
* Because of Christ’s suffering, we have been healed from the scourge of sin, and have been reconciled to Him (24-25)

**1 Peter - 3**

*“For He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it” (10-11).*

**Chapter in a Nutshell**

Peter here calls for a consideration of one another that impacts every relationship. This is equated with righteousness or good, and Jesus is given as its ultimate example.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Does verse 3 of the text condemn the use of makeup or wearing of jewelry?

2. What is the meaning of the phrase “the weaker vessel” in verse 7?

3. Explain the nature of the blessing promised in verses 10-12.

4. Explain how suffering can be considered to be a blessing.

5. Explain the type/antitype relationship as it is used in scripture, and give examples.

*(Please put answers on back of page or another sheet of paper)*

**Husbands and Wives (1-7)**

* Wives are called to submit to their husbands (1, 5-6)
* Much can be accomplished by a woman through the quiet example of a godly and chaste live (1-2)
* Inner beauty is much to be preferred over outward adornment (3-4)
* Husbands are to give honor to the wife; accomplished through deference and understanding (7)

**Blessed by a Compassionate Heart (8-12)**

* Peter calls for compassion, and righteous treatment of one another (8-9)
* By blessing others in our conduct, we are given the promise of blessing (10-12)
* The quote in verses 10-12 is from Psalm 34:12-16

**Suffering Categorized (13-17)**

* Two types of suffering are described in the text. Suffering for good, and suffering because of evil done (13-14, 17)
* Suffering for righteousness’ sake is a blessing (14)
* We are called to be ready in answering those who would stand against our faith (15-16)
* It serves no godly purpose to suffer for doing evil (cf. 4:12-19) (17)

**The Suffering of Christ (18-22)**

* Christ serves as our example, in His willingness to suffer on our behalf (18-19)
* Baptism serves as an antitype to the water of the flood, and by it a man is saved (20-21)
* The power of baptism is found in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who remains alive and in power (21-22)

**1 Peter - 4**

*“Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter” (16).*

**Chapter in a Nutshell**

The fourth chapter hinges on the statement of Peter in verse 1, *“Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh…”* The responsibility we have to service and perseverance is grounded in the debt we owe our Lord for his sacrifice on the cross.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Contrast the “will of the Gentiles” with the behavior the Holy Spirit requires of Christians.

2. Define the three terms used in discussing the drinking of alcohol in verse 3:

\* Drunkenness –

\* Revelries –

\* Drinking Parties –

3. How can it be said in verse 8, *“love will cover a multitude of sins”*?

4. Explain what *are “the oracles of God,”* as mentioned in verse 11. What do they contain, and to what are they limited?

5. Why is it that even the righteous individual is *“scarcely saved”*?

*(Please put answers on back of page or another sheet of paper)*

**Our response to Christ’s suffering (1-6)**

* We are to be likeminded with Christ. As He suffered for us, He serves as our example (in this context an example of sinlessness). (1)
* In response, we too are to be righteous in our life, as contrasted with our past (2-3)
* Our righteous life will be peculiar to the world, but their ridicule will be dealt with (4-5)
* The purpose of the preaching of the gospel (6)

**Instructions to Service (7-11)**

* We are to be sober and prayerful (7)
* We are to fervently love one another (8)
* We are to be cheerfully hospitable (9)
* We are to be good stewards of the gifts given us by God (10)
* We are to respect the authority of Christ in our words, that God may be glorified through Him (11)

**Suffering as a Christian (12-19)**

* Christians are to expect that they will suffer persecution as a result of their faith (12)
* Such suffering is a cause for rejoicing (13)
* When you suffer as a Christian, it is a mark of distinction – you are blessed. But, in contrast, those who are responsible for your persecution show their opposition to God (14)
* A distinction must be made between suffering for Christ, and suffering because of evil done. One is a blessing, the other is simple recompense for offense (15-16) (cf. 3:13-17)
* Even the righteous are scarcely saved (by God’s grace). Since this is so, the ungodly have no hope (17-18)
* As Christians we must commit our souls to God. This is done by good works as we respond to the faithfulness of our God (19)

**1 Peter - 5**

*“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (6-7).*

**Chapter in a Nutshell**

Before writing his final farewells, Peter discusses the relationship of Christians to the elders of each congregation, calls for submission to God, and active resistance of the devil.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Explain the difference between overseeing by example, and as a “lord over those entrusted to you.”

2. How could an elder serve for “dishonest gain”?

3. How do we submit to “one another”?

4. How do we exhibit sobriety and vigilance as we seek to withstand the devil?

5. What does it mean to be “perfect” as we are established and strengthened by God?

*(Please put answers on back of page or another sheet of paper)*

**Admonitions to Shepherds (1-4)**

* Peter expresses his credentials as an elder, an apostle and a Christian. This gives his admonitions authority (1).
* The nature of the elder’s oversight: willing and selfless shepherds, with the oversight emanating from example rather than dictatorial decree (2-3).
* The reward of such oversight: An eternal crown, supplied by the Chief Shepherd at His coming (4).

**Admonitions to Submit (5-11)**

* The principle of submission impacts our relationship to one another as Christians. We are to submit to the elders (takes humility) (5).
* We are to submit to one another (takes humility) (5).
* God is pleased with humility, but not pride (cf. Proverbs 3:34) (5)
* Humbling ourselves before God brings exaltation and comfort (6-7).

**Resist the Devil (8-11)**

* We are called to sobriety as Christians, recognizing the efforts of Satan to destroy us (8).
* Satan, described as a roaring lion, must be resisted. Steadfastness needed in light of our common trials as Christians (9).
* As Peter proclaims the glory of God, he prays that his readers might receive God’s grace (10-11).

**Final Farewells (12-14)**

* This epistle was sent to them using Silvanus (Silas) as a messenger (12).
* The letter was written for the purpose of exhortation, and to testify of God’s grace (12).
* Babylon is most probably the city by that name in Mesopotamia on the Euphrates river, but some think it is a symbolic name, indicating Rome (13).
* Peter’s final words of farewell (14).