



1 & 2 PETER

Bible Study Guide

Course Outline

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Welcome to The Story's 1 & 2 Peter Bible Study Curriculum!

I am thrilled that you will be joining us for a verse by verse journey through 1 & 2 Peter over the next few months. These two letters stand out among the rest of the New Testament canon due to their authorship and content. Most of our New Testament letters were written by Paul, but here we have two documents from one of the men who walked with Jesus. Peter was not only one of Jesus' 12 disciples, but one of his closest companions and became a key leader of the early church. Peter sent these two letters

to believers scattered among modern day Turkey to encourage them to continue to live faithfully despite rising persecution and hostility. He wanted to remind them of their new identity found in Christ, and the heavenly family they are part of.

In order for you to get the most out of this study we would ask you to do three things before each gathering:

1. Pray for the Lord to reveal Himself to you through His Word
2. Read the assigned passage of Scripture straight through
3. Answer the questions and re-read highlighted verses

Over the next few weeks you will notice that in every session we will ask some variation of these three questions about each passage: 1. What does this teach me about God and His Character? 2. What does this show me about myself or humanity in general? 3. What would it mean for me to be obedient to this passage this week? This final question is key. Discipleship is more than just knowing the right answers. Becoming more like Jesus demands that we would be obedient, and submit ourselves to God's Word.

I'm praying for you as you enter into this journey through these books! Please feel free to reach out to me directly if you ever have any questions.

DILAN BRADDOCK
Pastor of Discipleship

WEEK ONE: **Who is Peter?**

Before we dive into 1 and 2 Peter, we should probably get to know the man who wrote these letters!

The Bold Disciple *Read Luke 5:1-11*

What does this passage reveal to us about Peter? What does Peter's response in verse 8 show us about his heart?

Why would Jesus look for someone like this to lead His Church?

What was Peter's new profession after he encountered Jesus? What did he have to leave behind to take up this new calling, and what does this teach us about obedience?

Read Matthew 16:13-20

Peter was always the brash disciple. Whether it was walking on water or cutting off a soldier's ear, Peter was always moved by passion! Believe it or not, one of Peter's boldest and most profound moments came when Jesus asked the disciples a simple question: "Who do you say I am?"

Think about the question "Who is Jesus?". What were some of the answers followers of Jesus had to this question in verse 14? Why were these answers incorrect?

Now think about this same question today. What are some of the answers modern people might have to the question "who is Jesus"? Why are these answers incorrect?

Peter proclaimed “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” What makes this response so bold? How can you be more unashamed when people ask you who Jesus is?

What do you think Jesus meant in verse 18-19? What role is Jesus giving Peter?

Read John 21:15-19

Peter infamously denied knowing Jesus three times on the morning before Christ’s death. Peter’s actions caused him so much shame that after Jesus’ death Peter didn’t know what to do with himself. It seems he simply returned to what he knew - fishing. Even though Peter felt unqualified, Jesus sought Peter out, and in this passage Jesus reinstates Peter as a disciple.

What does Jesus’ pursuit of Peter show us about the character of God?

How do you think this encounter and restoration shaped the rest of Peter’s life?

Who was Peter writing to? *Read 1 Peter 1:1-2*

Now that we know the author, the audience and context are important. There is some disagreement among scholars when Peter wrote the first of his two letters. Some say it was pretty early in church history, possibly around 47 AD. Others say much later between 62-64 AD. While there might be some debate on date, scholars agree Peter wrote these letters from Rome.

When we put the date and location together we see that 1 Peter was written in a fascinating time for the early church. At this point the main threat for Christians was not death, but being made uncomfortable for their faith. Believers were not yet being fed to lions but they were being cast out of their families, synagogues, and communities. The persecution would become more violent in 64 AD, but prior to that it was primarily social. This context makes 1 Peter even more relevant to the modern Western Church. We are not being killed for what we believe, but if we stand firm on our convictions we could risk our reputations, jobs, or relationships.

Peter addressed his letter to “God’s elect, exiles”. What does it mean to be elect? What about an exile? Why would Peter pair these two words together to describe believers both then and now?

Peter says we have been chosen and sanctified to be obedient. Why is the sequence of these three terms important?

Spend some time this week and write down goals you have for this season and this study:

I look forward to diving into the rest of 1 and 2 Peter over the next 10 weeks. These letters will teach us to be faithful and fearless in an increasingly hostile, or at least uncomfortable, world. Join us as we find purpose in our suffering and how to live our lives with an eye towards our eternal home.

WEEK TWO: **Be Holy**

As a disciple of Jesus, Peter spent three years walking alongside Christ during his earthly ministry. This first-hand, eyewitness perspective makes Peter's letters particularly interesting. Peter's personal journey also shapes the content of these letters.

After a brief introduction, the focus of this first chapter turns to the hope and joy Peter has found in Jesus. As you read this letter you cannot help but notice the transformation that must have happened on the Sea of Galilee after the resurrected Jesus appeared to and reinstated Peter. The man is all in on Jesus and wants everyone to know there is nothing better that we could put our hope in.

Before this transformation I am sure Peter thought like many of us. Even though we love Jesus we often put our hope in other, lesser things. Maybe Peter put his hope in making his family happy, running a profitable fishing business, or being a man of his word. Take a moment to write down a few things you put your hope in (other than Jesus).

Our Living Hope *Read 1 Peter 1:3-12*

What words, ideas, or questions come to you after reading this passage?

Peter says we have been born into a living hope through Jesus. Re-read verses 3-5. How would you describe this living hope in your own words?

How is this living hope better than all of these lesser hopes you mentioned above?

In verse 7 what does Peter say that trials reveal?

Can you think of examples where the strength of your faith, or someone else's, was revealed when they went through difficult circumstances?

Holiness *Read 1 Peter 1:13-21*

In this next section, Peter calls his readers to holy living, but verse 13 starts with the phrase "therefore". Any time we see therefore we have to see what the therefore is there for! In this case, this phrase follows Peter's explanation of the Gospel, specifically our salvation through Jesus. We are called to action because of our new hope found in Christ.

Peter quotes Leviticus 11:44 which calls us to be holy, because God is holy. How would you define holiness? How can sinful humans live up to such a high bar?

Verse 17 calls us to live in reverent fear. What do you think Peter means?

What does this passage teach us about the character of God the Father and His plan for Jesus?

Read 1 Peter 1:22-25

Peter ends this chapter with this beautiful poem about the Word of God. The Word refers to Jesus, the Bible, and particularly in this case the Gospel proclaimed through both. As you go through this week, how would your life look different if you believed these words?

How does this truth inspire you to "love one another deeply"? Who do you need to love this week?

WEEK THREE: **God's Chosen People**

All humans desire to belong to a family. Peter is writing to a group of primarily Gentile believers, who are discouraged and scattered across Asia Minor. As we have picked up on already, these believers are facing persecution by both the Roman government and the Jewish synagogues. The Romans didn't trust them because they worshiped a king greater than Caesar and the Jews expelled them for their claim Jesus was God. Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your faith or convictions? Maybe unloved or unwanted because of who you are or what you believe? Share below:

Chosen Race, Royal Priesthood, and Holy Nation

Read 1 Peter 2:1-8

What words, ideas, or questions jump out from the page at you as you read?

When we are younger we often do everything we can do to seem more mature and wise. Peter says to become spiritually mature we are to become young, like newborn infants craving pure spiritual milk. Why is Peter telling us we must become young in order to grow old in our faith? How have you seen this spiritual mystery play out in your own journey?

While stones might be a strange metaphor to describe the church, it's an image from Scripture. Peter references memorable Old Testament passages in Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, and Isaiah 8:14 to paint a picture of the relationship between Christ and His Church. In this passage, who are the living stones and who is the cornerstone? What is the deeper meaning behind Peter's metaphor for us and the Church?

Our New Identity *Read 1 Peter 2:9-10*

What does this passage tell us about our new identity found in Christ?

What does it mean to be part of a chosen people?

What does it mean to be part of a royal priesthood?

What does it mean to be part of a holy nation and God's possession?

The end of verse 9 reminds us that God has called us out of the darkness into his marvelous light. What are testimonies from your own life where you have been rescued from sin and darkness, and shown God's grace and light?

Peter wrote to a group of believers who likely felt rejected, or at least estranged from their earthly families and communities. The main form of persecution against early Christians was social and economic. To tell someone who no longer had a home or family that "Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God" must have been a great encouragement. The Church was their new family. A chosen family in which believers are The Father's sons and daughters. How have you experienced the church as a family?

This passage reminds us that the Gospel is both exclusive and inclusive. It's exclusive because only believers are God's chosen people, royal priesthood, and a holy nation through their adoption into Jesus' family. Do you know people who struggle with the exclusivity of Christianity? What do you think is their hangup with the idea that Jesus is the ONLY way?

At the same time the Gospel is inclusive! All are invited and it's up to us whether or not we want to accept Jesus' knock on the door of our hearts. If we do, we go from a person without a home to one in God's eternal family. Do you know people who struggle with the inclusivity of Christianity? Why does this idea trouble some people?

WEEK FOUR: **Living as Foreigners**

How do you know if someone is a Christian? Is it based on what they wear, where they are from, who they vote for, if they have a Jesus bumper sticker? In the first century the answer to this question was easy: they lived differently. Their way of life was so contrary to the world that they stuck out like a sore thumb. Believers constantly drew criticism and condemnation from the world due to their love for one another and faith in Jesus.

After declaring believers a chosen people, royal priesthood, and God's holy nation in chapter 2, Peter now teaches what this new identity means for us here and now. If we are citizens of heaven, that means earth is not our primary home. We are merely visitors here, foreigners whose true residence is in another land. That does not mean our time here on earth should be wasted. Really the opposite: we should use this time as foreigners wisely!

Be honest: is it difficult to see heaven, and not this life, as your primary home? If so why?

Foreigners and Exiles *Read 1 Peter 2:11-17*

Peter calls us foreigners and exiles. When I hear both of these terms I think of the negative connotations, but I don't think Peter sees it that way. How does Peter use these terms, and what do they teach us about our new identity in Christ?

What does this passage reveal to us about humanity?

The call to live a godly life is not only for our benefit. Who does Peter say it's really for?

In verse 13 Peter speaks on the Christian posture towards authority. In our political climate it is almost the norm to disrespect the authorities placed over us. Why did Peter think it was important for Believers to respect those placed over them?

What does this passage and God's attitude toward earthly authority reveal to us about the character of God?

Suffering for doing Good *Read 1 Peter 2:18-25*

Peter already told his readers to respect the authorities placed over them, but he does not imagine this being easy. Remember he is writing to a persecuted church! The Apostle told his readers to respect the same people who were persecuting them. In a similar fashion he tells slaves to submit to their masters, even the ones who deal harshly with them. For many, this reading may be difficult to stomach, but in both cases the emphasis is really not on our suffering but Christ's suffering. When reflecting on this passage N.T. Wright says "The Christians will be called to suffer, to suffer greatly, to suffer unjustly - after the pattern of Jesus himself". Re-read verse 21, how does the introduction of Christ's suffering change your view on this passage & Christian suffering?

Peter understood a deep spiritual truth that somehow in our just suffering we can join with Jesus in His suffering, and in doing so spread the Gospel. It's often through godly suffering we can reveal Jesus to others. Peter seems to talk about suffering as an unavoidable reality for these foreigners and exiles. Have you suffered or been made uncomfortable in any way due to your faith?

If not, why? Are you in a season of preparation? Does your life not look any different from the way of the world? Do you lack boldness in your convictions?

In chapter 2 Peter has shown us that in Christ we have a new identity. We are no longer identified first as a mother, father, lawyer, business person, student, conservative, liberal or even American. First and foremost we are followers of Jesus, and that should be our primary identifier. How have you let other lesser identities take control? How are you being called to be obedient in your identity in Christ this week?

WEEK FIVE: **Structure of the Family**

The big bold chapter numbers we see in our Bible were not part of the original text. Peter did not intentionally label today's reading as a separate chapter distinct from the rest of the letter. Translators added these numbers later on so it would be easier to locate certain passages. This is always important to remember, but especially in today's reading. This section on the family is a continuation of what it means to model a godly life in a secular society. Believe it or not, family is actually part of living as a counter cultural witness in a pagan world.

Today in western society, the family has never been less popular. The rates of fatherlessness, divorce, and couples who decide to forego having kids all together are all at record highs. From a Gospel perspective, why is the family worth protecting?

The Family as a Witness *Read 1 Peter 3:1-7*

What do we learn about humanity and our desires from this passage?

Why are wives called to submit to their husbands? What is the greater purpose behind this command?

The beauty and cosmetics industry are some of the fastest growing in our economy. Over the last 5 years, the beauty industry has grown by 19.9% despite the pandemic. For the next 4 years beauty will continue its steady increase, with an average annual growth of 9%. The US is the fastest growing market. How does Peter's definition of beauty contradict the world's? What is beautiful in God's eyes?

In what ways does God's vision for family depart from our cultural view of family and even gender?

As the culture around Christians in America changes there are two primary responses. The first is to be swallowed up by the secular culture and go with the flow. By doing so we get lost and become indistinguishable from non-believers. The other option is we can adopt a “holier than thou” approach where we completely distance ourselves from the world and retreat. While circling the wagons might seem like a better option, it stifles our witness and hampers our ability to be on mission. Which of these extremes do you tend to favor? Do you get swallowed up or retreat? How can believers avoid these pitfalls and walk the fine line of faithful witness?

Seeking Harmony in all our Relationships

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

How are verses 8-10 a continuation of the earlier instructions for couples? How would following these teachings transform your relationships?

Peter quotes from Psalm 34, and I want us to think about this psalm in context of our church, families, or most intimate relationships. Remember we are called to love and respect those closest to us, not primarily for our own benefit, but so that our lives would serve as a testimony to others. In what ways are your words deceitful and damaging to those you love?

In your closest relationships where is there conflict, and how are you being called to pursue peace?

How can you pursue righteousness and join in prayer with loved ones?

The church is ultimately a family. Peter ends his advice for families, which really started in 2:13, by asking us all to live in harmony with one another. This is easier said than done, but if we want to change the chaotic world around us it starts with us. By seeking peace first in our own relationships we can then hope to transform the rest of the world. Spend some time praying for your families and closest relationships. Ask that God would use you to promote Truth and peace in all of your relationships.

WEEK SIX: **Suffering for Doing Good**

I have heard it said that the Bible features the phrase “do not fear” 365 times. I haven’t personally counted, but if this is true that is one command for each day of the year! If something is repeated in the Bible it’s important. The Bible doesn’t say there is nothing to fear, it specifically says do not fear. In our world there are many frightening situations and things that will make us anxious, but despite that Jesus is clear: do not fear. Be honest with yourself and spend time reflecting on this question - what do I fear?

Do not Fear *Read 1 Peter 3:13-16*

What does Peter say is the antidote to fear in verse 14-15?

Verse 15 has become a key passage here at The Story Church as we dream and develop ministries. When we recite this passage we start with “Always be prepared...” but miss the important context in verse 14. Surprisingly the doorway to sharing our faith can actually be our righteous suffering. Can you think of a time when someone’s suffering was as an opportunity to share their faith?

Verse 15 charges us to give the reason for the hope we have. What is the reason for the hope in you?

In verses 15-16 what guidelines does Peter give us for when we share our faith? Which of these things do you personally struggle with?

In what may seem like a huge pivot, Peter turns from our sufferings to the death and resurrection of Christ. It might seem random, but it's intentional. Like he did earlier in chapter 2, Peter wants us to root our stories in Christ's ultimate story because the cross will give purpose to our pain.

What happened on the Cross *Read 1 Peter 3:17-22*

What does this passage reveal to us about the heart of God?

We usually attribute suffering as punishment for doing evil, but Peter says we will suffer for doing good. How does this passage challenge your view of suffering?

Verses 19-20 are pretty crazy, and send biblical scholars on all types of rabbit trails. Where did Jesus go? Who or what are these spirits in bondage? Why are we talking about Noah and baptism? Different theologians will give you different answers. One interpretation that I particularly like would connect the imprisoned spirits to the Nephilim in Noah's day that lead to the great flood (Genesis 6-7). If Jesus was going and proclaiming to them, then this wasn't evangelism or a mission trip. Jesus was proclaiming his victory over Satan's minions and human rebellion. How could this image of Jesus announcing victory over his enemies be a source of encouragement to those who suffer?

In light of this passage, what is the significance of baptism? How is our baptism connected with the life, death and resurrection of Christ? If you need more help, check out Romans 6:3-4.

Jesus' death and resurrection didn't only shake up our earthly reality, but the spiritual realm as well. The cross changed everything, and Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father. He has all power and authority and all will face His righteous judgment. What does this mean for all the fears that you wrote at the beginning of this chapter? How would your life change if you believed this?

WEEK SEVEN: **Living For God**

In the 1st century to be a Christian meant that your life would look different from everyone else around you. Not in a “holier than thou” or judgmental way, but one in which believers were simply not into the things the world was into. This call to be different wasn’t just for the 1st century church, but should also be said about believers today. Does your life look different when compared to non-believers around you? If so, how?

Be Done with Sin *Read 1 Peter 4:1-11*

What does this passage show us about the heart and the desire of fallen humans? Why do “they” want you to be more like them?

Peter says we have wasted enough time doing what the pagans are doing. Another way of saying that would be you have wasted enough time running the rat race, partying till 2 am, finding your identity in what others say. While this time was “wasted” by chasing sinful desires we cannot let our mistakes chain us down. Peter wants us to let go of the past, and live today for Jesus. What’s the importance of turning completely away from our past lives/sin?

Do you struggle with letting go of some of your former desires? How could you put them to death?

Verse 8 quotes from Proverbs 10:12 and memorably says, “love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins”. Why is this true? How have you seen love do this in your own life?

Why do you think Peter connects being sober minded and alert with prayer?

Rejoice in Suffering *Read 1 Peter 4:12-19*

Are you surprised when you see Christians suffer? Why or why not?

Society teaches us to do everything we can to pursue safety and comfort and avoid pain and suffering at all costs. Why do you think we have come to celebrate the idols of safety and comfort so greatly?

Peter is setting up a different priority system. We should not be surprised or play the victim when we suffer but feel blessed. How is this possible?

Verse 17 says judgment begins with the household of God, and if we think this is bad, imagine what it will be like in the end for those who do not believe. How does thinking about eschatology (or the end times) influence our view of present sufferings?

Peter ends this chapter by asking us to commit to our Creator and to do good. This reminds me of a term called "spiritual obesity". This describes someone who has taken in all the knowledge about God, but done nothing with it. Like someone who knows all the workout techniques, watches Tik Tok's for healthy recipes, and even bought running shoes, but never goes to the gym. The knowledge is great, but just knowing what to do isn't going to give you those chiseled abs. In the same way, some of us know what the Bible says, what Jesus commands, and how we are called to live, yet we don't do it. We are passive and fail to commit and continue to do good. Are you guilty of spiritual obesity? How can you put your knowledge into action and obedience this week?

WEEK EIGHT: Instructions for Leaders

Leadership matters most when the heat gets turned up and pressure is mounting. There is a quote that says, “Hard times create strong men, strong men create good times, good times create weak men, and weak men create hard times” I think this can be applied to leadership. The hard times that Christians faced in the first century created incredible leaders of the church. Beyond the apostles like Peter you have men like Paul, Stephen, Ignatius of Antioch, and countless others who died due to Roman persecution. How do suffering and persecution foster remarkable faith and leadership?

How do comfortable times create weak leaders who fail to stand up for their faith?

The Flock and the Lion *Read 1 Peter 5:1-11*

Once again Peter borrows from the teachings of Christ. In John 10, Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd and we his people are the flock. In verses 1-4 look at how Peter uses this metaphor. Pastors often call the church their flock, but whose flock is it really? How should this influence the way elders or pastors watch over the people they have been entrusted with?

What is the difference between lording over a flock and being an example? Share examples from your own life of how you have seen both leadership styles in action.

How does Jesus serve as the model leader? If you need some help read Philippians 2:5-11.

In verse 7 Peter says to cast our anxiety on Christ because he cares for you. This must have been like a balm for those suffering persecution, but I think it also is relevant in the age of anxiety that we are living in today. How does this verse encourage you? What anxieties do you need to give over to God?

Verse 8-9 might be my favorite description for the devil in the entire Bible. The enemy is described as a roaring lion seeking to devour. This image might have been especially relevant as lions were used as means of execution for early believers! The devil isn't passively waiting for us to fall, he is active and looking for weakness to attack. Do you live like you have an enemy who is on the hunt? How should this realization change the way we guard and protect ourselves?

What are practical changes you can make this week to stay alert and resist the enemy?

We often hear that God will not give us more than we can handle. While I think there is a good heart behind that message, I am not sure if Scripture agrees. How do verses 10-11 reconcile with that idea? What promise does Scripture give us here?

Final Greeting *Read 1 Peter 5:12-14*

Who does Peter namedrop in his final farewell? Why are these people and churches significant?

As we come to the end of 1 Peter we have talked about suffering a lot, but Peter ends his letter with "peace". How can Christians who are currently being persecuted for their faith have any sense of peace?

Where do you need Christ's peace this week?

Spend time praying for the persecuted Church both local and international.

WEEK NINE: **Participate in the Divine Nature**

This week we will jump into the second letter the Apostle Peter wrote. 2 Peter was written from the same location and to the same churches as 1 Peter, but just a few years later near 67 AD. In the time between the two letters, the persecution of believers had ramped up, and Peter knew his time on earth was coming to an end. This realization of Peter's coming death influences every aspect of the letter. It deals with both the present circumstances these churches are going through, but also the future glory to come. If you were nearing the end of your life and you could write one letter to your church or family, what would you focus on?

Call and Election *Read 2 Peter 1:1-11*

How does Simon Peter introduce himself in this letter? Why do you think he chose this introduction?

Peter begins this section by telling us about the blessings we have access to through Christ. What do verses 3-4 teach us about our new humanity in Christ?

Verse 5 starts a beautiful chain of virtues that end in love. What stands out to you from this list? Which of these do you need the Holy Spirit to help you with the most?

Why do you think the final virtue is love?

Peter says these things will "keep you from being ineffective and unproductive" in your walk. What does an ineffective Christian life look like?

What do you think an effective Christian life looks like?

Have there been times when you would describe your faith as ineffective? How can you be obedient and more effective this week?

Eyewitness of His Majesty *Read 2 Peter 1:12-15*

Peter's coming death drives the sense of urgency in this letter. He wants people to remember what they have seen and heard and not forget, like humans are so prone to do. Why do you think we as believers always need to be refreshed by the Truth of the Gospel?

What makes Peter's witness so unique and compelling in verses 16-18?

Other than the Resurrection, the Transfiguration is one of the most unbelievable moments in the Gospel. I cannot imagine what it must have been like for Peter and the rest of Jesus' inner circle to see Jesus in all of His glory talking with Moses and Elijah. It must have been breathtaking! You may not have seen Jesus like that, but if you have been following him for any amount of time I am sure you have seen him move in your life or witness miracles that have made you marvel. Can you share about a time where you were "eyewitnesses of His majesty"?

What do verses 20-21 say about the origin of prophecy?

Don't miss what Peter does here! He is defending Old Testament prophecy and says it is fully reliable. Why? Because humans are super capable and without fault? No - because God is the author. Peter connects the entire Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) to the prophecy of the Old Testament. Prophecy is spoken by God the Father, carried through the Holy Spirit, and it was all pointing to the Son - Jesus. What does the Trinity and Old Testament prophecy teach us about the character of God?

The Truth, and ultimately Jesus, are described as a shining light. Where do you need to shine this light this week? Is it in some part of yourself, or to the wider world?

WEEK TEN: **False Teachers**

False teachers are not a new phenomenon in 2024. People have misused and warped the Word of God since the beginning. Even in Peter's time, shortly after the death and resurrection of Jesus, charlatans were using the Word of God to manipulate people and profit off of them. In chapter 1 Peter established the power of true prophecy always comes from God, but now he turns his attention to those who misrepresent the truth. The tricky thing about false teachers is they rarely come out and reveal their true intentions. They use deception to make us think that we are on the same team then seek to confuse what is clear.

Can you think of a time when you were tricked by someone who seemed to be the real deal, but then they were a phony? How did they deceive you? What happened when you found out?

The Judgment of False Teachers *Read 2 Peter 2:1-12*

At the beginning of chapter 2 what does Peter say is the motivation behind these false teachers? Do you think this same sin still drives false teachers today?

In this section we see the passionate side of Peter come out. He was likely speaking against Gnostics, people who claimed that in order to be a Christian you needed to attain some special knowledge or adhere to secret law. Why do you think the Apostle gets so heated and speaks so passionately about the destruction headed for these false leaders?

Christians often spend a ton of time speaking about God's love and spend much less on His Judgment. What examples does Peter use in verses 4-10 to describe God's righteous judgment?

What does God's judgment reveal to us about His character?

In verse 12 Peter says, “but these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand” I have often found this to be the case. People who speak against Truth might sound smart and intelligent on the surface, but when you dig down deeper you realize they are clueless. How have you seen this reality play out in your own experiences with false teachings?

The Way of the Wicked *Read 2 Peter 2:13-22*

How does this passage describe the way of the wicked? Which metaphor in this passage is most striking to you in describing sinful human behavior?

Peter in verse 19 shares a deep spiritual truth. False teachers preach freedom, but they are actually the ones who are most enslaved. How can the secular banner of “freedom” actually be a form of enslavement?

How is the freedom that Jesus offers different?

Verse 22 ends with a profound message from Proverbs 26:11. Both a dog returning to their vomit and a pig to their mud shows us the brokenness of humanity. We are prone to wander and return to our favorite vices. How can believers, as new creations in Christ, stay clear from our habitual sins and resist our animalistic urges?

As we come to the end of this chapter take a second to look inward. In what ways are you guilty of deception, manipulation, or potentially straying from the Truth? How can you practice more self-control as you lead others?

WEEK ELEVEN: The Day of the Lord

This week we bring our study of 1&2 Peter to a close, and as we do so I want to zoom back out to get a wider picture. The Apostle Peter is writing these two letters to believers, primarily Gentiles, who are scattered about modern-day Turkey. At first, the persecution they faced was primarily social, but in the mid to late 60's things changed with Emperor Nero's persecution that began after the great fire of Rome in 64AD. If before it was just uncomfortable to be a Christian, now it was deadly. Peter is writing specifically to these believers who are exiles with the purpose of reminding them of their living hope and their new spiritual family. They can be a part of this new chosen family here and now through the church, but will also share an inheritance with them in heaven.

How much time do you spend thinking about the afterlife - Christ's return and our place in the new heavens and new earth? Does thinking about this bring you joy or stress?

God's Timing *Read 2 Peter 3:1-10*

What words, phrases, or ideas stand out to you from this reading?

Verses 8-9 are beautiful but also mind-blowing. God is outside of time, and as temporal beings this is impossible for us to comprehend. This also means that God works at a different pace than us. We want things now, but God doesn't work in just days or years. He works over lifetimes and through generations. His timetable is perfect, but that means sometimes we will not fully understand the purposes of current events here on earth. Re-read these two verses. What hope do they give you?

What do these verses reveal about God's Character?

Verse 10 is a shift in the tone as the day of God's judgment is described. The idea that the day is coming "like a thief" isn't only found here, but also said by Jesus in Matthew 24:43 and then found in Revelation 16:15. What do you think this phrase means? Why do you think the end would come like this?

In the end the earth will be destroyed. All of our prized possessions will be burned away, but this cleansing doesn't lead to some disembodied experience where we float around. It will make way for a new heavens and new earth. How should this destruction, and then renewal, affect the way we live today? What will remain, and what will go away?

Be On Guard Read 2 Peter 3:11-18

How do these teachings on the end times inspire us to live holy lives here on earth?

Peter gets real honest in verses 15-16 and says something we have probably all thought when reading the Bible: sometimes it's hard to understand! Even Peter says he has trouble with some of Paul's writings. It's a funny verse, but don't miss what he calls Paul's writings - Scripture. The same word used to refer to Old Testament passages at this time. How do these verses support the authority of the New Testament?

How can you be obedient to Scripture and take Paul's advice to be on guard from the lawlessness of the world?

The Lord's patience is mentioned twice in this final chapter. Peter had lived a long and faithful life, and I am sure he had to work on patience throughout his faith journey. Patience is hard, but it is a fruit of the Spirit that the Lord can give you. Where do you need patience in this season of life?

Thank you for joining us the past 11 weeks as we walked through 1&2 Peter. Congratulations, this was a lot of work!

I hope this study was not only informative but one that drove you to obedience through action. It's one thing to know the Word, but it is another to follow it. Keep this study on your bookshelf and maybe return to it when you are in a season of suffering or persecution. Remember if you are in Christ, you belong to God's chosen family, and have an eternal home and inheritance awaiting you. You have a Living Hope that can never spoil, perish, or fade. Rest in that. Rest in the love and protection of Jesus. May this grant you grace and peace in abundance.

If you have any feedback on this study or ways we could improve it feel free to contact me at dbraddock@thestory.church. I look forward to your feedback!

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