

Tapes For Growing Christians

1 PETER Study Guide for

PETER

Growing Christians Ministries
Box 5757, River Forest, IL 60305
growingchristians.org

lesson 1

The Salutation of the Letter and a Description of the Believer's Position in Christ 1 Peter 1:1-5

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers are elect and sanctified and sprinkled. (1 Peter 1:2)
2. Believers are born again to a living hope. (1 Peter 1:3)
3. Believers have received an eternal inheritance. (1 Peter 1:4)
4. Believers are preserved by the power of God. (1 Peter 1:5)

practical application

1. Let the doctrine of election make you more grateful.

questions

1. Name the three parts of the salutation of Peter's letter. See Peter 1:1-2.
2. Who were the recipients of this letter?
3. What is a positive result of the persecution and scattering of believers? (Then and today)
4. How did Peter greet his readers? How does this greeting apply to believers today?
5. Each of the four doctrinal points has to do with the believer's spiritual position in Christ. Review the four doctrinal points.

answers

1. The author, the recipients and the greeting.
2. The recipients of this epistle were known as pilgrims or sojourners of the Dispersion. They were primarily Jewish Christians who were scattered throughout the provinces of the Roman Empire.
3. When believers are persecuted and scattered, they come in contact with many people. As the Lord strengthens them in times of persecution they preach the gospel and the Christian community grows in numbers.
4. "Grace to you and peace be multiplied." (1 Peter 1:2) To have God's grace and peace multiplied in the believer's life is something that money cannot buy. It is the greatest blessing that you can receive. That's what the apostle Peter wanted for his readers, and that's what God wants for believers today.
6. Believers 1) are elect and sanctified and sprinkled, 2) are born again to a living hope, 3) have received an eternal inheritance, and 4) are preserved by the power of God.

discuss / consider

1. Refer to 1 Peter 1:2 and your doctrinal / teaching notes on the tape. Believers are elect and sanctified and sprinkled. Define and/or describe each of these doctrinal points. What is the believer's responsibility in sanctification? By Whom are believers elect and sanctified and sprinkled?
2. Believers are born again to a living hope (1 Peter 1:3). Our salvation is not a reward for good works. We were spiritually dead, but through faith we have been born again (made alive, have new life, experience life in the family of God). This living hope rests on the solid foundation of the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Because our Lord lives forever, we will live forever as well. Meditate on this great blessing. How do you express your gratitude for such a great blessing?
3. Contrast earthly and eternal inheritances.
4. Not only is our inheritance preserved in heaven for us, but we are also preserved for the inheritance. The security of our salvation is based on the power of God. What affect does this fact have upon you, both in your mental acceptance of it and your actions because of it?

challenge

1. As a believer, the doctrine of election should be comforting to you. You were chosen to be one of God's children! Remember, it is only by the grace of God that you are saved. Praise Him for such love and grace!

memorize

"...elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ..." 1 Peter 1:2

"Grace to you and peace be multiplied." 1 Peter 1:2

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5

lesson 2

Our Christian Faith Will Be Tested and Proved and Our Salvation Was Revealed to the Prophets of the Old Testament 1 Peter 1:6-12

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Our faith will be tested and proved. (1 Peter 1:6-7)
2. Our faith is focused in a Person. (1 Peter 1:8-9)
3. Our faith was revealed to the prophets. (1 Peter 1:10-12)

practical application

1. Thank the Lord that you are more than an angel.

questions

1. Why is the date 64 A.D. significant in church history?
2. When did Christianity become illegal throughout the Roman Empire?
3. When was the epistle of 1 Peter written?
4. What was Peter's overall purpose in writing this epistle?
5. What was God's purpose in allowing persecution of the Christians then and today?

answers

1. It was the year of the great fire in Rome. The Roman Emperor Nero said that the gods were upset because of the Christians. Thus, Christians were blamed for the fire and the Roman persecutions began. Until this time Christianity was not illegal in the Roman Empire.
2. After 64 A.D., Christianity became illegal throughout the Roman Empire.
3. It was written about 64 A.D., either right before the Roman persecutions began or soon after they began.
4. To encourage Christians who are suffering for their Christian faith.
5. God had a purpose in allowing the persecutions of the early Christians and the same is true today. The church grows in times of persecution and faith is strengthened. See 1 Peter 1:6-7.

discuss / consider

1. Discuss the relationship between gold and a Christian's faith. How do you react in times of adversity and testing? Are you a faithful, stand-solid Christian or is your testimony hidden? Would you deny Christ or would you stand firm in the faith if you were tortured or your life threatened? Our faith is tested every day, in big and small ways. The subject here is that trials are tests of our Christian faith. Recall some of the tests you have experienced or are experiencing right now. Consider who will receive honor and praise and glory. (Refer to Romans 8:17 and Matthew 25:21).
2. 1 Peter 1:8-9 reminds us that our Christian faith is not just based on facts, but it is placed in a Person – the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian faith is a personal relationship with Christ. Have you experienced the joy that comes with such a relationship? Remember, true and lasting joy does not depend on circumstances.
3. There's a long history of the revelation of our faith. The Old Testament prophets did not fully comprehend all that they wrote about, but they certainly knew that the Messiah was coming with salvation, and that He would have to suffer before He was glorified in order to obtain the salvation. See 1 Peter 1:11.

challenge

1. Thank the Lord that you are more than an angel. Angels will never know the inexpressible and glorious joy of 1 Peter 1:8 that we will experience forever because of our salvation. How often do you thank the Lord for your salvation?

memorize

"...trials come that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 1:6-7

"Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible..." 1 Peter 1:8

lesson 3

A Number of Exhortations to Believers in Reference to Everyday Living in view of Our Great Salvation and Position in Christ 1 Peter 1:13-25

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers should strive for purity of life. (1 Peter 1:13-16)
 - a. Gird up the loins of your mind (be disciplined in your thinking)
 - b. Be sober (self-controlled)
 - c. Rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ
 - d. Don't be conformed to past evil desires
 - e. Be holy
2. Believers should strive for perfection of love. (1 Peter 1:22-25)

practical application

1. Remember, you never have to sin.

questions

1. Does God relax His standards for godly living when Christians are facing the pressure of persecution?
Does God lower His moral standards for Christian conduct when they are undergoing trials?
2. How did Peter address this issue with his first century readers?
3. What does this say to us today?
4. Explain the meaning of the "therefore" of 1 Peter 1:13.
5. Refer to 1 Peter 1:17-21. List the three motivating reasons as to why Christians should strive for purity of life.

answers

1. No. God does not fluctuate or lower His standards and moral obligations for Christians when they face trials and have difficulties.
2. The early Christians here in 1 Peter were facing persecutions and trials, and Peter's epistle reflects God's expectations – that they were to be obedient and living holy lives regardless of circumstances.
3. As believers, we are expected to be obedient children in the family of God and we are expected to live holy lives, regardless of difficult circumstances.
4. In view of our salvation and blessed position in Christ we are therefore to live our lives in line with our status. We are to be what we are in Christ, even when we are facing problems or persecutions.
5. Because of 1) discipline in God's family, 2) the cost of our salvation, and 3) God's eternal plan for us.

discuss / consider

1. As we "strive" for purity of life, strive does not mean that we do this in our own strength, but we need the power of the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. We have to work at being holy and we have to work at letting the Holy Spirit take control in our lives. Discuss and consider.
2. Consider the five exhortations given to believers in reference to purity of life.
 - a) Gird up the loins of your mind. Read 2 Corinthians 10:5.
 - b) Be sober or self-controlled. Recall times when you have sensed yourself being out of control. What steps could you have taken to be self-controlled?
 - c) Rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. How frequently during the day do you consider your eternal future and eternal benefits that will be fully realized when the Lord returns? Does this affect your daily investments?
 - d) Don't be conformed to past evil desires. How do you find release from conforming to your former evil desires? Are you practicing the positive – staying in God's word; continuing in prayer; involving yourself in Christian service; meeting frequently with other believers, being accountable to them?
 - e) Be holy. Read 1 Peter 1:15 and Leviticus 11:44. God's desire and empowerment by the Holy Spirit is for us to be holy. Are you striving to be holy? We will never be sinless in this life, but as believers, we are to sin less. Are you sinning less?
3. "Love one another fervently with a pure heart." (1 Peter 1:22) This is possible because we are born again and have new life, divine life. The Holy Spirit enables and empowers the divine life that we now have in Christ. (See also 2 Peter 1:3-4). Therefore, we can love one another fervently and with a pure heart. Is this true in your life? Do you have difficulty loving the unlovable, the cantankerous, the arrogant, the ones who rub you the wrong way? Or, are you letting the Holy Spirit enable and empower you to love fervently and with a pure heart?

challenge

1. Remember, you never have to sin. Because of the flesh or sinful nature that we still possess we do sin, but because we now have new life in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, we don't have to commit any sin. How is it in your life?

memorize

"...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 Peter 1:13)

"...as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct." (1 Peter 1:15)

"...conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear, knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things...but with the precious blood of Christ..." (1 Peter 1:17-19)

"... love one another fervently with a pure heart." (1 Peter 1:22)

lesson 4

Growing Christians Should Desire the Milk of the Word and Should Offer Up Spiritual Sacrifices 1 Peter 2:1-10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Growing Christians should desire the milk of the word. (1 Peter 2:2-3)
2. Growing Christians should offer up spiritual sacrifices. (1 Peter 2:4-10)

practical application

1. Be a living sacrifice as well as a living stone.

questions

1. What does the “therefore” of 1 Peter 2:1 mean?
2. What other terms are used for the new life in Christ?
3. What are the qualities of this new life in Christ?
4. If we have this new life in Christ, why do we still sin?
5. How can we overcome this tendency to sin?
6. Define the following terms:
 - a. Malice
 - b. Deceit
 - c. Hypocrisy
 - d. Envy
 - e. Evil speaking

answers

1. Every time you read “therefore” in the Bible, you should ask, “What is it there for?” This “therefore” points back to the end of 1 Peter chapter one, where we read that believers have been born again and have new life in Christ. “Therefore” because of this new life we should lay aside things of the old life.
2. Spiritual life, eternal life, divine life.
3. This new divine life that we possess is not sinful and does not desire to sin.
4. Because we still have the flesh or the sinful nature.
5. We are to lay aside the things of the old life and allow the empowerment of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us to control our lives.
6. a. Malice – the harboring of evil thoughts against another person, even hoping that something bad will happen to them.
b. Deceit – any form of dishonesty, like cheating or shading the truth your way.
c. Hypocrisy – pretending to be someone or something that you are not (like pretending to be spiritual when you are really worldly, or pretending to be generous when you are really selfish).
d. Envy – jealousy.
e. Evil speaking – more than just open slander, it includes gossip and backbiting, or talking down a fellow believer.

discuss / consider

1. Have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? Consider your great salvation and the Lord’s care for you. If you have tasted that the Lord is good and gracious, then you should continue to feed on the word, for this is the way you grow in Christian graces. We should desire the milk of the word and the meat of the word. How’s your appetite for the word? David had an extreme thirst for the living God (Psalm 42:1-2). Are you thirsty for the living God?

2. The Lord Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the living temple. We are the living stones. Consider the responsibility as part of the temple of the living Christ. As the Old Testament priests had a responsibility to offer up animal sacrifices, we as a holy and royal priesthood are to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Consider some of the spiritual sacrifices that we can offer up to Him: 1) our praise (see 1 Peter 2:9 and Hebrews 13:15), 2) doing good and sharing of our material possessions (Hebrews 13:16), and 3) service unto the Lord (Romans 15:16). Which spiritual sacrifices are you offering up unto the Lord?

challenge

1, Be a living sacrifice as well as a living stone. See 1 Peter 2:5 and Romans 12:1). Every true believer is a living stone, but not every believer is a living sacrifice. What about you? Living sacrifices are totally committed believers, having submitted their will to God’s will. Are you a living sacrifice?

memorize

“...desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow...if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” (1 Peter 2:2-3)

“...come to Him as a living stone...to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...” (1 Peter 2:4-5)

“...to you who believe, He is precious.” (2 Peter 2:7)

“Jesus Christ has become the chief cornerstone, and stone of stumbling.” (2 Peter 2:7-8)

“You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood...that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” (2 Peter 2:9)

lesson 5

An Exhortation to Believers to Submit to Certain Authorities that God Has Ordained 1 Peter 2:11-25

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Believers should submit to authority in the area of government. (1 Peter 2:13-17)
2. Believers should submit to authority in the area of labor. (1 Peter 2:18-20)

practical application

1. Let's follow in the steps of Jesus. (1 Peter 2:21-25)

questions

1. Believers are sojourners and pilgrims. What does this mean?
2. In what kind of warfare is the Christian involved?
3. Why are Christians to abstain from earthly lusts?
4. How can Christians close the fault-finding mouths of unbelievers?
5. When is a Christian justified in disobeying a civil authority?

answers

1. As believers, we are to live as sojourners and pilgrims here on this earth, abstaining from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, and not becoming entangled in the affairs of this world.
2. Christians are involved in a spiritual war, where Satan has many attractions that appeal to our fleshly lusts.
3. For their own spiritual well-being, and also to be a testimony to unbelievers.
4. By their honorable conduct and good works. They may be the means God uses to convict them of their sins and bring them to salvation.
5. Only when that governing authority asks us to do something that is directly contrary to the word of God. Then we are to obey the higher authority. See Acts 5:29.

discuss / consider

1. When Peter wrote this letter, the Roman Emperor Nero was in power. And it was at this time that Christians were greatly persecuted and Christianity became illegal in the Roman Empire. And yet Peter wrote to the believers to submit to authority in the area of government. Believers should submit to authority in the area of government at all levels – national, state and local. If this was possible in Nero's day, is it not possible today? Are you submitting or chafing under governmental authority?
2. In the first century slavery was practiced in the Roman Empire and Christian slaves were told not to revolt or to run away, but to submit to their masters, even when they were harsh and demanding. We don't have slavery in America today, but we can apply these verses (1 Peter 2:18-20) to the relationship between employers and employees. What do you do in a job situation where the authority above you is unfair and unreasonable? You are to submit and be patient. You are not to complain, but go about doing good under such circumstances. If this seems hard, remember what Christ suffered for you.

challenge

1. Let's follow in the steps of Jesus. What a supreme example. Jesus submitted to authority structures and suffered to the point of death. He did not complain or criticize, but committed everything to the Father.
Are you following in the steps of Jesus?

memorize

"Beloved...as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable, as a witness to the unsaved, that by your good works which they observe, they will glorify God in the day of visitation." 1 Peter 2:11-12

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake...for this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." 1 Peter 2:13, 15

"...when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God." 1 Peter 2:20

"...to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His steps." 1 Peter 2:21

lesson 6

**An Exhortation to Christian Wives in Reference to Their Husbands
and An Exhortation to Christian Husbands in Reference to Their Wives
1 Peter 3:1-7**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Christian wives should respect and submit to their husbands. (1 Peter 3:1-2)
2. Christian husbands should understand and honor their wives. (1 Peter 3:7)

practical application

1. Husbands, are your prayers being answered?

questions

1. Who is the source of all authority? See Romans 13:1
2. Who was the Roman Emperor when Paul wrote Romans 13?
3. Name the four God-ordained areas of authority.
4. What is our Christian responsibility of duty in reference to these four areas of authority?
5. Is there an exception within this framework?
6. Refer to 1 Peter 3:1-2. When the wife is submissive to her husband, what is a potential positive effect?

answers

1. God is the source of all authority and He has ordained or appointed certain lines of authority between Himself and man.
2. Nero was the pagan Roman Emperor.
3. The four areas of authority are: 1) state or government, 2) church, 3) family, and 4) labor.
4. When we have authority, we are not to abuse it or misuse it. When we are under authority, we are to submit.
5. Yes. The only time we disobey is when the authority above us requires us to do something that is completely contrary to the word of God. Then we obey the higher authority, namely, God Himself, because all authority finds its source in God. See Acts 5:29.
6. She may win her husband to the Lord when he observes the chaste conduct of her life and her reverence for God.

discuss / consider

1. Read 1 Peter 3:1-2. Wives are exhorted to submit to their own husbands, a line of authority in the home, where the husband is the head of the family. There are a number of Christians, both men and women who dispute the validity of these verses as applicable or needful in today's society. How would you deal with this refusal to honor the word of God?
2. Read 1 Peter 3:7. Husbands have the greater responsibility before God – to understand their wives and be sensitive to their spiritual, emotional and physical needs. See Ephesians 5:25. Husbands are to remember that they and their wives together are heirs of the grace of life, and that his headship position does not make them any better or more privileged. How would you deal with the husband who “lords” it over his wife?

challenge

1. Husbands, check this out. Are your prayers being answered? If not, it may be that in 1 Peter 3:7 you will find the answer. Examine your relationship with your wife.

memorize

“Wives, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”

1 Peter 3:1-2

“Let your adornment be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.” 1 Peter 3:3-4

“Husbands, dwell with your wives with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.” 1 Peter 3:7

lesson 7

**The Subject Continues to be the Practice of the People of God
with an Emphasis on Returning Good for Evil and on Suffering for the Sake of Righteousness
1 Peter 3:8-22**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. There is blessing ahead for believers who return good for evil. (1 Peter 3:8-9)
2. There is blessing ahead for believers who suffer for righteousness. (1 Peter 3:13-14)

challenge

1. Study Christian evidences.

questions

1. Refer to 1 Peter 3:21. Does baptism save a person?
2. What does it mean to suffer for the sake of righteousness?
3. Consider 1 Peter 3:18.
4. God is known to be patient and longsuffering with sinful man. Is there a limit to His longsuffering?
5. What does baptism symbolize?

answers

1. No. Notice that the overall context of the passage is suffering for the sake of righteousness. Christ suffered once for sins. See 1 Peter 3:18. It is the work of Christ alone that saves us. See Ephesians 2:8.
2. Two examples are given to illustrate what it means to suffer for righteousness sake: 1) the supreme example of the Lord Himself and 2) Noah. The overall argument is that God the Father rewarded the willingness to suffer for righteousness. See 1 Peter 3:18-20
3. The Lord preached to people whose spirits are now in prison because they didn't believe.
4. See Genesis 6:3.
5. Baptism symbolizes the death and burial of Christ, and that is what saves us – the work of Christ. Now we with a clear conscience before God acknowledge this truth in baptism. When we are baptized we are identifying with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, and acknowledging that the work of Christ has saved us, and we now want to separate from the old life and live the new life in Christ.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to 1 Peter 3:8-9. Think of some specific instances when you have returned good for evil. God will bless you for it.
2. Have you ever suffered for saying or doing the right thing? We are exhorted to operate in good conscience (1 Peter 3:16), even though we may be labeled as intolerant, even though we may be mocked or maligned for our faith. God will bless you for suffering for righteousness.

challenge

1. Refer to 1 Peter 3:15. There is evidence that is available to show the credibility of the Christian faith. The word and phrase, "to give an answer or defense," is the word from which we get the word, "apologetics." Apologetics is a defense of the Christian faith. Can you defend the faith? Do you have answers ready to give to people who question the Christian faith? Studying Christian evidences is a command of scripture.

memorize

"...be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil... that you may inherit a blessing." 1 Peter 3:8-9

"...seek peace and pursue it, for the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous..." 1 Peter 3:11-12

"...even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you are blessed." 1 Peter 3:14

"...sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15

"...it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil." 1 Peter 3:17

"Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit." 1 Peter 3:18

lesson 8

The Theme of Suffering for Christ and the Theme of Righteousness Continue 1 Peter 4:1-6

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal /teaching points

1. Unbelievers will give an account to the Lord. (1 Peter 4:5)
2. Believers will receive a reward from the Lord. (1 Peter 4:6)

practical application

1. It's a good sign when you are maligned for doing right.

questions

1. Who were the primary recipients of Peter's letter?
2. Refer to 1 Peter 4:3. How can you understand the description of these folks as unbelieving religious Jews?
3. "...since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." (1 Peter 4:1). Does this mean that if you suffer for Christ you can reach a state of perfection in this life?
4. Examine 1 Peter 4:1-2 in more detail. What does the mind have to do with ceasing from sin?
5. When writing to the first century Jewish believers, why was it necessary for Peter to emphasize and explain the matter of suffering for the sake of Christ?

answers

1. Jewish believers of the first century who were scattered around the Roman Empire.
2. These Jews who were scattered around the Roman Empire were surrounded by the pagan Roman culture, and many of them had become acculturated with these practices of pagan Rome.
3. No. but you will sin less. The word “sin” here conveys the idea of ceasing to live your life in line with your sinful nature. See Romans 6:14.
4. The principle of 1 Peter 4:1 is that our commitment to suffer for the sake of Christ begins with the mind. It’s a matter of the will. Only then can there be 1 Peter 4:2 – that we should no longer live in sin.
5. The Old Testament scriptures promised material blessings and long life if you followed the Lord. To the Jews, suffering was a sign of divine disfavor. But now that the Messiah has come and had been rejected, the way of suffering for Christ would be the norm for the committed Christian in a world that rejects Christ.

discuss / consider

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the judge of the living and the dead. No one will escape the judgment of God. When the Lord returns to this earth, there will be a judgment of the living . See Joel 3 and Matthew 25. Then at the end of our Lord’s thousand year reign on this earth, there will be a judgment of the unbelieving dead . This is the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20:11-13. Read the scriptures listed in this paragraph to understand what it means the unbelievers will give an account to the Lord.
2. Believers will receive a reward from the Lord. But your level of commitment now makes a difference. How committed are you in suffering for the sake of Christ now? Your commitment now will be in proportion to your eventual reward. Consider this carefully.

challenge

1. Have you ever been maligned for doing the right thing as a Christian? Have you been hated by the world when you spoke for Christ? See John 15:18. If so, that’s evidence that you are more than just a secret believer. You are a committed Christian, and it’s a good sign if you are maligned for doing right and hated by the world.

memorize

“...since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.” 1 Peter 4:1-2

“Unbelievers will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.” 1 Peter 4:5

lesson 9

A Series of Exhortations to Believers Concerning Faithfulness in Christian Conduct and Faithfulness while Undergoing Suffering for the Sake of Christ 1 Peter 4:7-19

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The goal of Christian service is the glory of God. (1 Peter 4:11)
2. The result of Christian suffering should be the glory of God. (1 Peter 4:12-19)

practical application

1. Remember, suffering for the sake of Christ is a privilege, not a penalty.

questions

1. "The end of all things is at hand." (1 Peter 4:7) What did Peter mean when he wrote this?
2. In view of this, what should it motivate Christians to do?
3. In doing these things, what are the benefits?
4. What does "agape" mean?
5. "Love covers a multitude of sins." What does this mean?

answers

1. Peter had in mind the imminent return of the Lord for His church.
2. To faithfully serve the Lord and to faithfully suffer for His sake. See 1 Peter 4:7-19.
3. To faithfully serve and to faithfully suffer is not only beneficial to us, but it brings glory to God.
4. It means the love of God in us and the denial of self in the interest of others.
5. If we really love one another, we will be able to overlook the minor faults and failures of other believers.

discuss / consider

1. Consider the exhortations in 1 Peter 4:7-10.
 - a. Have a serious prayer life. Do you have a serious and mature prayer life? Cite evidence.
 - b. Show fervent love to fellow believers. Are you denying self in the interest of others? Are you able to overlook minor faults and failures in other believers?
 - c. Show hospitality to one another. Are you inviting unbelievers into your home? Are you inviting believers who are difficult or cannot repay you into your home? Are you being hospitable without grumbling or complaining?
 - d. Use your spiritual gift for service. Are you ministering to one another as a good steward? Have you identified your gift(s)? Are you involved in Christian service? Cite evidence.

2. Why does God allow Christians to suffer persecution. Consider the reasons. Remember that the bottom line should be the glory of God. Christians were persecuted unmercifully under the Roman Emperor Nero. Christians are persecuted today in many parts of the world. Christians facing persecutions know the presence and power of Christ in their lives in a way that some Christians never experience. How can you enter in to suffering for Christ? How involved are you with mission fields where there is shameful persecution?

challenge

1. It is a privilege to suffer for Christ and the opportunity is now. Are you suffering for Christ because of your stand for Him? Are you praying for Christians who are undergoing extreme suffering for the sake of Christ?

memorize

"...the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers." 1 Peter 4:7

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." 1 Peter 4:10

"...in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever." 1 Peter 4:11

"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you...but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:12-13

"If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you....if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter." 1 Peter 4:14, 16

"...the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God..." 1 Peter 4:17

lesson 10

**Some Final Exhortations and the Final Greeting of the Letter
1 Peter 5:1-14**

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal /teaching points

1. Elders should shepherd the flock under them. (1 Peter 5:1-4)
2. Younger believers should submit to their elders. (1 Peter 5:5)
3. All believers should be humble and alert. (1 Peter 5:5-7)

practical application

1. Remember, you are not the only one.

questions

1. Who is the Silvanus of 1 Peter 5:12?
2. What is there a tendency to do when you face persecution?
3. What should you do about this tendency?
4. Who is the "she" of 1 Peter 5:13?
5. Who is the Mark of 1 Peter 5:13

answers

1. Silvanus is probably the Silas that accompanied the apostle Paul on his second missionary journey. Remember him? He and Paul sang hymns of praise in prison at Philippi. Silas served as Peter's secretary, writing this letter as Peter dictated it, and it was likely that he delivered it to the scattered Christian churches to whom it was addressed.
2. There is a tendency to question what you believe.
3. Remember that your Christian faith is the true grace of God. Stand firm without wavering. Trust God's grace and truth.
4. There are several possibilities: 1) most likely it was not Peter's wife, 2) it probably refers to the church in Babylon since Peter is writing to the scattered churches; 3) it may be the literal Babylon on the Euphrates River; or 4) it may be a disguised symbolic reference to Rome during a time of increasing persecution.
5. It is believed that John Mark is not the biological son of Peter, but rather the spiritual son of Peter. They spent some time together after the resurrection of Christ, and Peter disciplined John Mark. This is the John Mark who wrote the gospel of Mark.

discuss / consider

1. Elders, the spiritual leaders of the church, should be as shepherds to the flock under them, leading gently and by example. Consider the elders of your church. Are they respected? Are they biblical elders (do they follow scriptural guidelines of elders)?
2. The accumulated wisdom of the elders is extremely important for the smooth running of any church, and they have the God-given spiritual authority to so govern. As such members of the congregation, whatever age, are to submit to the authority of the elders. Are you willingly submitting to the elders?
3. Refer to 1 Peter 5:5-7. Are you submissive to one another? Are you clothed with humility? Note the blessings of the humbled: 1) God gives grace to the humble (so you can handle whatever God allows to happen to you); 2) God will exalt you (if you allow yourself to be humbled, just wait. God will vindicate you); and 3) God cares for you (if you are going through humbling experiences, turn all your anxieties over to the Lord. He can and will work through this with you and for you).

challenge

1. Do you believe that you are unique in your load of suffering? Not so. Don't be discouraged thinking that you are the only one. Let God use the suffering to mature you, establish and strengthen you, and settle you.

memorize

"(to elders) shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly...nor as lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock...and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away." 1 Peter 5:2-4

"...submit yourselves to your elders...all of you be submissive to one another...humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." 1 Peter 5:5-6

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith..." 1 Peter 5:8-9

"May the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 5:10-11.