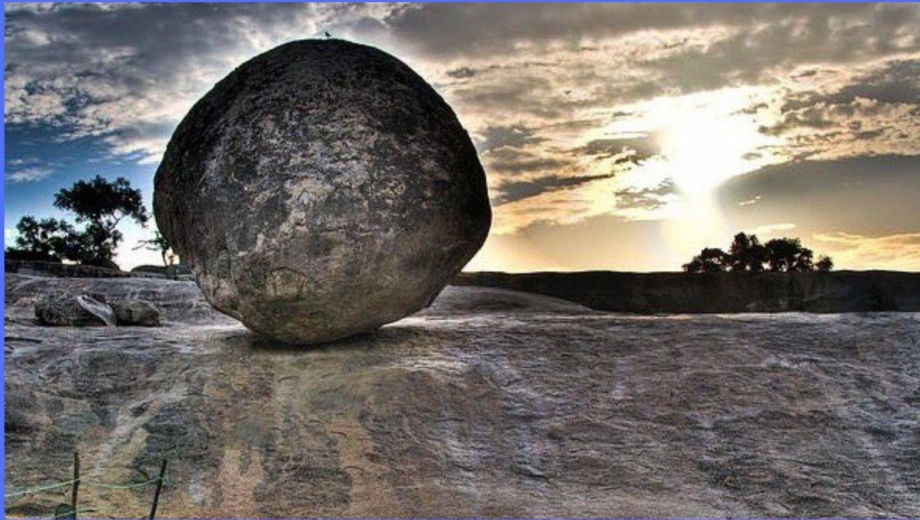


# **First Peter**

## **A 12-Session Audio-Assisted Bible Study**



**By Michael Collins**

## Table of Contents

<b>Study # 1 - 1 Peter 1:1-5 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Study # 2 - 1 Peter 1:6-12 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Study # 3 - 1 Peter 1:13-21 .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Study # 4 - 1 Peter 1:22-2:8 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Study # 5 - 1 Peter 2:9-17 .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Study # 6 - 1 Peter 2:18-25 .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Study # 7 - 1 Peter 3:1-7 .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Study # 8 - 1 Peter 3:8-12 .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Study # 9 - 1 Peter 3:13-22 .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Study # 10 – 1 Peter 4:1-11.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Study # 11 – 1 Peter 4:12-19.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Study # 12 – 1 Peter 5:1-14.....</b>	<b>35</b>

## Study # 1 - 1 Peter 1:1-5

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 1:1-5](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 1:1-5](#)

### 1 Peter 1:1-2

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

The author of this letter is the Apostle Peter, one of the 12 apostles chosen by Jesus. The letter is addressed to the believers in Jesus who, owing to the persecution that broke out against them in Jerusalem, were scattered across many cities, and hence referred to as pilgrims, as they were no longer able to live in their own hometown.

Peter goes on to say that these people were chosen by God. That's something none of us should ever forget – we did not choose God, but He chose us. In fact, Peter was echoing the very words of Jesus, who said to His disciples in **John 15:16** – “*You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*”

He then uses another phrase - ‘*foreknowledge of God the Father*’ – a phrase that can be misunderstood if it's not understood. God the Father knew who would respond to the Gospel, and believe in His Son Jesus, though He did not decide who would respond. He knew it because He was God – that's what is referred to as foreknowledge. All were invited, but only those who responded were chosen to belong to His Family.

He then says that after we were chosen by God, we were then given God's Holy Spirit to help perfect the work of sanctification (the process of becoming holy), in our lives. We've been set apart to live lives that are very different from the world around us – lives that reflect the nature of Christ Himself – a life of love, purity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc. And to help us live this new life, God has now given us His Holy Spirit to live inside of us, to help us in this process. None of us can live the life the Lord wants us to live, in our own strength, because by ourselves we don't have the power to live this new life – we need the help of the Lord. Imagine the best-looking, smartest mobile phone with a battery that has no charge. No matter how good it looks, it's useless unless it has a charged battery inside of it. So also, we need the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, to fulfil, and complete the work of sanctification in our lives.

The Holy Spirit teaches us how to obey Christ's teachings, and eventually become a reflection of Christ in every way. We are not only called to believe in all of Jesus' teachings on how to live this new life, but we are also called to obey His teachings, else the teachings are of no use to us or anyone else, and we'll find that over time there'll be no change in our character, and we will not become the reflection of Christ, that God intended for us to become.

He then uses a phrase that could be understood only when the background is first understood. The phrase is, *'sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.'* God had decided a long time back that Jesus would come into the world, and establish a covenant with those who believe in Him, and as if to create a shadow of coming events, God established a covenant with the people of Israel many centuries ago, when He delivered them from the bondage to slavery in Egypt. To establish this covenant with His people God asked Moses to sacrifice bulls and to sprinkle some of its blood on the altar and some on the people of Israel. So the sprinkling was an act to symbolize the covenant that God was entering into with the people of Israel.

With the old covenant in the background, Peter then makes reference to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, meaning that Jesus shed His blood to bear the penalty of the sins of the whole world. The blood of bulls and goats and birds could never take away the sins of the world, they were only pushing it forward to the day when people could really find forgiveness through the shed blood of Jesus on our behalf. God has now entered into a new covenant with those who put their faith in His Son Jesus Christ. This is an everlasting covenant that God will remain faithful to, and we should also remain faithful to.

He then goes on to greet them with God's grace – something that came in great measure through Jesus Christ. John said in **John 1:14** – *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."* This gift of Salvation is the greatest expression of the grace of God, where we do nothing to receive it; Jesus paid the price on our behalf, and all we do is believe and trust in His work, and thereby, we appropriate it in our lives. Peter is blessing them with God's grace, through which they have received all things freely – and unmerited at that, especially at a time when they were struggling in a land that was not their own. It's a lot like the times the world is facing at the moment with this pandemic creative havoc. We need all of God's grace in these difficult times.

Not only does He bless them with God's grace but he also blesses them with God's peace – something that Jesus came to bring as well. God made peace with man, who had rebelled against Him. We can now have a relationship with God like never before. Jesus also promised us a peace that was far different from the peace that the world offers us. Jesus said in **John 14:1**, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me."* Again Jesus said in **John 14:27**, *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* This again was something they would have needed to experience a lot, since they were also suffering persecution on account of their faith in the places they lived. In the midst of those difficulties, he blesses them with a peace that the world would not be able to comprehend. Someone said, *"Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of God, no matter what the conflict."*

Once again, this is the kind of peace we need today as well, when the world is going through turmoil as a result of this pandemic, but for those of us who know the Lord, we also get to experience this peace in a way that is unexplainable, and all because we have the Lord in our lives during these turbulent times.

## 1 Peter 1:3-5

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, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Peter then goes on to say that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is blessed (a word used to praise God for who He is), and here are the reasons why he praises God.

*Firstly*, Peter praises God for His abundant mercy. When Jesus came into the world, He came to save us from God's wrath on account of our sin, when He bore our penalty on the cross. Mercy is us not getting the punishment we deserve. Since this whole merciful plan of Salvation was God's plan, Peter praises God for his mercy.

Peter goes on to say that God has begotten us (caused us to be born again into two things – **a living hope** and **an inheritance**). When he says that we've been born into a living hope (assurance), he means that we have now have the assurance that we will live forever with God – imagine that – what an amazing assurance that is.

When he talks about being born into, he's referring to the rebirth Jesus talked about with Nicodemus in **John Chapter 3:1-21**. This hope (assurance) we possess is as a result of the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. If Jesus had not risen from the dead, then our faith would be in a dead person. But since Jesus rose from the dead, we have the assurance that we too will rise from the dead. (To read more about this amazing hope we have, read, **1 Corinthians Chapter 15**). Jesus is alive again, and will be forever more. It's because of this assurance we have, that we don't fear death anymore, because it means that when the Lord returns, and we rise from the dead, we will forever be with the Lord thereafter. This is the hope with which we live, and that's why Peter calls it a living hope.

Peter goes on to say that not only have we been born into a living hope but we've also been born into an inheritance that is both incorruptible and undefiled. This means that as believers in Jesus, and as children of God, we have this amazing hope that we will inherit something that will never spoil or fade or lose its beauty. This inheritance is also pure because it comes from God – it's undefiled in any way. Worldly inheritances will fade and spoil with time, but the inheritance that the Lord has in store for us, is eternal and pure.

Peter goes on to say that not only is God preserving for us an eternal inheritance, but He is also preserving us by His power, until such time that we get to receive that inheritance, when the Lord Jesus will return, which he refers to as the last time. The salvation we have experienced till now will fade into oblivion when compared with the salvation the Lord will reveal to us on that day. Imagine us being welcomed into the amazing presence of God to live with Him forever. Who could ask for anything better?

## Study # 2 - 1 Peter 1:6-12

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 1:6-12](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 1:6-12](#)

### 1 Peter 1:6-8

<sup>1</sup>In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> 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, <sup>8</sup> whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, <sup>9</sup> receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of *your* souls.

After talking about the hope we live with – the hope of living with God forever (eternal life), Peter then goes on to tell his readers (and us), that between now and the time that we possess that eternal life, we will be grieved with various kinds of trials. The first thing he encourages us to do during those tough times is to rejoice greatly in them. Now that’s not something most of us can relate with easily, or find ourselves doing when we are grieved by various trials. We hardly find ourselves rejoicing in trials, let alone rejoicing greatly in trials. Let’s see why and how Peter has this perspective of trials.

Before we look at his reasons to have this perspective of trials, let’s not forget that Peter is perhaps writing from his own experience of facing trials of various kinds, and rejoicing in them himself. Remember the time all the apostles were beaten for preaching Christ in **Acts 5:40**? In **verse 41** it says, “*So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.*” He is preaching only what he has already practiced.

The reason he gives as to why we need to rejoice greatly in our trials has something to do with the perspective with which we look at our trials. Firstly, he says that trials serve as a test of the genuineness our faith. One can profess to have genuine faith in Jesus when everything’s going well in their lives, and there’s not even a glimpse of trials, but when the same person is faced with trials, and they can still greatly rejoice in it, then that’s evidence of genuine faith. There seems to be a difference between faith and genuine faith, and we are called to possess and live with genuine faith. Faith believes when life is free of any trials, but genuine faith believes, and goes further to rejoice greatly in trials. These trials don’t come to test our faith as much as they do to test the *genuineness* of our faith, and our response to trials proves whether or not our faith is genuine.

Abraham believed God even when God asked him to sacrifice his one and only son on the altar, and he proved beyond doubt that his faith was genuine. Read what the angel of the Lord said to Abraham just at the point when he was about to sacrifice Isaac on the altar. “*Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.*” One of the best ways we can truly demonstrate our faith in Christ, is when we hold on to Him no matter what trials we face in life. God has an amazing way

of turning things around in our lives, but until then, let's hold on, and let our faith grow to become genuine and strong.

Peter goes on to compare the genuineness of our faith with gold. He says that it's because gold is refined of all its impurities in the fire, that it comes out pure, and is therefore so precious. He then says that more precious than gold, is the genuineness of our faith. He's not comparing gold with our faith, but rather with the genuineness of our faith. He seems to be saying that its trials can serve to transform our faith from mere faith to genuine faith. But for that process to take place, we need to remain faithful to the Lord in our trials, and not quit, just like gold needs to remain in the fire to be purified. Let's not miss the point. He's not talking about trials purifying us, as much as he's talking about trials proving the genuineness of our faith.

He adds a small detail regarding gold – though it is refined in the fire, and is so precious, gold will eventually perish. But that's not so with genuine faith. Nothing can destroy genuine faith – not the worst of trials in life. Fake faith will wear off at the slightest glimpse of trials, but not genuine faith.

Peter goes on to say that genuine faith will last right until the Lord Jesus returns, when He will praise us for our faith in Him, He will glorify us, and honor us in ways that no human could ever honor us, because despite all the trials we faced in life, we trusted in, and remained faithful to Him.

Regarding the trials we face Peter adds a couple of details that can go unnoticed. The first one being that the trials will last only for a little while. We are not going to undergo trials all of our lives – there will be an end to them. The second detail is found in the words, "*If need be,*" meaning that we don't need to go searching for trials, and that we will go through them only if we need to, If we do go through trials, we need to rejoice greatly in them.

Regarding their faith in Jesus, Peter commends the believers who, though they had not seen Him, they loved Him. It's not common for one to love someone they haven't seen. In fact, Peter himself had seen Jesus, had walked with Him, talked with Him, ate with Him, ministered with Him and so he loved Him. But the believers he's writing to (and we), have not seen Jesus and yet we love Him.

Not only do they love Jesus though they hadn't seen Him, but their faith in Jesus is accompanied by joy that can't be expressed in words, and by a glorious life in Christ. He tells them that the end result of such genuine faith in Jesus will be the ultimate salvation of their souls. Let's remember that the process of salvation began when we put our faith in Christ. We were saved from our sin and its penalty, but as we live out our lives in Christ, God is perfecting that work in our lives, where we are being transformed daily into the image of Christ, and one day we will be fully transformed, and then the work of salvation of our souls will be complete. That's why the Apostle Paul said in **Philippians 2:12-13**, "*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*"

## 1 Peter 1:10-12

<sup>10</sup> Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, <sup>11</sup> searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. <sup>12</sup> To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

Peter goes on to say that this salvation that we have received was something that the prophets of the Old Testament did a lot of research about. They knew that God was going to save His people, but they were not sure of the details of this amazing work of God. So they searched intently, to try and figure out what this grace that we were going to receive, was all about. Until then God's grace was evident to His people, but not in full measure as when Jesus came into the world. The Apostle John said in **John 1:14**, *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

The prophets of the Old Testament knew that the Holy Spirit was speaking through them about the coming of Jesus, and the grace that would be revealed through Him, but they were not sure exactly when this would happen. They had prophesied about the sufferings that Jesus would undergo while here on earth – a reference to His crucifixion. (**Read Isaiah 53**).

Not only did they prophesy about the sufferings that Jesus would endure, but they also prophesied about the glories that would follow His suffering – referring to His resurrection from the dead. (**Psalms 16:10**). Jonah being in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights was also a picture of Jesus being buried for three days and three nights, and then rising from the dead. Jesus Himself made reference to this in **Matthew 12:40**.

Why the prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament serve as a proof that Jesus was who He claimed to be, is because no one could foretell so much about a person's birth, life, death, burial and resurrection so accurately, unless it was God revealing those things about the person long before they actually happened.

Peter says that these things were revealed to the prophets not just for their own benefit but they were actually serving us, who have now come to believe the Gospel of Jesus. This gospel was preached to us by the Holy Spirit through various people. We should remember that every time we heard the Gospel preached to us, it was the Holy Spirit preaching to us through whoever was preaching. Likewise, every time we preach the Gospel to someone, it is the Holy Spirit preaching to them through us. Peter adds that the Holy Spirit was sent down to us from heaven. What a privilege we have to have the Holy Spirit of God sent down to us from heaven, to live inside of us, and to use us to take the gospel to other people, so that they too might come to faith in Jesus just like we did.

This Gospel message about God's plan to save the world from the penalty of, and the bondage to sin was so intricately planned by God for so many centuries, and implemented in His perfect time, that even the angels long to understand these things themselves.



## Study # 3 - 1 Peter 1:13-21

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 1:13-21](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 1:13-21](#)

### 1 Peter 1:13-16

<sup>13</sup> 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; <sup>14</sup> as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; <sup>15</sup> but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, <sup>16</sup> because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

Peter had just written about the amazing plan that the Lord had devised to save the world – so amazing was it that the angels desired to understand these things. He then says that we need to ‘gird up the loins of our minds.’ This term, ‘gird up the loins,’ is best understood by middle-eastern cultures, where robes are still used by men as a dress code. The term also connects with our South Indian culture, where the lungi is used. When a person wearing a robe or a lungi is about to get involved in some action that requires speed and quick movements, he takes the bottom of his robe or lungi and tucks it into his belt or into the top of his lungi so that he’s able to move easier with no hindrance. So his readers understood this term very well, since they wore robes.

Peter seems to be saying that the times we live in are of such significance, and calls for us to be active in living out our faith. We need to be mentally prepared for action. All preparation starts with the mind, and so he addresses the mind first. Someone said, “*All battles are either won or lost in the mind.*”

The second thing Peter tells his readers to be, is sober. The word, ‘sober’ can be used in two contexts; the first meaning of the word sober refers to not being drunk. As Christians, we are not called to drunkenness but to be sober, so we can live the way the Lord would have us live. The Apostle Paul cautions against being drunk with wine, which leads to debauchery, and encourages us to be filled with the Holy Spirit instead. **(Ephesians 5:18)**

Another meaning of the word, ‘sober,’ is to be serious. We are not to be flippant and careless in the way we live our lives, but to be serious in our commitment to Christ. This does not negate room for humor and laughter, but it refers to a serious commitment to walking with Christ every day.

Peter then goes on to them to tell them to rest their hope, or to set their hope fully on the grace that will be revealed when Jesus returns. After telling them to be ready for action and to be sober-minded, he then tells them to have a single-minded focus on the fact that they are going to receive a gracious gift from God when Jesus returns. All that we have received from God will fade into oblivion when compared with what the Lord will bestow upon us on that day. There’s nothing that can be compared with living forever in the presence of God, and that’s where we who believe in, and follow the Lord are headed.

Peter then goes on to remind them to be like obedient children, meaning that just as kids learn obedience at home, they too as new believers in the Family of God, need to be obedient to God. It's only in obedience to God that any real change and transformation can take place.

He then discourages them from becoming conformed to their former way of life, when they lived to fulfil their lustful desires, and reminds them that they did so out of ignorance. Now that we know the truth, we have no excuse to continue on in the old way of life.

Peter then gives a reason for his instructions for a holy (set apart) life – it's because God Himself is holy. Since we now know God personally and are part of His family, we need to seek to reflect His holiness in our lives. He then quotes the same words from **Leviticus 11:44**, which says, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*” This goes to prove that God's expectations of man have not changed – the only difference is that now we have the ability to live the life that God would have us live, because we have His Holy Spirit living inside of us.

### **1 Peter 1:17-21**

<sup>17</sup> And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; <sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold*, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. <sup>20</sup> He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you <sup>21</sup> who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Peter then appeals to their reason, and reminds them that since God is impartial in the way He judges people, we should be careful in how we live our lives, not assuming that because we are believers, the Lord will be lenient with us if we choose to live sinful lives. He goes on to remind them that they were not redeemed from their old aimless way of life (that was passed down to them along with traditions by their ancestors), by perishable things like gold or silver, but were rather redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus when He gave His life for their sins. He was pure like a lamb, and spotless with no sin, and that's why His blood was accepted by God, the Father. In fact, all the sacrifices of the Old Testament actually pointed to Jesus's sacrificial death on the cross for the sins of the whole world.

Peter reminds them that God's plan of redemption was not an after-thought, but was something He had planned long before creation itself. God knew that man would rebel against Him, and God had decided beforehand that Jesus would pay the price for our redemption, but this was kept secret until the time He came into the world. It's through Jesus that we have come to believe in God, who raised Jesus from the dead and took Him into heaven, where He is now seated at the right hand of God. On account of all this that God has done for us, our faith and hope are in God, since it was God who took the initiative to reconcile us back to Himself, though we were the ones who rebelled against Him.

## Study # 4 - 1 Peter 1:22-2:8

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 1:22-2:8](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 1:22-2:8](#)

### 1 Peter 1:22-25

<sup>22</sup> Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, <sup>23</sup> having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, <sup>24</sup> because “All flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, <sup>25</sup> but the word of the LORD endures forever.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

After telling the believers to live their time on earth in fear (reverence / respect) for God, Peter then says that we need to have sincere love one another, and he gives a reason for that. He reminds us that our souls, which were marred by sin, have now been purified when we responded to the Gospel that was preached to us through the Holy Spirit.

When referring to the kind of love we need to have for one another, he says that it needs to be sincere, fervent and pure. It’s easy for us to fake love and concern with mere words, and that’s perhaps why the Apostle John says in **1 John 3:18**, “*My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*” Peter says that our love needs to be sincere as opposed to insincere. None of us likes to receive insincere love from people, so let’s not give that kind of love to others either.

The *second* thing he says about the love we share with one another as believers, is that it should be fervent, as opposed to lacking in fervor, warmth or emotion. When we love people fervently, it deeply impacts them, in fact, that’s the kind of love we ourselves like to receive from others. So let’s ensure that our love for one another is fervent, and not unpassionate or unemotional.

The *third* thing he talks about the love that we are to share with one another, is that it needs to come from a pure heart. When the word, ‘*heart*’ is used it refers to the seat of our desires, intentions, and motives. So Peter seems to be saying that if we love someone, we need to ensure that our love has clean, sincere and genuine desires and motives. It means that the motive behind the love we show for people should not be selfish, but rather have the other person’s best interests in mind. Here again, it seems like he’s telling us that our love should be real and not fake or with ulterior motives, else the only person we’d be loving would be ourselves and not the other.

He continues to give reasons why we should love one another sincerely, fervently and with a pure heart. It’s because we’ve been born again – something we should never forget. We’re no longer the same people we were before we came to know Christ – we’ve been born again through the Holy Spirit, when we put our faith in Jesus. The Apostle John said in **John 1:12-13** – “*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*” He goes on to mention how we were not born again, and how we were born again. He

says that we were not born again by the seed of man – which he refers to as corruptible, meaning that physical birth is corruptible, and will end in death, but we were born again by seed that is incorruptible, meaning that the life that we now have will last forever and never end.

When Peter uses the word, ‘seed,’ he’s referring to Jesus, who was “*The Word made flesh.*” (**John 1:14**). The Apostle Paul refers to Jesus as the seed in **Galatians 3:16**, which says, “*Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ.*” Peter goes on to say, “*Through the word of God which lives forever and abides forever.*” This again is a reference to Jesus, who lives and abides forever. Jesus was never created, and will never die either – He is eternal.

Peter goes on to quote from **Isaiah 40:6-8**, which compares human life with the Word of God. He says that human life is as temporal as the grass of the field, and man, in all his splendor, is merely like a flower that blooms and then fades away, but the Word of God endures forever. So in other words, he’s saying that putting our trust in man or in the splendor of riches is futile, because it will all fade away one day, but putting our faith in Jesus is the best thing we can do in life, because He will never fade or perish, and so our hope is in Someone solid and firm forever. He goes on to say that the Gospel message that was preached to them, and us is all about Jesus.

### **1 Peter 2:1-3**

*“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, <sup>2</sup> as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, <sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”*

After telling us to love one another sincerely, fervently and with pure hearts, Peter then goes on to tell us how we should not live. He tells us to change the way we live, and to turn away from certain ways that are not conducive to loving one another, and he actually mentions a few sinful ways of living that we should turn away from.

The first thing he tells us to turn away from is *malice*, which is a desire to harm someone. When we love someone, we don’t seek to harm them in any way – verbally or otherwise. The second thing he says we need to stay clear of is *all deceit*, where one seeks to make believe what’s not true as though it was. Deceit can be in words, actions or attitudes and that’s why he uses the words, “*all deceit.*”

He adds to the list of things to avoid, by including *hypocrisy* – pretending to possess a higher standard of Christian living that’s not really true, but a mere pretense. When we truly love someone, we don’t deceive them or pretend we’re someone we’re not – we remain true to who we are with them. He goes on to add *envy* as something to stay away from. We never envy someone we truly love – we rejoice with them instead. Envy is an evidence of the lack of love for the person we envy. The final thing he says we need to stay away from is *evil speaking*. Speaking evil of others is certainly not an evidence of love for that person, and so if we claim to love one another, speaking evil of them should not even cross our minds, let alone our lips.

He then adds a suggestion that will certainly help us in our endeavor to lay aside these unhealthy practices, and instead to put on love for one another. He says that just as a new born infant desires or craves its mother's milk, which is pure, (unadulterated), we too need to have a craving and a desire for God's unadulterated Word, so that we may grow in our new-found faith in Jesus. He adds that if we have tasted and found that the Lord is gracious then we need to seek to listen to, read and obey His word, so we may grow in our relationship with Jesus. We were called, not to remain stagnant in our faith in the Lord, but to grow in maturity, so we may reflect Him in every area of our lives.

### **1 Peter 2:4-5**

**<sup>4</sup> Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, <sup>5</sup> you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

Peter then encourages us to come to Jesus, whom he refers to as the living stone, who was rejected by the builders. In fact Jesus Himself referred to Himself as such when in **Matthew 21:42**, he quoted verbatim from **Psalms 118:22**, which says, *"Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"* Jesus is not just the stone, but the *living* stone, because though He died, He rose from the dead, and is alive forevermore.

He goes on to add another detail about Jesus – the fact that He was rejected by men. When Jesus came into the world to live among men, He first came to God's chosen people, the Jews, but instead of welcoming Him and putting their faith in Him, they rejected Him, and did not consider Him the Messiah who was to come into the world. **John 1:11** says, *"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him."* Not only was Jesus rejected by men back then, but sadly, even today, while millions put their faith in Him, there are several more millions who reject Him as the Messiah, and so don't put their faith in Him, to get saved from God's wrath and eternal separation from God.

Peter goes on to say that though Jesus was rejected by men as the Messiah, He was chosen by God, and precious. People might have thought Jesus to be an impostor and not the real Messiah, but God had chosen Him to be the One through whom the whole world would have an opportunity to be saved from a lost eternity. He was not only the chosen One, but He was precious to God. In fact on two occasions (at the Baptism of Jesus in **Matthew 3:17**, and in **Matthew 17:5**, at the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain) God the Father spoke in the hearing of people when He said, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased..."*

Peter then goes on to then make a connection between us as believers in Jesus and with Him, the living stone. He says that we too are living stones, and adds that we are being built up into a spiritual house. In this spiritual house, Jesus is the most important living stone – the capstone, and we are also living stones, because we now believe in Him who is alive, and so now we have a new life that will never end. Though our bodies will die, our souls are born again and will never die. By including this detail about us as believers, Peter is reminding us that we need to live a new life that reflects Christ in every way.

He then goes on to say that the purpose behind us being included in this spiritual house is that we might be a *“Holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* In the days of the Old Testament, dead animal or bird sacrifices were offered to God in various ways. But now after Jesus offered Himself up as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, we who believe in Him, no longer need to offer up sacrifices to God. But in gratitude to God, we now live our lives as living sacrifices unto God, where we please the Lord in the way we live our lives. Our living sacrifices are acceptable to God, only through Jesus Christ, not any other man or woman. In fact, that’s exactly what the Apostle Paul also said in **Romans 12:1**, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”* Paul encourages us to live our lives in ways that are pleasing to God, and he calls this a reasonable service, meaning that this should be the appropriate response for all that God has done for us through His Son Jesus Christ.

### **1 Peter 2:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, *“Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”* <sup>7</sup> Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious*; but to those who are disobedient, *“The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,”* <sup>8</sup> and *“A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.”* They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

Peter goes on to quote from **Isaiah 28:16**, which says in effect, that God has placed in Zion (referring to the people of Israel) a chief cornerstone, elect (chosen) and precious, and says that whoever puts their faith in Him (referring to Jesus), will by no means be put to shame. God is faithful, and will never promise something and go back on His word, and put us to shame. Jesus has promised salvation to all those who put their trust in Him, and He will not disappoint us – He will deliver what He promised.

Peter goes on to say that not only is Jesus precious to His Father, but He is also precious to those of us who have put our faith in Him. Now that we realize who Jesus is, we should never trade anything for our relationship with Him. But to those who refuse to put their faith in Jesus, and who are disobedient to Him - the Cornerstone (most important person) in the spiritual house (The Church), He will come across to them as one who causes them to stumble over (rather than a stepping stone) into the family of God. Instead of Jesus being the One through whom they enter the family of God, He will be the One who will be like a rock of offense to them. The reason they stumble, is because they chose to disbelieve and disobey God’s Word when the Gospel was preached to them, and they therefore forfeited their own Salvation. Peter goes on to say that they were appointed to stumbling, meaning that if one disobeys God’s Word or rejects the Gospel, then there’s no other option available to them but to stumble and forfeit their own Salvation.

## Study # 5 - 1 Peter 2:9-17

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 2:9-17](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 2:9-17](#)

### 1 Peter 2:9-10

<sup>9</sup>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 into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

After telling his readers about the plight of those who reject the Gospel message of Salvation, Peter then compares them with the believers and says, “But you are a ‘*chosen generation.*’ By the word chosen, he means that God has Himself chosen us to belong to His family. All it took on our part was to believe and trust in His Son Jesus. God called all people to believe in His Son Jesus but only those who responded to the invitation, were chosen to belong to His family.

He then uses another word in conjunction with the word, ‘*chosen*’ – it’s the word, ‘*generation.*’ It seems like those who believe in Christ are being referred to as a new generation, which is quite different from those generations of the past, because we who belong to this new generation are now appropriating the Salvation that the Lord had planned over so many generations. This new generation has the potential to create a new world as it were, where love, joy, peace, holiness, justice and mercy, and everything that reflects God’s character, can reign. None of the generations that existed from the time of creation until the time of Christ, had this privilege of experiencing Salvation like the generation that Peter was addressing, which includes us. Earlier generations had only heard that Salvation was coming, but had never experienced it like we have - hence the words, ‘*chosen generation.*’

Peter then uses another pair of words to describe the church – ‘*royal priesthood.*’ We know that Jesus is the King – not just of the Jews, but of the whole world, and though we haven’t begun to see the full extent of His reign yet, we know that when He returns, He will do so as ‘*King*’ and ‘*Judge.*’ We who have put our faith in this King, have been included as children of the King, which makes us royalty as well. Let’s never forget that. No matter how the world looks at us, in God’s eyes, we are ‘*royalty.*’

Not only are we royalty, but we also belong to the ‘*Royal Priesthood,*’ where Jesus is the Great, Holy, Innocent, Perfect, undefiled, Merciful and Faithful, High Priest, and all we are priests. Just as the priests of the Old Testament offered sacrifices, we too offer sacrifices, but while they offered dead sacrifices, we now offer our lives as living sacrifices, unto God through Jesus, the Great High Priest.

Peter goes on to describe us *The Church*, by referring to us as a ‘*Holy Nation.*’ The word, ‘*Holy,*’ refers to being ‘*set apart.*’ We as believers are now set apart from living sinful lives, and are now set apart to God - to live lives that are led by His Holy Spirit. Earlier, we lived any way we wanted.

We did not have the ability to say, “No” to sin. But now, because of the Holy Spirit who lives inside of us, we do have the ability to say, “No” to sin. As God is set apart from sin, we His children too need to be set apart from sin as well. But not only are we to be set apart from sin, but we are also called to be set apart to God.

He adds another word along with the word, ‘*holy*’ - it’s the word, ‘*nation*.’ Here Peter is actually using the same words that God used in **Exodus 20:6**, when God told Moses to say to the people of Israel, “*And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*” Though we as believers in Jesus are not confined to any one nation on earth, we belong to a nation that is both invisible and yet eternal, where Jesus is King.

Peter goes on to refer to believers in Jesus as ‘*God’s own special people*’ - a term that was used by God concerning the people of Israel in **Deuteronomy 7:6**, which reads - “*For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth,*” and again in **Deuteronomy 14:2**, it says - “*For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*” The Lord looks at us the same way He looked at the people of Israel, whom He first chose as His people.

Peter then goes on to give a reason why we are considered a ‘*chosen generation*,’ a ‘*royal priesthood*,’ a ‘*holy nation*’ and ‘*God’s own special people*.’ It’s so that we may declare to the world around us, all that the Lord has done in our lives, when He brought us out of the darkness of sinful living, into His marvelous light, where we can now be led by His Holy Spirit. We can now live a new life that’s pleasing to God, be a reflection of His character, and both experience and share His love, grace, mercy, forgiveness, peace, and the hope of eternal life with others. He goes on to remind us that once we were not even recognized as a people, but now we are the people of God. Once we lived without having received mercy from God, but now we have received God’s mercy – what an amazing privilege is that? If we hadn’t received mercy, we would be destined for God’s wrath and for a lost eternity away from Him.

### **1 Peter 2:11-12**

***<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, <sup>12</sup> having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.***

Peter then goes on to literally beg the believers to not live a particular way, and to live another way instead, and gives reasons for his ardent request. He first reminds us that we are sojourners and pilgrims here on earth. This is a great reminder that everyone should never forget – we are only traveling through the earth, and we are headed for our real, eternal home in heaven. Once we have this perspective in mind, it will shape the way we think about life, and the way we live as well. Our values, priorities, decisions, etc. will change to become in alignment with the Lord’s will for our lives.



He then begs us to abstain from fleshly or selfish desires that seek to gratify the sinful nature, and which are at variance (at war) with our very souls. These fleshly desires might seem appealing on the surface, and even satisfy our body to a large extent, but if gratified, will eventually destroy our very souls.

Instead of living selfish, sinful lives, he then encourages us to live in such a way that those who do not believe in Jesus will honor us for our lifestyle. It's sad that for the most part, the world around us looks at us The Church, and finds so much commonality between our lifestyle and its own, that we're no different, no longer attractive, appealing, loving and morally strong, as we were meant to be.

The reason Peter gives for us to live honorable lives before the Gentiles, is so that when they observe our lives, they will give God glory on the day of visitation. This term, '*day of visitation*,' is not fully understood. Some believe it refers to the Day of Judgment, while others believe it refers to a time when the Lord will have mercy on people. There are several other views about the meaning of this phrase, but it's not very clear what is really meant by it. But whatever is really meant, we are called to live in such a way that the world around us will see a difference between their lifestyle and ours.

### **1 Peter 2:13-17**

**<sup>13</sup> Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. <sup>15</sup> For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— <sup>16</sup> as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. <sup>17</sup> Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.**

Because we are mere pilgrims and travelers here on earth does not mean that we do not submit to every authority that the Lord has placed over us. Peter goes on to mention a couple of positions of authority – Kings and Governors. Now while there might be different titles for the leaders who lead the nations of our world today, the principles Peter is mentioning apply to us even today. He says that the people in authority, be they Kings/Queens/Emperors/Presidents/Prime Ministers need to be submitted to, and respected as the supreme authority of the nation in which we live. Not only are we to submit to the supreme authority, but we are to also submit to the governors (or whatever other title might exist) who are sent by these supreme leaders. He gives us two reasons why we need to submit to these authorities. *Firstly*, it's because they carry out justice among those who do evil, and *secondly*, because these authorities also praise or recognize those who do good. This, Peter says, is God's will or desire, that by living a good life in the countries in which we live, we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, who speak evil of our good behavior.

Peter then goes on to say that though we are free (free from the bondage of the law and now have a new liberty in Christ), we should not use this liberty as a cover-up for sinful living. Just because Christ paid the price for our sins does not mean we can now go ahead and live a new life of sin, with the false assumption that we are now free to live any way we want. We are actually only now free to live the way the Lord would have us live. Earlier, we had the desire to do good, but lacked

the power to do so, but now that we have the Holy Spirit in us, we have both the desire and the ability to live the way the Lord would have us live.

Peter then reminds us that we are bondservants of Jesus. A bondservant was a person who chose to be a servant of his master, even though he had been freed by his master. Likewise, we have been freed from sin by God through faith in His Son Jesus, who paid the price for our freedom from sin. We have now made a choice to submit to the Lordship of God in our lives, and serve Him the rest of our lives. We are therefore bondservants of God.

He then suggests we do four things while we continue our life as sojourners here on earth – *“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”* Just because our home is in heaven does not mean we dishonor people around us on earth, but we should rather honor them. When it comes to relating with one another as believers, he says that we are to love one another. Jesus said that our love for one another would be a proof to the world around us that we are followers of Jesus. (**Jn.13:34-35**). We need to fear (honor, revere, respect, love and serve) God, and not take the Lord lightly, or for granted in our lives. In fact we should fear God (in the real sense of the word fear), when we ponder doing wrong, as Jesus said in **Matthew 10:28**, *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”* He ends by saying that we need to honor the King as well, corroborating what the Apostle Paul said in **Romans 13:1-7**, where he said that we need to submit to earthly authority, since it is God who places people in authority over us.

So what Peter seems to be saying is that though we are not really citizens here on earth, and are merely traveling through to our true, eternal home, we need to live in a way that reflects the nature of Christ; we need to love one another, and we also need to submit to the governing authorities above us, and thereby honor God in our lives.

## Study # 6 - 1 Peter 2:18-25

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 2:18-25](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 2:18-25](#)

### 1 Peter 2:18-20

Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. <sup>19</sup> For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. <sup>20</sup> For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God.

After telling his readers to be submissive to the governing authorities above them, Peter then turns his attention to the servants who work for earthly masters, and he tells them to be submissive to them as well. Though he's referring to servants or slaves, a practice that was prevalent back then, in today's context we can apply these teachings to employees who work in different kind of work places - companies, organizations, institutions, industries, etc. Submission to authority in the workplace is important for the smooth functioning of the company or firm.

Not only does he say that servants need to be submissive to their masters, but he also adds that they need to respect them, whether they are good and gentle toward them, or even if they are harsh toward them. Now while this might seem like an impossible ask for one to be submissive to harsh bosses, he goes on to give a reason for this. He says that it needs to be done due to one's conscience toward God, meaning that if one suffers wrongdoing when he is not guilty of any wrongdoing, then that is commendable before God. He will explain this later.

Back in the day, slaves were sometimes even beaten by their masters, a practice that is not acceptable today, though it still happens in some places across the globe. So Peter tells them that if they are beaten for wrongdoing, it's not commendable, meaning that they are getting the penalty for their behavior. But if when they are beaten, despite being and doing good, they are still patient with their masters, then that would be commendable before God. There's no room for such behavior in today's world though, since employers are supposed to respect their employees.

### 1 Peter 2:21-25

<sup>21</sup> For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: <sup>22</sup> “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; <sup>23</sup> who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; <sup>24</sup> who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

The reason we should be willing to suffer for doing good, is because our Master Jesus Christ himself suffered on our behalf when He suffered a cruel death on the cross. He serves as an

example of how we should react to unjust treatment from those in the world. If we follow Jesus, then we need to walk in His steps. He did nothing wrong, but was sinless. He was not deceitful in His speech either. In fact when He was insulted and criticized, He did not retaliate in like manner. When He went through all that suffering, He did not threaten those who mistreated Him. He had the power to defend Himself, but chose to not do so, and instead He committed Himself to God the Father, who judges all people righteously. If that's the response by our Master, we too should commit ourselves to God to defend us, and not retaliate against ill treatment by evil people.

The reason Jesus was crucified on the cross was to take upon Himself both our sins, and the penalty of the sins we had committed. So He was being punished for nothing wrong He had done, but was instead taking our punishment upon Himself. The purpose of Him taking our sins upon Himself was so that we can die to sin, meaning that we no longer live in sin, but instead can now live righteous lives led by His Holy Spirit. When Jesus bore the penalty of sin on our behalf, not only were we made free from the penalty of sin, but He also made us righteous in God's sight. We were made righteous by nothing we did, but by what Jesus did on our behalf. We were infected with the world's worst sickness – sin, and by Jesus taking the stripes by the Romans soldiers on our behalf, we who have now put our faith in Jesus are rid of that sickness of sin, meaning that we do not need to be under bondage to sin any longer – unless we choose to get enslaved all over again of course.

We were like sheep going astray from the sheepfold, but Jesus came as the Good Shepherd (**John 10:11**), and brought us back to the fold of God, where He is now the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. Our souls were lost, and not in relationship with God, but now since our souls have been saved, the Lord Jesus is leading us by His Holy Spirit, so we can live a new life of righteousness. Jesus, the Good Shepherd is leading us, so we don't need to go astray again. He has taken it upon Himself to oversee this great task of keeping us on track.

## Study # 7 - 1 Peter 3:1-7

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 3:1-7](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 3:1-7](#)

### 1 Peter 3:1-4

Wives, likewise, *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, <sup>2</sup> when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied by fear*. <sup>3</sup> Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel— <sup>4</sup> rather *let it 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.

After talking about the importance of us submitting to government authorities and to employers, Peter then turns his attention to marriage, and talks about the importance of submission in marriage. He begins by addressing the wives, and reminds them to be submissive to their own husbands. This one verse, taken out of context has been the cause for domestic violence, where husbands abuse their wives, and tend to justify it as well, quoting this verse on submission. Let's look at that in detail a little later.

The reason Peter says that the wife is to submit to her own husband is because God, who instituted marriage, designed it in such a way that the leader (head) of the home is the husband. Here again, the word '*head*' is often misunderstood. Every team needs a leader, and in the amazing team of marriage, the husband is supposed to be the leader. When a wife submits to her husband who is a responsible, wise, caring, loving leader, then the home can run smoothly, and can be a reflection of the love that God intended for marriage to demonstrate.

He goes on to say something that is once again an oft misunderstood verse in the church today. I'm sure the church Peter was writing to, understood what he meant better than we do today. Back in the day, there were wives who came to faith in Christ from non-Christian backgrounds, and their husbands would still have been unbelievers. This means that there would have been a clash between both of them in areas pertaining to their belief about God, in their values, morals, identity, purpose of living, etc. It is these women that Peter encourages to live a life that so reflects Christ, so that their lifestyle might win their unbelieving husbands over to the Christian faith.

Today this verse is oft misunderstood to mean that a believing woman can marry an unbelieving man, with the hope of winning her husband to the Lord thereafter. There's no room for that in Christian marriage. The Apostle Paul warns us in **2 Corinthians 6:14**, to not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. While this verse can be applied to any binding relationship with unbelievers, one of the main relationships it applies to, is marriage, as there'll be clashes galore if this were to happen. In fact, instead of one drawing their unbelieving husband to the faith, the opposite could easily happen, and the woman can be drawn away from her faith in Christ; not forgetting the confusion that the children will face, seeing their parents practicing two different faiths in the home.

So when we look at this verse in this context, we understand that Peter is addressing women, who were initially unbelievers, along with their husbands, but perhaps came to faith in Christ. He's telling these women to do all they can to live in such a way to help bring their husbands to the faith as well.

He suggests that their conduct be chaste or pure. He adds another quality that wives need to possess towards their husbands – fear. Here the word, *'fear'* does not refer to being scared of the husband, but rather being respectful toward him. Let's remember here that before the wife gives her husband respect, it's important that the husband first respects his wife, and does not ill-treat her, disrespect or abuse her in any way. All too often we see situations in families where husbands abuse their wives in more ways than one, and then demand respect from their wives; that's not the way it was meant to be.

He goes on to remind wives to not let their beauty be only external, limited to the way they do their hair or the wearing of gold or expensive clothing. Take note that he is not speaking against arranging your hair, wearing of gold or dressing well, but rather saying that one's beauty should not stem from these things, because that does not reflect the true inner beauty of a person. He goes on to say that beauty should stem from within; from the heart, which is the seat of all desires and motives, and from which stem attitudes, thoughts, intents, words, actions and reactions. If there's inner beauty, it will be reflected in the way one's life is lived. He goes on to further explain what he means by inner beauty – a gentle and quiet spirit, as opposed to a rude and haughty spirit. Peter goes on to say that such an attitude by a wife is precious (valuable/esteemed) in the sight of God.

### **1 Peter 3:5-7**

<sup>5</sup>For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup>as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. <sup>7</sup>Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* 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.*

Peter then goes on to remind the believing women that the women in times of old adorned themselves with such submissive attitudes towards their own husbands, rather than focusing on the adorning themselves with ornaments of external beauty. He then mentions the name of Abraham's wife Sarah who was herself submissive to Abraham, and who even referred to him as *'lord,'* not that she worshipped him as God, but respected him highly. He concludes this thought by saying that those women who do good, and are not terrified of their husbands will prove that they are children of Sarah. Women are not supposed to be scared of their husbands, which means that men are not supposed to strike terror or fear in the hearts of their wives either.

Peter then turns his attention to the husbands. He begins with the word, *"likewise,"* meaning that he has something to say to the husbands as well. He was not going to preach only to the women. The first thing he tells husbands to do is to live with their wives with understanding. So often we men want to be understood by our wives, but here Peter suggests the opposite. We need to take the time and effort to try and understand our wives' point of view; the angle they're coming from; their perspective.

The second thing he asks us men to do, is to give honor to our wives – another thing we so often demand, and yet are so unwilling or hesitant to give. In fact, honoring is far greater than respecting, and that's what we've been called to do – honor our wives. He then gives a reason why we should honor our wives – because they are weaker than us. This verse too is often misunderstood. Peter is not saying that women are weaker intellectually or emotionally – we know that's not true. He's talking about them being weaker than men physically. This does not mean that a husband boasts in his superior physical strength, but is a reminder that extra care and concern should be shown to his wife, seeing she is the weaker vessel. I like the word, 'vessel,' Peter uses to describe both the husband and wife. A vessel is used to contain something, and even so, a husband and a wife both equally contain the precious grace (gift) of eternal life.

Peter goes on to say that both are heirs of this gift of eternal life, meaning that with regard to receiving God's gift, no one is superior – both have received God's grace equally and are therefore equal in God's sight. That's why Paul said in **Galatians 3:26-28**, "*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" What Paul was saying is the same thing Peter is saying here – when it comes to receiving God's gracious gift of salvation, it's available to all people alike – Jew, Gentile, Slave, Free, Male and Female alike – we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Peter then concludes this section to husbands by giving a reason why it's important that we respect our wives and treat them with love and care as the weaker vessel. He says that if we don't do this, then our prayers will be hindered. This may not be a very popular teaching today, but it does seem that this is certainly a cause for the prayers of many a husband being unanswered.

So often there's the emphasis to wives to submit to their husbands, with little or no teaching to the husbands about respecting, honoring, loving and caring for their wives, but we fail to realize that it's unfair to expect a wife to submit to an irresponsible, abusive, uncaring, disrespectful husband. So let's we as husbands do all we can to love our wives, care for them, honor them, respect them and help them in every possible way, because this is God's will (desire) for us.

## Study # 8 - 1 Peter 3:8-12

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 3:8-12](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 3:8-12](#)

### 1 Peter 3:8-12

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;<sup>9</sup> not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.<sup>10</sup> For “He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit.<sup>11</sup> Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.<sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

After talking to husbands and wives, and encouraging them to live out their faith with one another in love, Peter then gives his readers some practical tips as to how to relate with one another. The first thing he asks is that we all be of one mind. He is talking about unity, not uniformity. He does not mean that we all think the same things in the same way. He means that we all remain united in our thinking pertaining to our faith in Christ, and to the way we live out our faith, demonstrating love with one another.

He then suggests that we be compassionate to one another. When we look around us, we see so many people who go through so many difficulties, and love demands that we don't just ignore the pain that they go through, but that we have compassion towards them, and do all we can to help them, thereby demonstrating true love in action.

He goes on to encourage them to love one another as we would our own brothers and sisters, because in the family of God, that's what we really are – brothers and sisters. All those of us who have put our faith in Jesus, are part of God's own family, and this family is an eternal family.

He then reminds us to be tender hearted towards one another, as opposed to being hard hearted. Seeing someone in need should stimulate a response to help, and not an attitude of indifference, criticism or judgment.

Peter further adds that we need to be courteous towards one another. We all like people being courteous with us, and so we need to first decide to be courteous to people. When we are courteous to people, we let them know that we respect them, and that they are valuable.

He then addresses another important aspect that we find so easy to forget. When people are evil to us, or revile us in some way, we tend to want to respond to them the same way they did to us. But Peter reminds us that we should not respond to evil with evil, or to reviling with reviling, but we should rather respond to such behavior with blessing. In fact, he seems to echo the very words of Jesus in **Matthew 5:38-41** where Jesus said,<sup>38</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’<sup>39</sup> But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.<sup>40</sup> If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic,



let him have your cloak also. <sup>41</sup> And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. <sup>42</sup> Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. <sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, <sup>45</sup> that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? <sup>48</sup> Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Peter goes on to give two reasons why we should respond to evil and reviling, in love and not retaliate the same way. The *first* reason is because we were called by the Lord Jesus to live this new life, which is the kind of life He Himself lived. He loved all people, and never returned evil with evil, and reviling with reviling, but rather with blessing. In fact, He gave His life for sinful people like us humans, even while we were still sinners.

The *second* reason, is that we will be rewarded by the Lord if we respond this way. Sometimes it’s tempting to take things into our own hands and recompense evil for evil, but let’s remember when we do that, we are not reflecting the character of our Lord Jesus in our lives. When we respond in love and kindness, we can be sure that we will inherit a blessing. We don’t respond in love to inherit a blessing, but when we respond in love, we will inherit a blessing. This blessing is from the Lord, who sees our loving responses to the evil done to us.

Peter then quotes from **Psalm 34:12-16**, where King David says, “*He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. <sup>11</sup> Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.*”

From the above passage in the Psalm, it’s quite obvious that God’s expectations of man’s way of life was nothing new – God was loving all along, and God expected us to be loving towards Him and towards one another all along. We hear of so many so-called solutions to living long and happy lives here on the earth today, but these verses give us the perfect solution to long and happy living here on earth. Since our life here on earth revolves around our relationship with God and one another, it’s wise to pay heed to these reminders by King David.

The *first* thing the Psalmist tells us to do is to refrain our tongues from evil, and our lips from speaking deceit. As tempting as it is for us to run people down, speak evil of them and to be deceitful with our words, we are cautioned against that way of speech because it does not reflect the character of Christ.

The *second* thing we need to do is to turn away from evil and do good. While the first thing pertained to our words, the second tip pertains to our way of life. We are not to do evil, but rather do good. Though it’s not always easy to do good, especially when evil is done to us, we are being encouraged to do good, because we would be thereby reflecting the nature of Christ in our lives.

The *third* thing he encourages us to do is to seek peace and pursue it. I like the way he refers to peace as something to be sought after and pursued, because it is such a difficult thing to find and

maintain. It's so easy to find evil, as it's so prevalent all around us, but to find peace, we need to take that extra, intentional effort to search for it, and when we set our sights on it, to pursue it with all our hearts and minds. This means that we need to do all we can to be at peace with one another, even when everything around us suggests we be at loggerheads with one another.

He then reminds us that when we train ourselves to speak in love and live in love, we can be sure that the Lord who sees all things takes note, and will reward us accordingly. He says that the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and that His ears are attentive to their cries, meaning that the Lord who sees us live in love, will then answer our prayers.

He immediately adds a caution to all of us, reminding us that if we choose to live like the wicked, retaliating evil with evil and reviling for reviling, then we can be sure that the face of the Lord will be against us, meaning that we cannot expect God's favour in our lives. So often we find ourselves living in stark contrast to God's expectations of us, and yet expecting God to answer our prayers and show His favour on us.

Let's remember that we are not gods, and we don't dictate terms to God either. He is God and it's His desire that we reflect His character in our lives, and when we do that, He is willing to do anything for us, knowing that we will use whatever He does for us to continue to glorify His Name.

## Study # 9 - 1 Peter 3:13-22

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 3:13-22](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 3:13-22](#)

### 1 Peter 3:13-17

<sup>13</sup> And who *is* he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” <sup>15</sup> But 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; <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. <sup>17</sup> For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

After telling the believers to be kind and compassionate to one another, Peter then goes on to tell them that no one will harm them if they are followers of what is good. He goes on to say that if however, they do suffer for doing good, they should consider themselves blessed or fortunate. In fact that's what Jesus too said in His sermon on the mount in **Matthew 5:10-12** “*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Peter goes on to tell them to not be afraid of, or troubled by the threats of those who do them harm. This, once again, is a take from Jesus' words in **Matthew 10:28**, where Jesus said, – “*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*” Peter goes on to tell them to instead sanctify God in their hearts, meaning, to let God take center-stage in their lives, and to live for Him alone. He adds that they should be ready to answer those who ask them to explain how they could have such a hope or assurance, referring to the hope of eternal life, which comes from their faith in Jesus. It's important to remember that not all people are antagonistic to the Gospel. There are those who are genuinely seeking the knowledge of the truth, and we should be willing to answer them, if they ask questions pertaining to our faith in Christ.

While answering those who question us about our faith, Peter reminds us to do so with meekness (gentleness) and fear (respect). We should never be proud or haughty with anyone, especially with those who are seeking the knowledge of the truth. We need to remember that what we say is as important as how we say it, because our attitude speaks more, and louder than our words. He further adds that we need to have a good conscience, so that those who either seek the truth, or those who ridicule or defame us as evildoers, would see our good conduct and be ashamed of their behavior towards us. Peter then goes on to say that if at all it is God's will that we undergo suffering, it should be for doing good and never on account of doing evil.

We should be careful to not equate suffering that we might bring upon ourselves owing to wrong choices we make with suffering we face on account of our faith in Jesus. It's in this context that Peter says it's better (if God so permits) to suffer for doing good than to suffer for doing evil.

### **1 Peter 3:18-22**

For 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, <sup>19</sup> by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup> who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup> There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Peter goes on to give us a reason why we should be willing to undergo suffering at the hands of those who oppose us or persecute us on account of our faith in Jesus. He reminds us that just as our Master Jesus, who, though He was just, suffered on behalf of us unjust people, when He bore our sins upon Himself, we too need to be willing to suffer on account of our faith in Him. Jesus took upon Himself our suffering in order that He might reconcile us with God. He goes on to explain that Jesus's suffering was not merely a verbal abuse or ridicule by men, but actually resulted in His death on the cross. Praise God, the gospel does not end with the death of Jesus. He was raised to life from the dead by the Holy Spirit. Let's always ensure when we share the gospel that we conclude with the amazing fact that Jesus rose from the dead. It's the resurrection of Jesus that justifies us, and it's because of His resurrection that we possess this hope (assurance) that one day we too will rise from the dead at the return of the Lord Jesus.

He further adds that Jesus was raised to life by the Holy Spirit, (and went in spirit, not in body) to the place of the dead, referred to here as '*prison,*' and preached to them. This is a very confusing passage and there are so many interpretations to it, and one can't be entirely sure what it really means. But what it does seem to suggest is that after Jesus died, He went in the spirit (not in the body, as his body was still in the tomb), to the place of the dead, and preached to the people who lived back the times of Noah, while he was building the ark. God was waiting for these people to repent of their sinful ways, but they did not. They thereby chose their fate of being destroyed by the flood. The only ones who did believe Noah concerning the impending flood were the seven other members of Noah's family – his wife, his three sons, and his three daughters-in-law, and so they were the only ones who were saved as a result.

Peter says that Noah's family was saved through water. While the rest of the world was destroyed by the water, Noah's family was saved, as they floated in that ark on the water. He then goes on to make a comparison between that water and Baptism. He explains that baptism was not meant to clean our bodies, but was rather an act of obedience to God in the process of Salvation. In baptism we identify with Jesus' death, burial and resurrection from the dead. What he was saying in effect, is that the saving of Noah and his family from the flood was a shadow of the baptism that Jesus both partook of Himself, and preached about as well.

Jesus is now exalted far above all human and angelic authority and has all powers subject to Him. When Jesus was here on earth, he took on flesh and blood and lived like us, subjecting himself to earthly authority. But now that He has ascended back into heaven, from where He came, all authority, both in heaven and on earth have been subjected to Him. Though it might not always seem like the Lord is in control of this world, let's remember that unless the Lord permits something to happen it can never happen, and He has the ultimate authority, and He will one day prove it for all to see. Until then we have the choice to either submit to His authority over our lives, and enjoy the rewards of that, or to rebel against His authority over our lives, and face the consequences of our rebellion. Though the rewards of our subjection, or the consequences of our rebellion to His authority over our lives may not always be seen here on earth, they will eventually be seen when the Lord returns to judge the earth.

## Study # 10 – 1 Peter 4:1-11

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 4:1-11](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 4:1-11](#)

### 1 Peter 4:1-6

Therefore, 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,<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.<sup>4</sup> In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*.<sup>5</sup> They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.<sup>6</sup> For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

After mentioning the fact that Jesus suffered when He came as a human in flesh and blood, Peter goes on to tell us that we too need to possess the same attitude Jesus had, when we suffer for the sake of our faith in Jesus. He goes on to say something that would answer the question many a believer has concerning suffering - “*Am I suffering because of some sin I have committed?*” Peter seems to suggest the opposite. He says that we who suffer for our faith in Jesus are proving that we have ceased to live a life that is controlled by sin any longer, and hence suffering comes our way to try to turn us away from our faith, and back to sin. When we suffer for the sake of Christ, it’s not because we have sinned, but rather because we have made a commitment to follow Christ, no matter what. So we need to do all we can to remain faithful to the Lord in spite of the suffering, because if we quit on our faith in times of suffering, we are making our faith of no effect, and quitting on what we were meant to hold on to for life.

He says that such people who have put a stop to sin in their lives, have done so because they have made a decision to not fulfil their sinful desires, but instead, to live in a way that seeks to do the will of God. Thereby, such people are seeking to fulfil God’s desires, rather than their own sinful desires. This is the only way that we can be transformed into the perfect image of God.

He goes on to remind us who are tempted to satisfy our selfish sinful desires that we have spent enough time committing those sins before we came to know Christ, during which time we lived just like all the other unbelievers around us. He mentions a few of the desires that people seek to satisfy – lustful desires, alcoholism, wild singing and dancing, wild parties, and idolatry, all the Lord detests. The people of the world will be surprised that we don’t join them in such wild and irresponsible living, and would, for that reason, criticize and ridicule us for our faith in Jesus. Peter reminds us that such people who live this way, and ridicule us for the different lifestyle we live, will have to answer the Lord when He returns to judge both those who are living when He returns, and those who are dead as well.

**Verse 6** is quite a difficult verse to understand, and there are several suggested interpretations for it. There are some who believe that this verse is referring to the earlier verse in **1 Peter 3:19** which

talks about Jesus, after his death, and before His resurrection going to preach to the people of Noah's time who were still in prison. If this interpretation is to be considered, then it seems like Jesus was preaching the gospel to those who died in the flood during Noah's time. This then makes one ask what the purpose of this preaching was. Was it to give them a chance to be saved before the Lord returns the second time? This interpretation would then lend itself to mean that these people were judged by God when they were humans in the body, but if they believed Jesus' gospel then they actually had a chance to be saved by the Holy Spirit, so they too could have eternal life.

Another interpretation to this verse is that it refers to those who died on account of some sins they committed while alive in the body, but after Jesus preached to them, they now had another chance to be saved when He returns.

My personal interpretation to this verse is that it is connected with the previous few verses where Peter encourages us to be willing to suffer for the sake of Christ, just like He suffered. Perhaps the words, *"For this 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,"* refers to those people who had the gospel preached to them while living on earth just like any of us, but these people were perhaps condemned to death on account of their faith. The judgment they received was physical death, and was based on human standards, where people took offense at the preaching of the Gospel. But the souls of such people are no longer dead – they are alive to God. So in God's eyes, they are no longer dead but alive and will rise again at the Second Coming of Jesus, when He returns to judge the world.

### **1 Peter 4:7-11**

<sup>7</sup> The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. <sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> 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.

Peter then reminds us that the end of all things is at hand, meaning that the end of the world as we know it, the return of the Lord Jesus, and Judgment Day are all very near. For these reasons we must take care to be alert, and not be taken unawares or misled into sinful living all over again. We must also be sober and not get drunk with alcohol, and thereby be led into all sorts of sinful living. Finally, we need to be prayerful, because that's the only way we can be in touch with the Lord, and stay in step with the Holy Spirit who leads us in our walk with the Lord.

When it comes to relating with one another, we need to ensure that we love one another deeply, as opposed to being superfluous or pretentious in our love. Peter reminds us that when we truly love one another, then we won't hold grudges but will rather be able to overlook the offenses of one another. He also reminds us to be hospitable to one another, meaning that we entertain one another in our homes. He adds another caution, and that is that we do all this without grumbling. This means that all the love that we share with one another needs to be shared willingly and cheerfully,

and not grudgingly, because it's only that which is done in love that truly impacts people and reflects the love of God in our lives.

Peter reminds us that we have each been gifted with spiritual gifts by God, and that we need to use those spiritual gifts to serve one another as faithful stewards. By this term, '*stewards*,' he reminds us that we don't own the gifts we possess but rather that they have been entrusted to our care, so we might serve one another in love. God was extremely gracious when He bestowed us with spiritual gifts – we did nothing to receive them, and did not earn them in any way, therefore we should not for one moment think that we are something because of the gifts we possess, but should, in humility use them to serve the Lord as we serve one another in love.

God demonstrated His grace to us in various ways, and in the variety of the spiritual gifts that He endowed us with, are seen the variety of the display of the grace of God in our lives. So let's also demonstrate this grace as we serve one another in love.

He reminds us that if any of us speaks (meaning the word of God), we need to remember that we are speaking the very words of God, and therefore we should not take it lightly and share it glibly, but rather with sincerity and wholeheartedness. If any of us serve, we need to do so with the strength that the Lord provides us with. We should be careful to not seek to serve the Lord with our own strength – we need God's strength to empower us, if we are to be effective in our service.

When we, through faith in Jesus share God's word and serve this way, then God is the One who gets the glory, and is praised through our service. Peter goes on to say that the One Person who needs to get the glory forever and ever, is none other than God Himself, because it is He who has made all things, and it is also He who has brought about a transformation in our lives, resulting in life forever and ever. So let that be our goal in life, to bring glory to God in all that we desire, think, say and do.



## Study # 11 – 1 Peter 4:12-19

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 4:12-19](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 4:12-19](#)

### 1 Peter 4:12-16

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. <sup>15</sup> But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. <sup>16</sup> Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

Chapter 4 commenced with Peter encouraging the believers to welcome suffering, if it comes their way, just as our Master Himself suffered for our sake when He gave His life for us. He then goes on to give a few practical tips on how to live out our faith. He encourages us to not perceive suffering as a strange phenomenon but to rather rejoice if and when it does show up.

Peter gives us two reasons why we should rejoice in our suffering – the *first* being that we thereby identify with the sufferings of Jesus, meaning, that just as Jesus suffered on our behalf when He gave His life for us, we too can now willingly face suffering as we live our lives for Him.

The *second* reason Peter encourages us to rejoice in our suffering, is on account of the fact that we will be partakers of the glory in heaven when Jesus returns the second time. At that time instead of suffering, we will be filled with exceeding joy – a joy that will never perish, spoil or fade.

He goes on to say that if we are reproached or suffer on account of our faith in Jesus, then we are blessed because it's a proof that we have the Holy Spirit, (whom he refers to as the Spirit of glory and of God) within us. Is that not the most beautiful gift to have as believers in Jesus – the Holy Spirit in our lives?

He goes on to remind us that though the name of Jesus be blasphemed by those who trouble us, the fact is that God's name is also being glorified in the process. Our response to suffering for the sake of Christ should be such a witness to those persecuting us that they will realize how loving is the God we worship and thereby give glory to God through us.

Peter then goes on to differentiate between suffering and suffering. There is one suffering that we as believers will face on account of our faith in Jesus, but there's another kind of suffering that we can bring upon ourselves, and that is based on our own wrong doing. Peter reminds us to not live in such a way that we bring suffering upon ourselves, and he mentions some of the ways we can do that – by taking other people's lives, stealing other people's belongings, doing evil to others, and getting involved with other people affairs. The common thread that Peter seems to use to link all the mentioned wrong-doing is that we should not take advantage of other people.

He then says that if anyone suffers as a Christian, then we should not be ashamed of it but should rather glorify God through it, because to suffer for the sake of Christ is truly an honour, and for this we should glorify God.

### **1 Peter 4:17-19**

*17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.*

Peter then reminds us that when the Day of Judgment comes, the Lord Jesus is going to begin judging, not the world around us first, but rather the house of God, meaning the Church itself. It's quite obvious why Jesus will start judging us first – it's because we were entrusted with the good news of Salvation, and we were required to live a new and different life from those around us. As Jesus said in **Lk.12:48** *"Everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."* Again in **Lk.19:26**, Jesus said, *"...To everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."*

Peter goes on to say that if judgment begins with us, the very people of God, what would be the condition of those who rejected Christ, by not putting their faith in Him? He goes on to quote **Prov.11:31** – *"If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"*

He then encourages those who endure suffering on account of their faith, to realize that this is in accordance with the will of God, and to commit their souls to God. Our bodies are wasting away every day. The suffering we face may cause us to suffer a lot of physical harm, but he reminds us to commit our souls to God – the soul can never be destroyed by anyone on earth. Those who oppose us can at the most attack our bodies and take our lives, but our souls are safe in the hands of God. Jesus Himself said in **Mt.10:28**, *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."*

He further reminds us to not discontinue doing good to others, just because we face suffering, but to continue to do good, knowing this for a fact, that God, whom we serve is not unaware of the good we do, but is our faithful Creator. If God is our faithful Creator, then it's obvious that He will be faithful to reward us for our faith, in spite of the sufferings we endure.

## Study # 12 – 1 Peter 5:1-14

For the Audio Version on **YouTube**, click here – [1 Peter 5:1-14](#)

For the Audio Version on **Spotify**, click here – [1 Peter 5:1-14](#)

### 1 Peter 5:1-4

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; <sup>4</sup> and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

After addressing the issue of suffering, and how we need to endure it if it is God's will that we suffer, Peter then turns his attention to the leaders who lead the church, reminding them how they need to execute their service to the Lord as they lead.

He begins by mentioning the fact that he himself is an elder, and therefore advises his fellow-elders in how to conduct themselves in the church. Let's remember that back in the days of the early church, an elder was actually an older person in age, and not just a designation in the church that could be held by someone of just about any age.

Not only does he identify himself as a fellow-elder, but he also identifies himself as a person who witnessed the sufferings of Christ, namely His crucifixion at Calvary. That's not something many an elder could have claimed to be witnesses of back in the day.

He goes on to say that not only was he a witness of the sufferings of Christ, but that he was assured that he would partake of the glory of God to be revealed when Jesus returns. What he was saying in effect, is that those who suffer for the sake of Christ can be assured that all the suffering they endure will be worth it all in the end, when we will partake of the glory of Jesus, when He returns the second time to judge the world. Peter was in effect saying that he had also suffered for the sake of Christ in His ministry to the Lord. He seems to echo the words of the Apostle Paul who said in **Rom. 8:18**, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*"

He then begins to give the elders certain instructions to help them as they carry out their God-given responsibilities. He tells them to '*Shepherd*' the flock that they've been entrusted with by God. We know he's not referring to sheep, but rather to believers in Jesus. He tells them to take care of the believers just as a shepherd would take care of his sheep, protecting them and providing them with the proper food they needed to grow. In the same way, the elders were responsible to do all they could to protect their sheep from false teachers, and to provide them with the spiritual nurture they needed to grow in their faith.

He then uses another word to describe an elder – an overseer. An overseer is a person who oversees the affairs of something. He does not control them, but merely oversees them. This is something we need to take into account today, when so often a pastor or elder seems to exercise so much control over his flock, rather than merely being overseers of them.

He then reminds them what attitudes they need to not have and what attitudes they need to possess as elders. He tells them to not exercise their duties as if they had no other choice, and were being forced to do it, but rather to do it willingly. Any job done out of compulsion will be done with mediocrity, but a job done out of one's own free will is done a lot better.

He then cautions them against serving in this position for dishonest gain. Leadership in the church was not supposed to be used as an opportunity for one to deceive people, and make money for themselves in the process. Instead one was to serve as an elder, serving with eagerness. Serving with eagerness is a lot more than even serving willingly. It means that the person serving is doing so with enthusiasm and passion. Have you noticed how the quality of a job is far superior when it's done with enthusiasm and passion, rather than when it's done half-heartedly?

It appears that just as serving the Lord can be seen sometimes as a means to make dishonest gain today, there were people who perhaps had the same intentions back then, and hence his caution against this selfish reason for serving.

The next caution he gives them is to not serve in the position of elders as lords over the people entrusted to them, but instead to be examples to the flock. An elder was not supposed to control the lives of the people entrusted to his care. No one should ever do that – even God does not seek to control us and make us do things against our will. Instead an elder was to live such a life that his actions would speak volumes, and people would seek to emulate his lifestyle that reflects the life of Christ. Every leader should always remember that our actions speak a lot louder than our words do; so when we teach, our words should speak, but louder than our words our lives should speak.

He then reminds the elders that just as they are serving as shepherds of the flock, the Chief Shepherd, Jesus is returning to reward those who serve Him, and the reward he mentions is a crown of glory that will never fade away. He's perhaps referring to the eternal life that James referred to in **Jms.1:12**, when he said, *“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”* This crown of glory – eternal life, will never fade away.

### **1 Peter 5:5-7**

Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” <sup>6</sup> Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, <sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

After addressing the elders, Peter then turns his attention to the younger people in the church. He tells them to submit to the authority of the elders, something that needs to be taught a lot more these days. Elders have gained a lot of experience over the years, and therefore it's only wise that the younger believers submit to their authority so they can learn from their wisdom and experience and not have to make the same mistakes they made in life.

He goes on to say that we should all be submissive to one another, meaning that we should be willing to learn from one another so we may grow in love together. To learn from one another - even from a younger person sometimes, calls for humility; and that's why Peter adds that all the believers need to seek to be clothed in humility. It's the humble person who learns, not the one who thinks they know it all.

He then gives a reason why we should seek to be humble and not proud – it's because God Himself resists the proud person, but instead gives grace to the one who is humble. We all need God's grace

in our lives every day, but if we're too proud, we're not going to receive it. It's the humble that are guaranteed God's grace in life. We all make mistakes in life and need God's forgiveness on a daily basis, but it's only the humble person who acknowledges his wrong, and seeks God's forgiveness. The proud person will deny his wrong, explain it away, blame someone else or employ any other defense mechanism, and thereby forfeit the forgiveness that could be theirs.

Keeping in mind the fact that God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble, Peter then tells the believers to therefore humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, going further to explain why – so that He may exalt us in due time. A humble person won't push himself forward, but will submit himself to the mighty hand of the Lord, meaning that he will let the Lord lead him every step of the way, and when we do that, then the Lord will exalt us in His own, perfect time. A proud person will do all he can to get ahead, and might even do so, but without having the blessing of the Lord in his life.

He then goes on to tell us to cast all our cares or worries on the Lord, knowing that He cares so much for us that He will take care of them. Merely worrying about our problems is not going to ever solve them, but placing them in the care of the Lord will ensure that He will help solve our problems and take care of our needs or worries. Let's always remember that the Lord loves us much more than we, or anyone else can love us, and that He cares for us, and is therefore concerned about our needs and concerns much more than we are. Since that is true, let's also remember that He is both able and willing to help us, if only we are willing to entrust ourselves and our concerns completely to His care.

### **1 Peter 5:8-11**

**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. <sup>10</sup> But 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. <sup>11</sup> To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

Just because we are told to not worry about anything, and to cast our cares upon the Lord, does not mean we are to remain careless and flippant in the way we live our lives. Peter goes on to remind us that we are to be both sober and vigilant, as opposed to drunk or flippant and naïve about the wiles of the enemy, the devil.

Let's never forget this very important truth – humans are not really the enemies of the children of God – the devil is. Humans may merely be pawns in his hands, if they permit him to use them as such. In fact, the Apostle Paul said in **Ephesians. 6:12**, *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*

Peter not only says that the devil is our real enemy, but he goes on to tell us something more about the way he operates. He says that he walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. What a powerful analogy. I'm sure we've all seen videos of lions stalking their prey, how they walk until they begin the chase or make the pounce on it. If the prey is careless, it's dead meat.

This is the analogy Peter uses to depict the way the devil is out to get us. His aim is not to just harm or injure us, but to devour us, much like a lion devours its prey. While the Lord came to give us eternal life, the devil's goal is to try and take our lives, and give us eternal death.

Peter does not just tell us to be aware of the devil's ways, but he also tells us what to do to avoid being caught in his snare. He tells us to resist him in the faith. He had just talked about submitting to authorities, submitting to one another and submitting to God, and now he says the opposite when it comes to the devil. We are not to submit to him but rather to resist him in the faith.

When the devil came to Eve in the form of the serpent, he twisted God's word and deceived her into sinning. Likewise when the devil came to Jesus to tempt Him in the wilderness, he tried to twist the word again to deceive Jesus into submitting to him, but he was unsuccessful as he was dealing with the Word made flesh Himself.

Likewise when we are tempted to sin, it will often be in a subtle way, where we'll be tempted with a twisted truth that might even make a sinful thing seem harmless. That's why Peter says that we are to resist him in the faith. Our faith should be strong and firmly based on God's word. The only way we can resist the devil is by being steadfast in our faith. Once we begin to waver in our faith, it's a losing battle for us.

Very often the devil will bring suffering our way on account of our faith in Jesus, tempting us to quit on our faith. But Peter reminds us to stay firm and unshakable in our faith. He then reminds us that we are not the only ones who are suffering on account of our faith in the Lord, but there are other brothers across the world who are also suffering on account of their faith in the Lord Jesus. It's so easy for us to sometimes feel that we are the only ones suffering on account of our faith in the Lord, much like Elijah felt when he said in **1 Kings 19:14**, "*...I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.*" And what did the Lord say to him in response? "*Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.*" (**1 Kings 19:18**).

Peter goes on to praise the name of the Lord when he says that God is the one who has so graciously called us to His eternal glory. We did nothing to be invited to be with the Lord forever – He graciously invited us to walk with Him here on earth, and to spend eternity with Him in heaven. This is something we so often tend to forget – we are called to eternal glory. Our destination is not any beautiful place here on earth, neither is it the grave, but rather our destination is heaven, where we will forever be with the Lord. This promise will be fulfilled on account of our faith in the Lord Jesus, and is not based on any merit on our part.

He does say though, that before we enter that glory, we will have to undergo sufferings here on earth, on account of our faith in the Lord. While these sufferings might seem like they are getting the better of us, Peter reminds us that these suffering are only going to last for a while. While the sufferings might sometimes seem unending, causing us to ask, "*How long Lord?*" Peter reminds us that it is short-lived in comparison to the reward awaiting us, when the Lord returns.

He goes on to say that God will perfect us, establish us, strengthen us and settle us, meaning that He will complete the transforming work He began in us, so that we will eventually reflect the character and nature of Christ in our lives. He will make us so strong in our faith that absolutely nothing can shake us, and we will be well settled in our hope in Christ – our ultimate settling though will be with God Himself in heaven.

Seeing that God is the One who is so lovingly, graciously and powerfully at work in us Peter says that all glory, and dominion (or power) belongs to Him forever and ever. None of us can dare take any glory for the Lord's work in our lives, but we should take every opportunity to give God the glory for all He does both in us and through us.

### **1 Peter 5:12-14**

*By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. <sup>13</sup> She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son. <sup>14</sup> Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

Peter then concludes his letter by commending to them a person called Silvanus or Silas, whom he refers to as a faithful brother and says that he has written this letter with his help.

He goes on to remind them that he has briefly exhorted or encouraged them, testifying to them that what they have come to believe in, and stand firm in, is not some false teaching or some fake message of grace, but rather the true grace of God. God never promises anything that He does not deliver. When God gives His word He keeps it without fail.

He then refers to the Jewish believers in Rome, (referring to Rome as Babylon, so as to protect their identity), whom he says have been chosen by the Lord, just as they are, and conveys their greetings to them. He also conveys the greetings of John Mark, whom he refers to as his son, meaning that He led him to Christ, and therefore he is his spiritual son in the faith.

He then tells them to greet one another with a kiss of love – a very prevalent form of greeting back then, as is also the case in many cultures across the world even today.

He then blesses all those who have put their faith in Christ Jesus with peace – a much needed blessing back then, as is in our times as well.

*If you were blessed by this study of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter please share this e-book with someone else.*

**Michael Collins**

Feel free to use this book as you wish – there is no copyright to it. You may photocopy it, print it, and share it however you like.

It's my desire that the Word of God be taught wherever possible, beginning in our very own homes.

---

*For further information feel free to contact me at*

*E-mail: [mikestherusy@gmail.com](mailto:mikestherusy@gmail.com)*

*Phone: +91-9841571394*

---