



2021-2022 ANNUAL THEME | SERIES 2

Series Overview and Guides

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

Objective

what we hope to see God accomplish in us through this study

That we live by the grace of God – persevering today in light of the glory of tomorrow.

STATEMENTS OF THE OBJECTIVE

“I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!”

—1 Peter 5:12 NASB

“The dominant note of this epistle is one of confidence and hope (1:3, 21). God’s people have set before them the prospect of the full vindication and open glorification of the Christ whom they know as their Shepherd... This prospect should inspire His people to endure earthly trial with joy, as partakers of Christ’s sufferings, that their joy, and indeed their personal share with Christ in His glory, may thus be all the greater on the day when His glory is revealed (4:12-13; Romans 8:18-20).”

— Alan M. Stibbs

The First General Epistle of Peter



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Premise

why we are studying this

Ours is a remarkably complex world, where divergent voices claim to tell us how we should live. In such a situation, the Christian needs to understand the simple truth of God’s grace and live by it alone. Christians should dwell on earth as people who are: bound for a future grander than anything temporal, transformed by God’s gracious election, and operating according to a greater purpose. Sadly, that is rarely our experience, necessitating engagement with God’s word from Peter. When we so engage, the Lord changes not only us, but the world.

STATEMENTS OF THE PREMISE

“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

—1 Peter 2:11-14 NASB

“First Peter has a distinctively pastoral tone with a strong emphasis on godly behavior in suffering. It is of great value for Christians today, who are still in a hostile world and many of whom in certain lands are suffering for Christ. A faithful witness for him can be costly, not only under repressive regimes but also in our more open society.”

—Edwin Blum
1 Peter

Theme

what the study is about

Peter’s first general letter is one of those rare books where a clear purpose statement is delivered. As with John’s gospel, this purpose statement comes near the end (1 Peter 5:12; John’s is found in 20:31.) That declaration to stand in God’s grace obviously sets the tone for the entire epistle and undergirds Peter’s argument.

STATEMENTS OF THE THEME

“[You] who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.”

—1 Peter 1:1-2 NASB

“The design of Peter in this Epistle is to exhort the faithful to a denial of the world and a contempt of it, so that being freed from carnal affections and all earthly hindrances, they might with their whole soul aspire after the celestial kingdom of Christ, that being elevated by hope, supported by patience, and fortified by courage and perseverance, they might overcome all kinds of temptations, and pursue this course and practice throughout life.”

—John Calvin and John Owen
Commentary on the Catholic Epistles

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 1:1-2

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Peter launches the letter with his “big idea” in mind. His greeting includes some major themes of the letter:

- God’s grace, as shown through election,
- The triune God’s work in the life of the Christian,
- The sovereignty of God as revealed in foreknowledge,
- The Christian as a pilgrim in this life,
- The Christian is meant to live differently, in obedience.

OBJECTIVE

We live by the full measure of God’s grace.

WE ARE PILGRIMS

“When scientific achievement, the welfare state, and dialectical materialism combine to make our century too worldly-minded, 1 Peter recalls us to the heavenly and eternal outlook, and reminds Christians that they are but strangers and pilgrims here.”

—Alan M. Stibbs
The First General Epistle of Peter

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that grace and peace are multiplied to us to God’s glory.

Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

Session 1: Stand Firm in Grace

1. What challenges for you (not in general) come to mind when you hear “Stand firm” in the context of your faith? From the group discussion, did any categories of challenges become evident?
2. Read the Objective, Premise, and Theme for this series on the first page of this guide. What ideas stand out or resonate with you? Why?
3. Read 1 Peter 5:12. What is the reason Peter wrote this letter?
 - a. Why is it important to understand this?
 - b. How does God’s grace affect your daily life as a believer?
4. Read 1 Peter 1:1-2 together. What do we learn about God?
 - a. How are the three persons of the Trinity described?
 - b. How should the biblical truth that God is sovereign impact your view of your own life? How should it impact your view of world events?
 - c. How does being elect according to God’s foreknowledge, knowing that Jesus died for you, and that the Spirit gifted you for service to others strengthen your resolve to stand firm in God’s grace?
5. What do we learn about ourselves in these two verses?
 - a. In what way are you, as a believer, an “exile” in your culture and community?
 - b. Why do we often forget that we are first and foremost citizens of heaven?
 - c. Peter prays that grace and peace be multiplied to his audience. What incident in Peter’s life illustrates how he learned to stand firm in God’s grace?
 - d. How can grace and peace be multiplied to you personally? How might God use you to do this for others?
6. What are some practical ways to live as strangers and pilgrims in this world while still being salt and light to it?



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SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 1:3-7

KEY IDEAS

THEME

This passage reveals what we have in our great salvation, how the Christian journey flows, and the results for us and God.

- Our salvation brings praise to God.
- Our trials strengthen our faith.
- Our faith journey brings praise, honor, and glory to us and to the Lord.

OBJECTIVE

We embrace our great salvation – past, present, and future.

HOPE

The first characteristic of the new pilgrim life of the believer is hope. This hope is living (1:23; 2:4-5) not merely because it is active (Heb. 4:12), or simply an improved version of Jewish hope (Heb. 7:19)... Peter is referring to something of a different order: a sure and confident outlook which has a divine, not a human, source... This living hope highlights the fact that the present life is by no means the limit of the believer's expectation. The living hope in the newborn Christian has a vigor, an endurance, and an assurance beyond any human power: such hope can no more fail than the living God who bestows it.

—Norman Hillyer
New International Bible Commentary

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we live now in the hope and joy of our sure inheritance.

Session 2: Stand Firm in Hope

1. Imagine that you were expecting a multi-million-dollar inheritance. How would that expectation affect your attitude toward normal financial situations in the meantime?
2. Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. Each verse describes an aspect of our salvation.
 - a. Which verses describe the work on our part?
 - b. Read Ephesians 2:1-5. What is the source of our salvation according to both Peter and Paul?
3. Discuss each of the three adjectives Peter used to describe our inheritance: imperishable, undefiled, unfading.
 - a. Describe each one in your own words. And for contrast, what would the opposite be?
 - b. How is this inheritance different than any earthly inheritance?
4. Read 1 Peter 1:6.
 - a. Knowing our inheritance, what attitude should we have?
 - b. Do you have an abiding joy in the midst of grief and trials? Why, or why not?
5. Read verse 7 from the New Living Translation: "These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world."
 - a. What does God expect your trials to do?
 - b. What did Peter say is the ultimate result?
 - c. Describe how a trial has impacted your life. How did it show the genuineness of your faith?
6. How do these verses encourage you to live undaunted?





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SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 1:7-12

KEY IDEAS

THEME

Salvation is awesome!

- The future revealing of Jesus is the disclosure of one present but unseen. It is laudable & encouraging to believe in and love Him while He is yet unseen.
- Salvation is not merely a future eschatological event, it is a present reality, the abundant life Jesus promised.
- This amazing gift is so precious that both angels and prophets of old longed to see the details of it. Incredibly, God planned it just for us.
- Surely something this wonderful is meant to be shared, continuing the tradition.

OBJECTIVE

We share the truth.

DAILY GOSPEL

God did not give us His gospel just so we could embrace it and be converted. Actually, He offers it to us every day as a gift that keeps on giving to us everything we need for life and godliness.

—Milton Vincent
A Gospel Primer for Christians

PRAYER

Pray for each other this week, that we boldly share the reason for our joy.

Session 3: Stand Firm in Faith

1. Has someone ever asked you the reason for your joy? How did you reply?
2. Read 1 Peter 1:8-9.
 - a. What are some ways to explain believing in something you can't see?
 - b. Even though you haven't seen Jesus, why do you trust Him?
 - c. Review verse 6. How have you experienced joy even in the middle of grievous circumstances?
 - d. In what ways are you "receiving the goal of your faith" (v. 9) now and not just in the future?
3. Read 1 Peter 1:10-12.
 - a. What did the prophets declare about the gospel you have heard in your lifetime?
 - b. Why did they (and we!) want to know when a prophecy is going to come to pass? Why did Christ not make it plain to them?
 - c. What is the correct "lens" through which we are to interpret Old Testament prophecy?
 - d. Why do angels desire to look into the truths of the gospel?
4. What is the role of the Holy Spirit when we share the gospel with others as it was shared with us?
5. What is wonderful or precious about knowing you are saved in these turbulent days?



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SCRIPTURE READING

1 Peter 1:13-21

KEY IDEAS

THEME

The Christian is no longer trapped in the cycle of familial sin (*patroparadotos*), but instead has God Himself as Father. This relational change has occurred because of Jesus' resurrection and is unspeakably precious. As happy and obedient children, Christians should live holy lives. This conduct isn't based on rules, but rather a relationship with the Father to whom we are set aside. Our new conduct in fact demands that we gird up the loins of our thinking and embark like Israel from Egypt, showing inherent courage, integrity, and humility.

OBJECTIVE

We live obediently as God's family.

FIND SOMETHING GOOD

"Each of us will give an account of his works, and each will receive the appropriate reward. This is a 'family judgment,' the Father dealing with His beloved children. The Greek word translated *judgeth* carries the meaning 'to judge in order to find something good'."

—Warren W. Wiersbe
The Bible Exposition Commentary

PRAYER

Pray for each other, that we are obedient and holy in all our conduct.

Use the back of this page to write prayer requests.

Session 4: Stand Firm with Family

1. 1 Peter 1:13 begins with "Therefore." Back up and read verses 6-7 followed by verse 13.
 - a. In light of verses 6-7, why should we hold the attitude described in verse 13?
 - b. What is the ultimate event to which both sections refer? Why is that event so important?
2. Read verses 14-16 which refer to us as God's children.
 - a. Discuss the biblical idea of our adoption by God. Read Galatians 4:4-7 and Ephesians 1:5-6 for more context.
 - b. What kind of conduct does God expect from His children?
 - c. Why is it that we don't always live this way?
3. Read 1 Peter 1:18-21.
 - a. What past history in your earthly family was contrary to godly living?
 - b. How were you ransomed from those old, futile ways?
 - c. What does it mean to you to know you have been set free from the power of sin?
 - d. How does your life reflect the fact that your faith and hope are in God?
4. Discuss with your group specific applications of this passage which you can make in your life.

