

Life Group Discussion Guide

Introduction:

Utilizing "The Moody Bible Commentary" that you received from me earlier in the semester, prepare for the lesson by reading the introduction to the book of 2 Peter by Louis Barbieri on page 1967.

Today's passage consists of only the introduction of the letter (vv. 1-2) and the "resources" of the Christian (vv. 3-4). Although it is short, there is much to be gained from today's passage. If you haven't already, pray for wisdom, understanding, and grace to learn and apply all that there is in 2 Peter 1:1-4. And then read the passage several times, preferably in different translations.

As we jump into this new book, what are some facts that you remember about the apostle Peter (*look through the gospels, if needed*)? Why is it important to know about the experiences of Peter? How might Peter's experiences influenced how he wrote this letter?

If you were to write a letter to encourage, strengthen, or call up a church, how might your introduction go? What do you want to be known as - "a disciple of Jesus", "a servant of Christ", "one called by the will of God", or maybe "a prisoner for Christ Jesus" (although, you have to be in jail for that one)? Why did you choose what you did for being known?

Head:

- Peter, in his introduction to the letter, refers to himself as a servant (Gk. δοῦλος [doulos]) and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Why might Peter refer to himself as both a servant and one that is sent by Christ Jesus? What does it mean for Peter to be a servant of Jesus to those that he is writing to? Do you believe there to be a significance to the order in which Peter describes himself (servant then apostle)? Why or why not?

- W. H. Griffith Thomas suggests that the use of the double name of "Simon Peter" in this letter might imply, for the reader, the life of Peter before and after discipleship to Christ. In what way(s) did Peter's life change? Take a few moments to recall stories from the New Testament that highlight Peter's discipleship to Jesus (i.e., the transfiguration, walking on water, denying Jesus, etc.).

- Verse 2 in 2 Peter 1 is similar to Peter's greeting in his first letter. Here, Peter adds to the greeting that he desires that grace and peace be multiplied to his readers "in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." Would you say that experiencing the grace and peace of God is dependent upon knowledge of God? Why or why not? Do you believe there is a significance to the order of Peter's words of grace and peace? (For the leader, you might consider that without the grace of God, there can be no peace from Him.)

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- Verse 3 states that God has given the Christian everything that he or she needs for life and living in a godly manner. And again, Peter highlights the knowledge that a Christian needs of God. In what ways has God given the Christian ALL that he or she needs to live a godly and righteous life? (Consider passages like Romans 1:17 and 3:21-26)

Heart:

- D. Edmond Hiebert states, in part, "The first chapter vividly portrays the nature of the Christian life with its challenge to spiritual growth and maturity, built on a sure foundation." What is the sure foundation that Peter presents in this section? Why does it matter if Christians have a solid and sure foundation on which their faith is built? Have you found yourself questioning, or needing reassurance, regarding the truth of our faith? What has that time looked like for you? How have you grown in understanding the foundation of our faith that lies in Christ?

- Based on what you know from this passage, and the rest of your formation as a Christian, is what God has given us in His Spirit and His Word sufficient for a godly life? Do we need other sources of insight through other disciplines of knowledge (i.e., psychology, philosophy, etc.)? Why do you answer this way? What does it mean that "Scripture is the final and ultimate authority in faith and life?" Do you agree or disagree with that statement? Why?

- In what way(s) has today's passage helped us to worship God more wholly? Is there something from the first four verses of 2 Peter 1 that causes you to see God with a new (and more clear) perspective? Why do you think that particular thing stood out? If you haven't seen anything new, that is okay.

Hands:

- This week, how might you consider the promises of God so that you can grow in your knowledge of God and your worship of Him? Is there someone that you might share those promises with? Resolve to share with someone this week all that you have learned today.

- As a result of today's pericope, is there something I should be applying to my life in order to honor God and serve the people around me?

Conclusion:

- As we conclude, is there anything from Pastor Kevin's sermon that stood out to you that we have not yet discussed? Why do you think that particular thing stood out to you?

Pray:

Is there anything that you can pray for as a result of today's passage? Spend time praying for one another's needs and requests.