



Baptist Expositor

1 Peter

Maintaining Hope and Holiness Through Suffering



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Learner

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INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER

AUTHORSHIP

The apostle Peter wrote the book of 1 Peter according to 1 Peter 1:1. Peter also acknowledged the scribal help of Silvanus (also known as Silas) for the composition of this letter (5:12). Peter is also accredited with writing 2 Peter where he likely addressed the same recipients (see 2 Peter 3:1). According to early church fathers, Mark used Peter as a primary source when he wrote the Gospel of Mark. Peter was one of the twelve disciples and a leader of the early church.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Most conservative scholars believe Peter wrote this book in AD 64 from Rome. In 5:13, Peter referenced “Babylon” which most scholars believe stood as a code name for Rome. Babylon stands as a symbol for those who have persecuted God’s people.

ORIGINAL RECIPIENTS

Peter wrote this letter to scattered Christians living in the Roman provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. These areas make up modern Turkey. Peter knew these believers well as he addressed them as “Beloved” twice in this letter (2:11; 4:12). During the period when Peter wrote this letter, believers were experiencing persecution from the Roman government with Nero as the Roman emperor.

THEMES AND PURPOSE

Peter stated his purpose in 5:12, “I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.” As Peter expanded upon this purpose, he touched on themes such as Christian hope, living in holiness and humility, and how to endure persecution while faithfully serving the Lord and His churches. Peter placed an emphasis on the sufferings of Christ as an example of how to bear up under pressure.

The following is the breakdown of Peter’s letter (note how Peter goes back and forth between doctrinal and practical sections): I. Salutation (1:1-2); II. *Doctrinal* understanding of salvation; III. *Practical* emphasis on holy living (1:13—2:3); IV. *Doctrinal* blessings of election (2:4-10); V. *Practical* living in submission (2:11—3:12); VI. *Doctrinal* understanding of suffering for Christ (3:13—4:19); VII. *Practical* teaching on living in humility (5:1-11); VIII. Benediction (5:12-14).

UNIT AIM

Learners will come to know the importance of maintaining personal holiness and faithful Christian service in the midst of a hostile world that persecutes believers for the sake of Christ. Believers find their primary hope in salvation and the ultimate return of Christ. The title for this series of lessons is, “Maintaining Hope and Holiness through Suffering.”

LESSON 1: THE JOY OF SALVATION IN FACE OF PERSECUTION

1 Peter 1:1-9

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

GUIDED BIBLE STUDY

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What contrasts do you note in this passage?
4. What comparisons do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
2. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?

Lesson 1: The Joy of Salvation in Face of Persecution

1 Peter 1:1-9

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Peter's _____ (1:1-2)

A. Human author identified (1:1a)

B. Original recipients identified (1:1b-c)

1. Their physical location (1:1b)
2. Their spiritual status (1:2)

Part Two: The Believer's _____ (1:3-5)

A. Salvation is a born-again experience (1:3)

B. Salvation comes with an inheritance (1:4)

C. Salvation comes with God's protection (1:5)

Part Three: The Believer's _____ (1:6-9)

A. Joy despite trials (1:6)

B. Joy through proven faith (1:7)

C. Joy because of a guaranteed good outcome (1:8-9)

Apply It

- ***Believe the truth***
- ***Praise God***

Lesson 1: The Joy of Salvation in the Face of Persecution

1 Peter 1:1-9

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Lesson Aim: The learner will understand that even though believers may suffer for the faith, they can rejoice in the glorious salvation God grants along with His protection.

Introduction

Most people have no problem enjoying life when all seems to be going well. When problems or hard times surface, however, a person's enjoyment often begins to diminish. Thankfully, believers have an advantage when problems prevail in life as they can lean upon God's strength and maintain their joy in Him. The apostle Peter wrote the letter of 1 Peter to believers who experienced suffering and persecution because of their faith. He wrote to encourage them during these difficult times, but also to challenge them to holy living. Believers should never claim exemption from holy living when faced with persecution and hostility. If anything, persecution marks a time for believers to increase their zeal for holiness before God. The letter of 1 Peter is full of great doctrinal truths regarding salvation and practical truths regarding how rightly to live out that salvation, even amid persecution.

Part One: Peter's Salutation (1:1-2)

Peter began his letter with a salutation—a typical introduction for a letter during the first century. A salutation often included the identification of the author and recipients, along with a “salute” or word of well wishes for the recipients.

A. Human author identified (1:1a)

Peter clearly identified himself in the opening part of the letter and claimed a particular title. He called himself “an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1:1a). Jesus called Peter to follow Him during His earthly ministry and he later became an apostle. The **key word** apostle refers to one who is sent on a mission with full authority from the one who sent him. Peter specifically stated that he was an apostle “of Jesus Christ.” Peter belonged to Christ and ministered on behalf of Christ.

B. Original recipients identified (1:1b-c)

1. Their physical location (1:1b)

Peter did not write this letter to a specific church, but rather to a specific group of Christians living in the first century. Peter described them as “the strangers scattered” (1:1b). The **key word** strangers refers to those sojourning in a strange place as temporary residents. The **key word** scattered in this context refers to those forced to leave their homes and regions due to persecution. These descriptive terms remind believers today of their own temporary residence in this present world. Believers can look forward to their eternal (permanent) home in glory!

Peter listed five provinces (regions of the Roman Empire) where these Christians lived: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (1:1c). These five Roman provinces made up what is now modern-day Turkey. As one looks at a first-century map of these provinces, one can detect a circular route (clockwise)

in the order that Peter mentions them. This is likely the order the believers in these regions would have received this letter.

2. Their spiritual status (1:2)

Spiritual status speaks of these believers' relationship with God. Peter described this status in relation to the full Godhead—God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ. **First**, Peter described them as “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1:2a). The **key word** elect refers to one's prerogative in choosing. It specifically speaks of God's call on an individual's life to salvation. Peter further mentioned that believers are “elect” according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. The **key word** foreknowledge means to know something beforehand or ahead of time. With God as the subject, it demonstrates His special affection toward those He means to save. What a joyous thought to contemplate—believers are not an afterthought with God, but a forethought!

Second, the means of the believer's chosen status comes “through sanctification of the Spirit” (1:2b). The **key word** sanctification refers to making one holy and demonstrates a complete belonging to God. According to John 16:13, a **related passage**, the role of the Holy Spirit is to lead the believer into all truth; thus, causing spiritual growth and sanctification. The believer should not discount this sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Third, the purpose for the believer's chosen status relates to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus (1:2c). God has chosen believers that they might be obedient to Him. The **key phrase**, “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,” indicates God's covenant relationship to His people. Exodus 24:7-8, a **related passage**, links God's call for obedience to His original people of Israel to the sprinkling of animal blood by Moses. **Praise God** that believers are sprinkled by the better blood of Jesus Christ!

Peter closes his salutation by expressing his desire for God's grace and peace to be multiplied to his recipients (1:2d). The **key word** multiplied means to the fullest measure. The order in which “grace” and “peace” appear is theologically significant. One cannot experience the peace of God apart from His grace.

Part Two: The Believer's Salvation (1:3-5)

First Peter 1:3 begins Peter's thanksgiving section of his letter, which relates primarily to the believer's salvation. In this section, Peter writes about believers being born again, receiving an inheritance, and enjoying God's protection.

A. Salvation is a born-again experience (1:3)

Peter gives **praise to God** for his abundant mercy (1:3a). The **key word** blessed refers to one who is worthy of praise. It is only used to describe God and Christ in the New Testament. Peter notes God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, demonstrating a distinction between these two persons of the holy Trinity (1:3b). Stated as a **cause and effect**, according to God's abundant mercy (cause) He “hath begotten us” (effect; 1:3b). This **key phrase** refers to God's initiative in bringing about a spiritual re-birth. People are born spiritually dead because of sin and need a re-birth experience. This born-again experience

leads to a living hope. The **key word** hope speaks of a confident expectation as opposed to wishful thinking, and such hope is “lively” or alive and active in the believer’s life. The resurrection of Jesus is the basis through which the believer experiences this hope (1:3c). Because He lives, the believer has hope of a born-again life!

B. Salvation comes with an inheritance (1:4)

An inheritance comes with a person’s born-again experience. Peter describes this inheritance in three ways marked by some **key words** and **phrases** (1:4a). **First**, it is incorruptible, meaning it is imperishable and not subject to decay. **Second**, it is undefiled, meaning that it is pure and no evil can touch it. **Third**, it “fadeth not away,” means that it will endure forever so that time cannot change it. Nothing on this earth provides one with such a guarantee! Peter goes on to speak of this inheritance as reserved in heaven (1:4b). When God makes a reservation, one can have confident hope that such a reservation will never be lost!

C. Salvation comes with God’s protection (1:5)

Furthermore, believers are kept by the power of God (1:5a). The **key word** kept means to protect or keep watch over something. God not only saves people but keeps them saved. The word “kept” is grammatically passive meaning that God does this for the believer. People cannot save themselves, nor keep themselves saved. Believers are ever dependent upon the power of God. Peter notes faith as the means by which this power of God works in the believer’s life. Believers have faith in a “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1:5b). This **key phrase** refers to the full experience of salvation in eternity.

Part Three: The Believer’s Joy (1:6-9)

Peter continues his thanksgiving section by speaking about the joy associated with salvation. Positive circumstances often dictate one’s level of happiness. However, joy goes beyond mere happiness and marks an enduring quality of a born-again life. A believer can experience joy in the Lord no matter the circumstances.

A. Joy despite trials (1:6)

Peter states that believers should rejoice in the great salvation he described in 1:3-5. Believers can rejoice even though they are in “heaviness through manifold temptations” (1:6). The **key word** heaviness refers to distress or grief. The **key word** temptations refers to trials or difficulties in life. Peter states that these trials can be manifold or varied. In the context of 1 Peter, these trials are specifically related to persecution because of the faith. Peter even states that such seasons of difficulty are necessary. Despite life’s difficulties, believers can rejoice in something that does not change—their born-again status before God.

B. Joy through proven faith (1:7)

The **key word** trial means to prove something through testing. Why are such trials necessary in the believer’s life? The believer’s faith needs to be proven genuine. Faith has often been described as a muscle. If a person desires strong

muscles, those muscles must be worked through exercise. If a believer desires strong faith, that faith must be exercised through trials or difficulties.

Peter **compares** such tested faith to gold that is tested through the fire (1:7a). Melting down gold causes the impurities to rise to the top. Those impurities can be skimmed off and the remaining gold is more pure than before. Peter states that proven faith that goes through the fire of difficulties is even more precious than purified gold! Noted as a **cause and effects**, such proven faith (cause) is then found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation or return of Jesus Christ (effects; 1:7b).

We may not enjoy the difficulties of life, but if we pass the test of life's difficulties through strong faith, we can rejoice that we have a faith that has been proven genuine. **Praise God** for the trials that prove our faith genuine.

C. Joy because of a guaranteed good outcome (1:8-9)

Believers should look forward to the return of Jesus Christ when they will get to see Him face to face. The apostle John reminds us in John 1:18, a **related passage**, that no one has seen God at any time. By way of **contrast**, Peter says that even though we do not see Him yet, we still love him and believe in Him (1:8a). It takes faith to believe in what we cannot physically see, as stated aptly in Hebrews 11:1, a **related passage**, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Having such confident faith, the believer can rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1:8b). **Praise God** for such unspeakable joy! No matter how difficult life may become for believers in this life, they can endure it knowing that the outcome results in "the salvation of your souls" (1:9). This **key phrase** likely refers to both the blessings of salvation now and in the future.

Conclusion

There is no better way to begin a letter to persecuted believers than to remind them of God's great salvation. This salvation is the work of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God guarantees this salvation and keeps the believer saved. The trials of life cannot alter this status, but only work to prove the believer's genuine faith. What a great reminder for believers today as well. The world continues to place pressure upon Christians and many are heavily persecuted for their faith. Such persecution is necessary for faith to grow and be proven genuine. May believers continue to encourage one another with God's great salvation through times of testing.

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that believers are chosen according to God's foreknowledge.
- **Praise God . . .**
 - for the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.
 - for His great mercy.
 - that believers are sprinkled with the better blood of Jesus.
 - for an indestructible inheritance.
 - for trials that prove the believer's faith genuine.
 - for the unspeakable joy believers can experience in this life.

LESSON 2: THE PROPHETS OF OLD SERVING HOLY BELIEVERS

1 Peter 1:10-16

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

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Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?

Lesson 2: The Prophets of Old Serving Holy Believers

1 Peter 1:10-16

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Prophets and _____ (1:10-12)

A. They searched diligently (1:10-11)

B. They received _____ (1:12)

1. Revealed to the prophets (1:12a)
2. Preached by the preachers (1:12b)
3. Looked into by the angels (1:12c)

Part Two: The _____ of Believers (1:13)

A. Believers should prepare their minds for action (1:13a-b)

B. Believers should completely fix their hope on grace (1:13c)

Part Three: The _____ of Believers (1:14-16)

A. Negatively—Do not be _____ (1:14)

B. Positively—Be _____ (1:15-16)

Apply It

- *Praise God*
- *Praise God*
- *Obey the command*

Lesson 2: The Prophets of Old Serving Holy Believers

1 Peter 1:10-16

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner should be challenged to live an obedient and holy life before the Lord in light of Old Testament prophecies surrounding the sufferings of Christ.

Introduction

Believers tend to think of their salvation in terms of the moment in time when they believed. This marked their moment of faith in Jesus alone and repentance of sin. The Bible refers to this as the new birth experience (John 3:3, 7). The bigger picture of salvation involves the prophecies of the Old Testament which foretold the securing of salvation through Jesus Christ. While believers experience salvation at a particular point in time, God knew it from long ago. Praise God that He had salvation figured out in eternity past, as noted in 1 Peter 1:20, the **immediate context**.

Believers should not think of their salvation only in terms of the moment of conversion. Obviously, this is the place where it begins for the believer, but it is not where it ends. Salvation changes the rest of the believer's life. That change involves obedience and holiness. The Scripture text in this lesson will focus on the message of salvation from the Old Testament prophets and the response of believers to that salvation.

Part One: The Prophets and Salvation (1:10-12)

Salvation is not just a New Testament concept. It should be thought of as more of a biblical concept. Both the Old and New Testaments are full of thoughts regarding God's salvation. God used the Old Testament prophets to foretell the coming of salvation through Jesus. The prophets of the Old Testament performed two primary tasks. They did "foretelling" where they spoke of events yet to come. They also did "forth telling" (i.e., preaching) where they spoke of God's salvation and confronted the people about their sins.

A. They searched diligently (1:10-11)

In the opening section of 1 Peter 1, the **immediate context**, Peter refers to the recipients as elect (1:1-2), born again (1:3), possessing an inheritance (1:4), and protected by God's power (1:5). He also speaks of the joy of their salvation (1:6-8) and closes with the phrase, "the salvation of your souls" (1:9). He picks up in 1:10a by writing about the prophets who prophesied about this salvation. In their prophesying, the prophets enquired (or inquired) and sought diligently. Both **key words** carry similar meanings. Enquired means to make a diligent investigation or seek with intensity, and sought means to make a thorough investigation. Peter refers to salvation as "the grace that should come unto you" (1:10b). The word "grace" is **repeated** from 1:2 and is used a total of eight times in this epistle as noted in Peter's purpose for the letter (5:12). Grace speaks of God's gift to mankind which leads to salvation.

The prophets searched to know two things: what person the prophecies spoke of and what time the prophecies would take place (1:11). In both, it was the Spirit of Christ who declared this information to them. The **key word** signify means

to declare, show clearly, or make plain. The tense of the verb indicates that the Spirit “kept on signifying” this information to them. The Spirit testified concerning the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. The **key word** testified means to bear witness or predict beforehand. The prophets of the Old Testament prophesied hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth. The main test of a true prophet involved whether or not his prophecy came to pass, according to Deuteronomy 18:15-22, a **related passage**. The Old Testament prophets proved to be true prophets indeed as their prophecies about the sufferings of Christ were fulfilled in the first century.

B. They received revelation (1:12)

1. Revealed to the prophets (1:12a)

The Old Testament prophets did not speak on their own initiative. They spoke only what God revealed to them. One thing God revealed to these prophets was that they did not minister to themselves, but, in **contrast**, they ministered to those who would later receive their prophecies (1:12a). Hebrews 11:39-40, a **related passage**, also speaks about the saints of old serving Christians. The **key word** revealed means to have something made known by divine revelation. As the word is passive in voice, it was God who did the revealing to these prophets. The **key word** minister literally refers to a servant who waits on tables. This imagery emphasizes that the prophecies of the Old Testament benefitted those who would read them later.

2. Preached by the preachers (1:12b)

The Old Testament prophets spoke what God revealed to them. The preachers of the New Testament reported what the prophets revealed. The **key word** reported means to announce or openly declare. Their primary means of announcing included preaching the gospel or good news of Jesus Christ. God used the Holy Spirit to reveal the gospel truth to the preachers. During the time of the apostles’ preaching, the New Testament was in the process of being written. It should be noted that the Bible for the first-century preachers primarily included the Old Testament. Today, preachers have the full Word of God whereby they can make known the whole counsel of God.

3. Looked into by the angels (1:12c)

Peter closes 1:12 with an interesting phrase, “which things the angels desire to look into” (1:12c). The **key phrase**, “to look into,” means to stoop or bend over to make a closer inspection of something. Angels, who do not experience salvation, possess an inquisitive nature about the prophecies of God and their fulfillment. The Old Testament depicts this beautifully with regards to the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. On this day the high priest would place droplets of blood from a bull and goat upon the mercy seat in the tabernacle/temple. On top of the mercy seat were two Cherubim (angels) made of gold. They had outstretched wings with their faces looking down upon the mercy seat as if longing to look into this atoning work.

Part Two: The Actions of Believers (1:13)

The prophets faithfully prophesied what God revealed to them. As in Peter's day and also our day, preachers faithfully preach the message of the gospel led by the Holy Spirit. Peter now speaks of what believers **must** do in response to this glorious message. He mentions two specific **commands believers should obey**.

A. Believers should prepare their minds for action (1:13a-b)

The **first** command states to "gird up the loins of your mind" (1:13a). This is an unusual phrase that literally refers to a man securing his outer garment with a belt when he is engaged in vigorous activity. Peter uses this phrase in a figurative sense with an emphasis on a believer preparing his mind for action. In Romans 12:2, a **related passage**, the apostle Paul commanded believers to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. Believers must have their thinking directed toward spiritual things. What one thinks about truly does matter.

Along with this first command, Peter mentions for believers to "be sober." While on the surface this phrase sounds like a command, it is actually used in conjunction with the first command. Together, the two phrases could be translated as "gird up the loins of your mind *while* being sober." The Christian life should be characterized by one who exhibits such self-control and demonstrates the power of God at work. **In what ways can you keep your thought processes clear and demonstrate self-control in your life?**

B. Believers should completely fix their hope on grace (1:13c)

The **second** command is for believers to "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:13c). The **key word** hope, which is the main part of the command, refers to sure confidence or expectation. In today's modern language, the word hope is often used with a sense of uncertainty. We hope for something that may or may not come to pass. In contrast, Peter commands the believer to hope "to the end" or completely for grace. God's grace is not an uncertain concept, but something sure in the believer's life.

The ultimate experience of God's grace will be brought to believers at the "revelation of Jesus Christ." This **key phrase** speaks of the time of Christ's return, which is the believer's ultimate hope! Do not forget that Peter wrote to Christians experiencing persecution. Placing a focus on the believer's ultimate hope serves as great encouragement for those experiencing hard times on this earth. Believers today should possess this same hope!

Part Three: The Obedience of Believers (1:14-16)

A. Negatively—Do not be conformed (1:14)

Apart from the specific commands that Peter gave his readers in 1:13, they are also to live a life of obedience. Their obedience is marked first by what they should not do, "not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts" (1:14a). The **key word** fashioning or conforming refers to pressing something into a mold. Believers should not be conformed to their former lusts which they did in ignorance (1:14b). The idea behind the word "ignorance" speaks of what they did

in their spiritually lost condition. The apostle Paul also commands believers not to be conformed to this world in Romans 12:2, a **related passage**.

B. Positively—Be holy (1:15-16)

Secondly, this obedience is marked positively with the command to be holy in **contrast** to conforming to former lusts. The **key word** holy refers to one who is set apart. Noted as a **comparison**, believers are commanded to be holy like the God who called them (1:15a). The **key word** called in this context means to invite or summon one to salvation. This demonstrates the initiative God takes in our salvation, which is similar to how He causes believers to be born again as mentioned in 1:3, the **immediate context**. God desires His children to be like Him in holiness. Peter goes on to say that believers should be holy in “all manner of conversation” (1:15b). This **key phrase** refers to more than a conversation, but one’s overall conduct or behavior. Holiness should impact every area of our lives. Therefore, holiness is more than the mere absence of sin but relates to upright behavior before God.

Peter quotes Leviticus 11:44-45 in 1:16 to demonstrate the reason why believers should be holy. Note the **cause and effect** within the quote, “You shall be holy (effect) for I am holy (cause).” Truly, the believer needs no other reason to strive for holiness than the fact that the holy God who called them has commanded their holiness. **How does your life demonstrate holiness?**

Conclusion

The Old Testament prophets got it right! They prophesied about the sufferings of Christ, and, at the appropriate time in history, Jesus came to earth and fulfilled what they prophesied. The prophets served future believers well with their prophecies and the preachers of Peter’s day proclaimed them accurately. Because of the faithfulness of the prophets and the preachers, people believed, and their belief resulted in actions of obedience and striving for holiness. **Praise God** for the prophets and preachers who impacted our lives from long ago!

Apply It

- **Praise God** for the prophets who faithfully served future believers.
- **Praise God** for the preachers who do and have faithfully preached the gospel as led by the Holy Spirit.
- **Obey the command . . .**
 - to prepare your mind for action.
 - to fix your hope completely in God’s grace.
 - to live a holy life before God

LESSON 3: THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF THE PERFECT LAMB

1 Peter 1:17-21

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson option provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson commentary.

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1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What are the cause/effect relationships in the passage?
3. What comparison do you note in this passage?
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
3. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
3. Is there a command to obey in this passage?

Lesson 3: The Precious Blood of the Perfect Lamb

1 Peter 1:17-21

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: _____ the Father (1:17)

A. How believers address God (1:17a)

B. How God judges (1:17b)

C. How believers live before God (1:17c)

Part Two: The _____ of Christ (1:18-19)

A. How believers are NOT redeemed (1:18)

B. How believers ARE redeemed (1:19)

1. Christ's blood is precious (1:19a)

2. Christ, the giver of the blood, is perfect (1:19b)

Part Three: The _____ of Christ (1:20-21)

A. He was _____ (1:20a)

B. He was _____ (1:20b)

C. He is the _____ of a person's belief (1:21)

Apply It

- *Believe the truths* that
- *Obey the command*
- *Praise God* that

Lesson 3: The Precious Blood of the Perfect Lamb

1 Peter 1:17-21

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will come to know the truth that God redeems believers through the precious blood of the perfect Christ.

Introduction

Many people are tempted to believe that money is the “cure-all” to their problems. People think sometimes, “All difficulties in life would cease if I just had more money.” Certainly, people need money to pay bills and secure their necessary needs; but, money cannot solve everything. Sometimes the presence of more money can bring more difficulties. Money most definitely cannot fix a person’s sin problem nor secure one’s salvation. God provided something far greater to secure what people could not secure for themselves. Jesus Christ became God’s great provision for mankind. This lesson emphasizes this all-important truth.

Part One: God the Father (1:17)

Before discussing the precious blood from the perfect Christ, it is important to understand the One who sent Christ to this earth. Through Christ, believers can address God a certain way, know that God judges without partiality, and live a righteous life before God.

A. How believers address God (1:17a)

The writer of this lesson can address Lance Hellwig as “Dad,” because he was physically born from him. Peter reminded believers in 1:3, the **immediate context**, that they are spiritually begotten of God. This spiritual birth experience affords believers the right to call God “Father.” Peter stated at the beginning of 1:17, “And if ye call on the Father” (1:17a). The word “if” in that quote makes it sound like Peter’s readers possibly might or might not call God “Father.” However, Peter actually stated a fact instead of a probable condition. The grammar of the original language of the New Testament (Greek) affirms Peter’s confident statement. The word “since” translates the original language more precisely than “if.” The believers in Peter’s day could most definitely call God “Father” as can believers today.

Do not miss the **key word call** in 1:17a. This word means to address someone who is greater. This word was used when appealing to a higher court. Peter used the same root word in 1:15, the **immediate context**, when referring to God who has called believers. The particular form of the word in 1:17a carries the sense of an intense calling by the one who calls, thus refers to believers making a strong appeal to God as Father. **Praise God** that believers can appeal to the One who is the greatest of all!

B. How God judges (1:17b)

The One believers call “Father” judges all men “without respect of persons” (1:17b). This **key phrase** means that God is impartial and does not take a person’s position or status into account when rendering judgment. Not only is God impartial in His character, but believers have equal status before God. No one’s social or economic status allows him or her to have a better relationship with God compared to others. All believers can call God “Father” and know that He will judge their works

impartially.

Notice the Scripture states that God judges “according to every man’s work.” The word “work,” in context, relates to the believer’s work beyond salvation. All believers will stand before God one day and give an account of the work or good deeds they have done, as Paul reminds us in Romans 14:10 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, **related passages**.

C. How believers live before God (1:17c)

Here is where the word “since” makes more sense in 1:17. Stated as a **cause and effect**, because or since believers can call upon God as “Father” who judges all impartially, they should “pass the time” of their sojourning or course of life in fear (effect; 1:17c). This **key phrase** refers to one’s moral conduct or behavior. This links well to 1:15-16, the **immediate context**, where the Scripture commands believers to be holy as God is holy.

While living at home with his dad, this writer knew that certain behaviors were expected. God the Father expects believers to behave a certain way. Believers should specifically pass the time “in fear.” The **key word fear** refers to a holy reverence for God. Knowing that God will judge their deeds, believers should live their lives seriously before Him in fear or respect for Him.

The idea of sojourning should remind believers of the temporary nature of this life. Abraham and the patriarchs of the Old Testament also viewed themselves as sojourners as noted in Hebrews 11:9-10, 13, a **related passage**. **How has your behavior been before God lately?**

Part Two: The Blood of Christ (1:18-19)

Christ’s blood is key to the forgiveness of sins as aptly stated in Hebrews 9:11-14, 22, a **related passage**. Peter reminded his readers of the importance of Christ’s blood in the verses that follow.

A. How believers are NOT redeemed (1:18)

Peter answered the all-important question of how God redeems people in 1:18-19. He did so first by stating how a person is NOT redeemed. Peter wrote, “Forasmuch as you know,” which literally means *you know and continue to know*. Believers know that they are NOT redeemed through corruptible or perishable things like gold and silver. The **key word redeemed** means to deliver or set free by way of a payment. In the Old Testament, a slave could be set free through the payment of a redemption price (see Leviticus 25:47-49), but no money paid can purchase one’s spiritual redemption or salvation. The believer’s spiritual redemption includes the payment of sin’s penalty, which Christ himself paid.

Peter also reminded these readers what they inherited, “your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers” (1:18b). The **key word conversation** comes from the same Greek root word translated as “pass the time” in 1:17 and refers once again to one’s behavior. Peter reminded them of a time when they lived in ignorance in 1:14, the **immediate context**. People inherit the same old sinful ways from their predecessors that can never pay the price of their redemption, according to Romans 5:12, a **related passage**. The world needed something greater, and God provided just that.

B. How believers ARE redeemed (1:19)

1. Christ's blood is precious (1:19a)

The price of redemption could not be paid through corruptible things, but, in **contrast**, Christ secured the true price of redemption through His own blood! (1:19a). Ephesians 1:7, a **related passage**, also clearly notes the redemption through Christ's blood. Remember, the word "redeemed" refers to a payment that is made. The payment of sin through Christ's blood was the only payment that would secure salvation for mankind. Peter described Christ's blood as precious, which refers to what is costly or of great worth.

2. Christ, the giver of the blood, is perfect (1:19b)

Not only is the blood described, but Peter **compared** Jesus to a lamb "without blemish" and "without spot," great **truths to believe**. The first **key phrase** means to show no fault or something absent of any defect. The sacrificial animals of the Old Testament had to be without blemish and defect as noted in Leviticus 22:19-21, a **related passage**. The second **key phrase** refers to that which is pure and clean. Jesus as the Lamb of God possessed no defects and was pure having no sin in His life. These two phrases together provide an image of Jesus as perfect, which He is!

Part Three: The Person of Christ (1:20-21)

Peter moved from the discussion of Jesus' blood and His perfection as a sacrifice, to mentioning specific things about His person.

A. He was foreordained (1:20a)

Peter noted first about the person of Christ that He was "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1:20a). The **key word** foreordained means to know something beforehand. In this case, God knew it and set it in place. This is also a **repeated word** from 1:2, where Peter referred to believers as elect or chosen "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." The prophets of the Old Testament prophesied about Jesus coming to earth as noted in 1:10-11, the **immediate context**. While this is true, 1:20b clearly states that Christ's existence predated His coming to earth as He existed in eternity past long "before the foundation of the world," a **truth to believe**.

The above **key phrase**, which means before Creation or time, is noted as quite important in several **related passages** in the New Testament. Some of these passages refer to Jesus, while others refer to believers. Jesus stated that the Father loved Him before the foundation of the world in John 17:24. John further noted Jesus as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world in Revelation 13:8. Paul referred to believers as chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world in Ephesians 1:4. John referred to believers as having their names written in the book of life before the foundation of the world in Revelation 13:8. All of these Scripture references remind the believer that before time began, the Father knew of Christ's coming and the existence of believers.

B. He was manifested (1:20b)

The second thing Peter conveyed about Jesus is that He was manifested. Even though Jesus was foreknown before the foundation of the world, Peter noted in **contrast** that He "was manifest in these last times for you" (1:20b). The **key word** manifest means to reveal or make something known. The prophets of the Old

Testament prophesied about Him and the preachers of Peter's day preached about Him (1:12). Through the prophets and the preachers, God revealed His Son to the world. May we continue to make Jesus manifest today so that many more can come to the knowledge of the truth. ***When was the last time you witnessed to someone about Jesus?***

C. He is the basis of a person's belief (1:21)

The third item Peter noted about Jesus is that through Jesus, people become believers in God (1:21a). Jesus is the basis of the believer's faith. Peter further marked two important ***truths to believe*** regarding this basis of our faith: God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory (1:21b). Scripture notes belief in Christ's resurrection as a requirement for salvation. Paul clearly agreed as stated in Romans 10:9, a ***related passage***, that one must confess Jesus as Lord and believe in his heart that God raised Him from the dead. When Jesus completed His work on the cross and rose from the dead, Scripture states that God highly exalted Him in Philippians 2:9-11, another ***related passage***. This relates to God giving Jesus glory. Noted as a ***cause and effect***, God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory (causes), so that our faith and hope might be in God (effects; 1:21b). ***Praise God*** for these wonderful effects!

Conclusion

God possesses only one plan of redemption regardless of what other religions or some mistaken Christians might say. To state it as clearly as possible, any other way than the way God prescribes in His Word is the wrong way. Such a statement does not reek of arrogance but is simply the most profound truth in the world. Christ, the perfect Lamb of God came to this earth to shed His precious blood so that we might become believers in God. The Heavenly Father required the blood and life of His Son to redeem mankind. May God impress this truth upon your heart!

Apply It

- ***Believe the truths*** that . . .
 - God redeems believers through the precious blood of Christ.
 - Christ is the unblemished and spotless Lamb of God.
 - Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world.
 - Christ is the basis for one's personal belief in God for salvation.
 - God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory.
- ***Obeys the command*** to behave yourself in reverence as you sojourn on this earth.
- ***Praise God*** that . . .
 - believers can appeal to the One who is the greatest of all.
 - He is impartial when He judges.
 - Our faith and hope are in God

LESSON 4: BORN AGAIN TO LOVE AND GROW

1 Peter 1:22—2:3

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What comparisons do you note in this passage?
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
3. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
4. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?

Lesson 4: Born Again to Love and Grow

1 Peter 1:22—2:3

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The _____ of A Purified Soul (1:22)

A. _____ *to the truth* (1:22a)

B. _____ *for believers* (1:22b-c)

Part Two: How the Believer is Born Again (1:23-25)

A. The _____ *Word of God* (1:23)

1. The Word of God lives forever (1:23a)
2. The Word of God abides forever (1:23b)

B. *The temporary vs. the permanent* (1:24-25a)

Part Three: The _____ of a Born Again Life (2:1-3)

A. *Believers should lay aside certain behaviors* (2:1)

1. Malice (2:1a)
2. Guile (2:1b)
3. Hypocrisies (2:1c)
4. Envy (2:1d)
5. Evil speaking (2:1e)

B. *Believers should _____ the Word of God* (2:2-3)

1. The command to desire the Word (2:2a)
2. The purpose for the command (2:2b)
3. The motivation for the command (2:3)

Apply It

• *Believe the truths* that . . .

• *Avoid the errors*

• *Obey the commands*

• *Praise God*

Lesson 4: Born Again to Love and Grow

1 Peter 1:22—2:3 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will come to know the truth that believers are born again by the Word of God, and that born-again experience should result in true love and growth as a Christian.

Introduction

People can make a variety of claims about themselves, but can they back those claims up with action? For instance, I could claim to be the world's greatest brain surgeon. That is quite a claim! But place a scalpel in my hand and direct me to operate on a person's brain, and you would soon find out that I cannot back up such a claim. Similarly, being a genuine, born-again believer is accompanied by action on one's part. It is evidenced by more than a claim; it must be observable through real spiritual fruit.

Part One: The Proof of A Purified Soul (1:22)

God alone possesses the power to save a person from his or her sins. The **key phrase**, "purified your souls" appears to be synonymous with salvation in this verse (1:22a). The grammar of the word purified speaks of a completed action with continuing results, "having purified and continuing to be purified." One would expect the action of the verb to be directed toward God as the One doing the purifying. But instead, the voice is active, which indicates that the recipients of the letter are accomplishing the action. What Peter indicated by this construction concerns the proof of a purified soul. The believer demonstrates proof of a purified soul through certain actions.

A. Obedience to the truth (1:22a)

The first proof involves obedience to the truth. The believer's desire to adhere to and follow God's truth marks a sure way to spot a true believer, demonstrating that such a person does indeed possess a purified soul. The believer accomplishes this obedience "through the Spirit." The likely reference here is to the Holy Spirit. Believers need the Spirit's presence and power to remain obedient to God's truth.

B. Love for believers (1:22b-c)

Love for other believers marks a second proof of a purified soul. The text specifically states, "unto unfeigned love of the brethren" (1:22b). The **key word** unfeigned means sincere or genuine. Our love for one another does not need to be fake, but genuine. The word for "love" here specifically refers to brotherly love. Peter had in mind for believers to love each other. According to 1:6-7, the recipients of this letter faced persecution. Believers need each other's love during difficult times. Peter commanded the believers to love each other "fervently," which means eagerly or earnestly. May we always seek to **obey the command** to love our brothers and sisters in Christ with an eager and earnest spirit.

Part Two: How the Believer is Born Again (1:23-25)

According to 1:19, the **immediate context**, God redeems believers through

the precious blood of Christ. In 1:23-25, Peter wrote about what God uses to bring about their born-again status.

A. The incorruptible Word of God (1:23)

1. The Word of God lives forever (1:23a)

After writing about how believers demonstrate proof of their purified souls in 1:22, Peter mentioned that the believers are born again not from corruptible seed, but in **contrast**, incorruptible seed (1:23a). The phrase “being born again” speaks of God’s action on behalf of the believer. The believer does not birth himself spiritually, but God Himself performs this work. Also, from a grammatical standpoint, the believer is born again at a certain point in time and continues to have that status without end! **Believe the truth** that believers are born again by the incorruptible Word of God.

The incorruptible seed refers to the Word. God plants the seed of His Word in the believer’s heart which results in a born-again experience. God’s Word is incorruptible meaning that it is unable to perish. Since it cannot perish, Peter described it further as living forever. The Word of God is unlike any other writing in that it literally lives. God breathed life into it through inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16) and therefore it is alive as emphasized by Hebrews 4:12, a **related passage**.

2. The Word of God abides forever (1:23b)

Not only does the Word live forever, but it abides forever (1:23b). The **key word** abideth means that the Word remains. Many have attacked the Word of God through the centuries. The attackers have come and gone, but God’s Word remains. The Psalmist stated in the **related passage** of Psalm 119:89, “Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.” **Believe the truth** that God’s Word lives and abides forever.

B. The temporary vs. the permanent (1:24-25a)

Peter **compared** all “flesh” and the “glory of man” to the grass that withers and the flower that falls off (1:24). The “glory of man” is a reference to one whom God creates in His own image. Mankind does not live forever on this earth but eventually dies. In **contrast** to the temporary nature of man is the permanent nature of the Word of God, “But the word of the Lord endureth forever” (1:25a). The word “endureth” comes from the same Greek word translated as “abideth” in 1:23. 1 Peter 1:24-25a is a quote from Isaiah 40:6-8. Isaiah emphasized in this chapter that the Lord has spoken. What God speaks will come to pass; therefore, His Word endures forever.

C. The importance of preaching the gospel (1:25b)

The living and abiding Word of God must be preached. Peter reminded his recipients that this was the very Word that was preached to them. The **key word** preached refers to proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Earlier he referred to the gospel preached to them by others through the Holy Spirit (1:12). That same Word must be preached today. There can be no substitute for the preaching of God’s Word, for this is what people need to hear.

Part Three: The Results of a Born-Again Life (2:1-3)

God uses His incorruptible Word to bring about a person’s spiritual birth.

The moment of being born again marks a starting point in the believer's walk with the Lord. That experience should result in proper behaviors and a proper desire.

A. Believers should lay aside certain behaviors (2:1)

The **key phrase** "laying aside" literally refers to the removal of clothing (2:1). Peter employed this key phrase (which is one word in Greek) in a figurative sense of getting rid of something in one's life. He mentions five specific things that must be laid aside, all of which can be identified as **key words** and clear **errors to avoid**. Also, notice that the word "all" is associated with the words listed.

1. Malice (2:1a)

The first behavior a believer must lay aside is "malice." This word refers to evil or wickedness. God clearly calls the believer to holiness as noted in 1:16-17, the **immediate context**. There is absolutely no room for wickedness in a believer who is called to be holy.

2. Guile (2:1b)

The second behavior a believer must lay aside is "guile." This word refers to deceit. Peter already mentioned that believers must exhibit obedience to the truth. Deceit results in the opposite of truth. May believers always strive to deal with one another truthfully and never exhibit a spirit of guile toward anyone.

3. Hypocrisies (2:1c)

The third behavior a believer must lay aside is "hypocrisies." This word speaks of one who pretends to be something he is not. Earlier, Peter stressed the need to love one another with sincerity (1:22). We do not sincerely love one another if we are only putting on a show.

4. Envy (2:1d)

Fourthly, believers should lay aside "envy." This word refers to jealousy. Believers who truly love each other do not become jealous of one another. Rather, a believer who demonstrates genuine love for a fellow believer rejoices when good happens to him. This relates to covetousness, which the Word of God forbids in the tenth commandment (see Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21).

5. Evil speaking (2:1e)

The last or fifth behavior to lay aside is "evil speaking." This word refers to slander or tearing down someone else with words. Again, this particular behavior violates Peter's previous command to love the brothers. Believers should be in the business of building each other up with their words, not tearing down. Believers should never exhibit this kind of behavior.

B. Believers should desire the Word of God (2:2-3)

A precise translation of the first part of 2:1 would be, "after laying aside." Once the believer lays aside the sinful behaviors mentioned in 2:1, it is time to replace them with something better.

1. The command to desire the Word (2:2a)

Peter begins 2:2 with an interesting **comparison**. Just like a baby who longs

for his or her mother's milk, so the believer should desire God's Word. The word for milk in 2:2a likely refers to the Word of God. Peter described the Word as both spiritual and sincere or pure. The **key word** sincere refers to what is not watered down. Believers should desire the pure Word of God, and never settle for some watered-down version. Watered-down milk cannot be detected with the naked eye, only when one drinks it. May we as believers **obey the command** to desire the sincere milk of the Word.

2. The purpose for the command (2:2b)

Stated as a **cause and effect**, Peter clearly states the purpose of why he commanded his recipients to desire God's Word. Desire the spiritual, pure milk (cause) so that you will grow (effect; 2:2b). Just as babies need milk to grow, so believers need God's Word to grow. If a baby never shows any signs of growth, the parents become worried and take their baby to the doctor to determine what is wrong. We should be even more concerned when a believer does not grow. And no growth will occur apart from the Word of God.

3. The motivation for the command (2:3)

Peter is just as clear as to the motivation behind desiring God's Word, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (2:3). The word "if" could be translated using the word "since." Peter is not questioning whether the Lord is gracious or not, he is rather stating a fact concerning the gracious nature of the Lord. Just like a mother's milk tastes good to a baby, so the Word of God demonstrates the gracious nature of the Lord, a sweet taste indeed to the believer! **Praise God** that He is gracious!

Conclusion

How important is the Word of God? Without it, a person cannot be born again. God uses His incorruptible Word as a means by which He causes one to be born again. Once a person is truly born again, he or she must live such a life before God and the world which exemplifies their born-again status. Then, to maintain continual growth, the believer must desire the spiritual, pure milk of God's Word. Every believer, no matter the stage of their spiritual growth, must keep the process of growth moving forward. A lack of growth in a believer shows spiritual deficiency that must be corrected. May we keep showing our purified souls through obedience to the truth and sincere love for fellow believers.

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that . . .
 - believers are born again by the incorruptible Word of God.
 - the Word of God lives and abides forever.
- **Avoid the errors** of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and evil speakings.
- **Obey the commands** to . . .
 - love one another with a pure heart fervently.
 - desire the sincere milk of the Word.
- **Praise God** that He is gracious!

LESSON 5: JESUS: THE CHIEF CORNER STONE

1 Peter 2:4-12

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson options provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson commentary.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What comparisons do you note in this passage?
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
3. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?

Lesson 5: Jesus: The Chief Corner Stone

1 Peter 2:4-12

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The _____ Stone and Stones (2:4-5)

A. Jesus as the Living Stone (2:4)

1. How He is perceived by men (2:4a)
2. How He is perceived by God (2:4b)

B. Believers as Living Stones (2:5)

Part Two: Belief vs. _____ (2:6-8)

A. The blessing of belief (2:6-7a)

B. The danger of unbelief (2:7b-8)

Part Three: The _____ and _____ of God's People (2:9-10)

A. The description of God's people (2:9a-d)

1. A chosen generation (2:9a)
2. A royal priesthood (2:9b)
3. A holy nation (2:9c)
4. A peculiar people (2:9d)

B. The purpose of God's people (2:9e)

C. The joy of being called God's people (2:10)

Part Four: Good _____ and its Results (2:11-12)

A. What believers are to do (2:11-12a)

1. Abstain from fleshly lusts (2:11)
2. Exhibit excellent behavior (2:12a)

B. How believers can impact the lost (2:12b)

Apply It

- Believe the truth
- Avoid the error
- Praise God

Lesson 5: Jesus: The Chief Corner Stone

1 Peter 2:4-12

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand that just as Jesus was chosen by God as elect and precious, so God chooses believers to be His special people so that they might praise Him and serve Him faithfully.

Introduction

Peter encouraged his readers in 2:1-3, the **immediate context**, to crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word. That same Word caused their spiritual rebirth (1:23). God also used the Word to facilitate the believer's spiritual growth. Every believer should want to crave His Word since they have "tasted that the Lord is gracious." The epistle now turns its attention toward describing the Lord and believers in more detail.

Part One: The Living Stone and Stones (2:4-5)

A. Jesus as the Living Stone (2:4)

Peter **compared** Jesus to a living stone. The **key phrase** "living stone" seems like an unusual phrase. After all, a stone does not possess any qualities of life. A stone or rock is best described simply as matter. However, the comparison to Jesus as a rock speaks volumes regarding His dependability.

1. How He is perceived by men (2:4a)

We will notice different responses to Jesus as the stone throughout this passage. The text begins with how men or people, in general, perceive Him. Peter stated that this living stone has been "disallowed indeed of men" (2:4a). The **key word** disallowed means to throw something out after testing it, thus, to reject it. Jesus is certainly no stranger to rejection as He experienced rejection by His own people, as noted in John 1:11, a **related passage**. They tested Jesus according to their perception of what the Messiah would be. They looked for a military leader or one with earthly authority. Jesus did not pass "their" test, and so they rejected Him. Sadly, people today continue to reject Jesus.

2. How He is perceived by God (2:4b)

Man's perception is one thing; God's perception is another. Men may reject Jesus as the living stone, but, in **contrast**, God perceives Him as chosen and precious (2:4b). Peter already referred to believers by using the word "chosen" (elect) in 1:2. He now refers to the living stone as chosen of God. The Heavenly Father noted the approval of His Son when Jesus was baptized, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The **key word** precious means to honor, respect, or esteem someone highly. No one deserves greater honor than Jesus! Men may reject Jesus, but the Father has respected Him.

B. Believers as Living Stones (2:5)

While Scripture describes Jesus as a living stone (singular), believers share this comparison as living stones (plural). Peter further **compared** believers to being "built up a spiritual house" and as a "holy priesthood." Just as a house can be built by fitting stones together, so God builds His spiritual household with believers who

work together as a holy priesthood. Note the description of this priesthood as “holy.” Peter already reminded his recipients of the need to be holy in 1:15-16, a quote from Leviticus 11:44-45. In mentioning the priesthood, we see Peter’s use of the Old Testament, particularly Leviticus, which describes regulations for priests.

The priests of the Old Testament served God faithfully in and around the temple. They offered animal sacrifices to God according to God’s laws. These sacrifices performed in the right way became pleasing and acceptable before God. Believers likewise offer up acceptable “spiritual” sacrifices unto God as they live in obedience to His Word. These spiritual sacrifices are performed “through” Jesus as the agent through whom this work is accomplished.

God no longer requires animal sacrifices since Jesus’ fulfillment as the ultimate sacrifice upon the cross. Such sacrifices God requires of believers today include the good works believers do in their service to God. Paul reminds believers in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, a **related passage**, that good works done in the right way, when passing through the fire of God’s judgment, will come forth like precious gold or silver. But, works done in the wrong way will be burned up like wood, hay, and stubble.

Part Two: Belief vs. Unbelief (2:6-8)

A. The blessing of belief (2:6-7a)

Peter quoted Isaiah 28:16 in 2:6. The quote entails God laying down a chief corner stone in Sion (or Zion), a reference to Jerusalem. With this quote, Peter continues the stone imagery, which again relates to Jesus. The **key phrase**, “chief corner stone,” likely refers here to a foundation stone in a building that ensures the walls on either side of it remain sure, which helps the soundness of the entire structure. Isaiah 28:16 mentions that this chief corner stone is laid “for a foundation” and is a “sure foundation.” The text further states that this stone is elect (chosen) and precious, two ideas **repeated** from 2:4. Paul also refers to Jesus as the chief corner stone, a definite **truth to believe**, in Ephesians 2:20, a **related passage**.

The best response to such a stone is to believe or trust in it. One must believe that this special stone will ensure the integrity of what is built. People can definitely place their trust in the soundness of Jesus. Peter stated that “he that believeth on him shall not be confounded” (2:6b). The **key word** confounded means to be disappointed or put to shame. **Praise God** that those who place their trust in Jesus will never be disappointed! And just as God perceives His Son as precious, so believers see Him as precious (2:7a).

B. The danger of unbelief (2:7b-8)

In **contrast**, Peter noted those disobedient people who do not place their trust in Jesus (2:7b). Peter quoted another Old Testament verse from Psalm 118:22. This quote describes a stone rejected by builders. Their major mistake—this rejected stone was intended to be the chief corner stone. Without the chief corner stone, the building will never be true.

For those who do not believe, Jesus becomes “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,” an Old Testament quotation from Isaiah 8:14. These are the same disobedient ones who stumble at the Word. The **key word** offence literally refers to the trigger of a trap for catching prey. The figurative usage speaks of an obstacle that causes one to stumble. People typically stumble over something because they do not see it or were not expecting it. The Jews certainly did not “see” or expect Jesus

to be the Messiah. From God's perspective, these disobedient rejecters of Jesus have been appointed as those who would stumble. This hard statement by Peter demonstrates that God ultimately knows those who will or will not believe. **Avoid the error** of stumbling over Jesus and taking offense at Him.

Part Three: The Description and Function of God's People (2:9-10)

A. The description of God's people (2:9a-d)

The tenor of the passage now moves back to those who believe. The beginning of 2:9 states, "But ye," in **contrast** to those who are disobedient and stumble. Peter begins to describe the believers more fully in a series of four statements, which are derived from the Old Testament (Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 43:20-21; 61:6).

1. A chosen generation (2:9a)

Just as Jesus is chosen by God as the living stone, so also He views believers as a chosen generation (2:9a), that is, a people of God's own choosing. God noted Israel of the Old Testament as His chosen people. Now, believers in Christ (i.e., the church), both Jews and Gentiles, are noted as His chosen people.

2. A royal priesthood (2:9b)

Earlier, Peter referred to believers as a holy priesthood, now they are described as royal. The apostle John mentions how God has made believers both kings and priests in Revelation 1:6, a **related passage**. As children of the King of kings, believers are spiritual royalty in God's Kingdom.

3. A holy nation (2:9c)

Believers are once again identified as holy, a "holy nation" (2:9c). The word "nation" is not equated to an earthly nation, but rather a reference to God's people. God referred to His original people, the Israelites, as a holy nation in Exodus 19:6. Believers are obligated to be holy because God Himself is holy (1:15-16).

4. A peculiar people (2:9d)

God's people are noted as "a peculiar people" (2:9d). The **key word** peculiar refers to people who are God's possession. **Praise God** that as believers we belong to Him!

B. The purpose of God's people (2:9e)

Notice the **cause and effect** in 2:9. Because believers have the four-fold status mentioned above, they should "shew forth" praises unto God (effect; 2:9e). This **key phrase** means to proclaim or report something everywhere. God expects His people to proclaim His praises to a lost world. The God who deserves our praise is the One who has called us "out of darkness into his marvelous light," a stark **contrast** indeed! God is the One who calls His people to Himself that they might come into the light of His Blessed Kingdom.

C. The joy of being called God's people (2:10)

In 2:10, Peter quoted from Hosea 1:10. Peter **contrasted** between a former time when the Gentiles were not considered God's people, but now they are. In parallel fashion, he also described them as those who had not obtained mercy

but have now obtained God's mercy. The **key word** mercy means to have pity on someone. **Praise God** that He took pity on the lost Gentiles to bring them into His fold!

Part Four: Good Behavior and its Results (2:11-12)

Peter addressed his recipients as "Dearly beloved" at the beginning of 2:11. This sort of address demonstrated Peter's care for these believers. He also urged them in a call to action, "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims." Peter already acknowledged them as "strangers" in 1:1.

A. What believers are to do (2:11-12a)

1. Abstain from fleshly lusts (2:11)

Peter urged them first of all to abstain from fleshly lusts. The **key word** abstain means to keep one's distance from something. Believers should keep away from allowing the flesh to rule their lives. Peter described the struggle as a war against one's soul, very reminiscent of Paul's own personal struggle he described in Romans 7:14-19, a **related passage**.

2. Exhibit excellent behavior (2:12a)

Peter urged them also to have their "conversation honest among the Gentiles" (2:12a). The **key word** conversation refers to one's behavior. Believers should let the world see their good behavior even while experiencing persecution.

B. How believers can impact the lost (2:12b)

A distinct purpose exists as to why the believer's good behavior remains important. Lost people may speak evil concerning Christians, but the believer's good works, which the lost will behold, should cause them to glorify God in the "day of visitation." This **key phrase** likely refers to God visiting the lost to show them mercy and causing them to become converted. Never minimize the impact of your good behavior before spiritually lost individuals. You never know how God might use your life to impact the life of someone else.

Conclusion

Jesus is the living and chief corner stone. As such, He supports believers whom Scripture describes as living stones. The lost may stumble over who Jesus is, but believers, like the Father, view Him as precious and acknowledge His role as the chief corner stone. God considers believers His special chosen people, enjoys their praises, and encourages their good behavior so that others might be impacted by their spiritual service and become God's people as well. May we never forget who Jesus is nor our own status before God!

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that Jesus is the Chief Corner Stone.
- **Avoid the error** of stumbling over Jesus and taking offense at Him.
- **Praise God**
 - that those who place their trust in Jesus will never be disappointed.
 - that as believers we belong to Him and are called to be His special people!
 - that He took pity on the lost Gentiles to bring them into His fold!

LESSON 6: SUBMISSION AND SUFFERING

1 Peter 2:13-25

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
4. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
2. Is there an example to follow in this passage?

Lesson 6: Submission and Suffering

1 Peter 2:13-25

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Submission to _____ Rulers and All People (2:13-17)

A. Submit for the Lord's Sake (2:13-14)

B. Silence _____ men (2:15-16)

C. Showing submission to all (2:17)

Part Two: _____ Submitting to Their _____ (2:18-20)

A. Submission to the good and the bad (2:18)

B. Submission that is acceptable before God (2:19-20)

Part Three: _____ Example of Suffering (2:21-25)

A. He left this example for believers (2:21)

B. He suffered perfectly (2:22-23)

C. He suffered for our _____ (2:24)

D. He suffered for those who went astray (2:25)

Apply It

• *Follow the example*

• *Obey the commands*

Lesson 6: Submission and Suffering

1 Peter 2:13-25

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will submit properly to authorities, honor all people, and follow the example of Christ who suffered righteously on behalf of mankind.

Introduction

People are generally prideful in their attitudes. We enjoy our freedoms and often celebrate our individualism. Most people do not like being told what to do. A person left to himself will allow pride to dominate his life. However, a believer who is controlled by the Holy Spirit and committed to living under the authority of God's Word will not allow pride to interfere with proper behavior.

A believer could get filled with pride after reading how the Bible describes believers in 2:4-10, the **immediate context**. God refers to believers as living stones, a spiritual house, a holy and royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a holy nation, and a people of God's own possession. Believers might want to hold their head high and say, "Yeah, that's right!" However, the Chief Corner Stone never boasted about who He was, but suffered willingly at the hands of evil men. The same **immediate context** in 2:12 informs believers that they are responsible to keep their behavior honest among the Gentiles. Such behavior involves submission and suffering.

Part One: Submission to Government Rulers and All People (2:13-17)

The idea of submission is almost seen as an offensive word in modern society. People even might say, "Who are you to tell me to submit!" But, the Bible describes submission as something beautiful when done in the right way and for the right reason.

A. Submit for the Lord's Sake (2:13-14)

After telling his readers that they need to demonstrate good behavior among the Gentiles in 2:12, Peter immediately **commands** them to submit "to every ordinance of man" (2:13a). The **key word** submit literally means to place oneself under the authority or rule of another. The key idea here is that of obedience. Believers should obey "every ordinance of man." This **key phrase** refers to human institutions created by God such as governmental authorities. A believer should submit to governmental authorities (effect) for the Lord's sake (cause; 2:13b). In Romans 13:1 and Titus 3:1, **related passages**, Paul also called for submission to governmental authorities. It is important to note that Peter, the author of this epistle, defied religious authorities in Acts 4:18-20 when he, along with John, was commanded not to preach in the name of Jesus anymore. We see a principle here that believers are to obey authorities unless those authorities call upon believers to disobey God.

One should submit both to high-ranking officials and lower-ranking officials. The king is viewed as supreme (2:13c). This **key word** refers to one who has the greater authority. The lower-ranking official refers to the governor (2:14a). As a **cause and effect**, the king sends the governor (cause) to punish those who do wrong and praise those who do right (effects; 2:14b). According to **historical**

background, Nero was the Roman emperor at the time Peter wrote this letter (AD 64). In the latter part of his reign, Nero heavily persecuted Christians. Even under the rule of an unfair or cruel government, Scripture still calls for submission.

B. Silence foolish men (2:15-16)

In almost parallel fashion to the phrase, “for the Lord’s sake,” Scripture refers to the importance of fulfilling God’s will (2:15a). The believer’s main goal through life should be to do the Lord’s will. Jesus even taught in His Sermon on the Mount to pray to the Father, “thy will be done” (Matthew 6:10). There can be no greater joy for the Christian than to know that he or she lives according to God’s will.

Noted as a **cause and effect**, it is God’s will that the believer who does well (cause) will “put to silence the ignorance of foolish men” (effect; 2:15b). The **key phrase**, “put to silence” literally refers to muzzling an animal. When believers live well in society and respond well even to cruel treatment, the result often silences those who might accuse or look down upon them.

Through the redemption Christ paid on the cross, believers are free to serve the Lord. Such freedom and liberty should never be used as a “cloke (cover) of maliciousness.” This **key phrase** refers to placing a cover over one’s evil behavior. Believers should never trade evil for evil and call it good, but in **contrast**, should use this freedom as servants of God. Paul warned about using our freedom as an opportunity for the flesh in Galatians 5:13, a **related passage**.

C. Showing submission to all (2:17)

Beyond submission to governmental authorities, Peter, in a series of **commands to obey**, called for the proper attitudes toward all. **First**, believers should “honour all men” (2:17a). The **key word** honour, **repeated** from 2:4, 7 (translated “precious”), means to place a high value on another. All people are created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26, 27); therefore, believers should honor all people.

Second, believers should “love the brotherhood” (2:17b). Believers need one another in a hostile world, so they should love each other. This command matches Christ’s own command to His disciples when He told them to love one another in John 13:34, a **related passage**.

Third, believers should “fear God” or reverence Him (2:17c). The believer’s holy behavior before God demonstrates the reverence he or she should have for God.

Fourth, believers should “honour the king” (2:17d). With this command, Peter reminded his readers of the need to live orderly under government rule. Notice the emphasis on submitting to and honoring the king as “bookends” in 2:13b and 2:17d.

Part Two: Servants Submitting to Their Masters (2:18-20)

The text continues at this point with a further focus on submission. Servants are called upon to submit to their masters. Slavery was quite prominent in first century Rome. Master/slave relationships may not be as prominent in modern times, but one could easily apply employer/employee relationships to 2:18-20.

A. Submission to the good and the bad (2:18)

Peter commanded, “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear” (2:18a). The word “subject” comes from the same Greek word as the word “submit”

in 2:13, thus making it a **repeated word**, along with the word “fear” (repeated from 2:17). Just as there were “good and gentle” masters in the first century, so there are good and gentle employers today. It is not hard to submit to a good and gentle boss, but what about a master or boss characterized as “froward” (crooked or dishonest)? So, Peter commanded not only to submit to the good and gentle, but, in **contrast**, to the crooked as well.

B. Submission that is acceptable before God (2:19-20)

It, therefore, becomes thankworthy to subject oneself to a corrupt master or boss. This **key word** literally refers to grace. Such an attitude of submission demonstrates grace in one's life to endure grief while suffering wrongfully at the hand of an unruly master/boss. The key to enduring such treatment with grace can be found in the phrase “for conscience toward God” (2:19). This matches well with submitting oneself to government “for the Lord's sake” (2:13). Everything we do should be unto the Lord, as referenced in 1 Corinthians 10:31, a **related passage**.

Peter paused in 2:20 to make a valid point about suffering patiently in a not-so-ideal situation. He posed a rhetorical question in 2:20a that demands an obvious answer. He basically asked, “What credit is there in enduring harsh treatment patiently if you do something wrong?” The obvious answer is, none. If a person does something wrong, he should expect punishment. But, in **contrast**, God accepts patient suffering (2:20b). Let us examine Jesus' example of suffering to gain a clearer picture of how to endure suffering when one is in the right.

Part Three: Christ's Example of Suffering (2:21-25)

In 1 Peter 2:21-25, Peter drew from Isaiah 53, where Isaiah prophesied of the suffering servant to come. Jesus is that Suffering Servant.

A. He left this example for believers (2:21)

These believers were called to suffering (effect) because Christ also suffered leaving them an example (2:21a). Jesus told His disciples in John 15:20, a **related passage**, that just as He was persecuted, they would experience persecution. No greater example exists than Jesus on how to suffer. His is truly an **example to follow**. May believers ever strive to follow Christ's steps (2:21b).

B. He suffered perfectly (2:22-23)

One of the greatest **truths to believe** about Jesus is that He never sinned. He was the only human to walk this earth perfectly. Peter not only stated Christ's sinless character but emphasized that no guile was found in his mouth (2:22), an allusion to Isaiah 53:9. The **key word** guile refers to deceit or trickery. James 3:2, a **related passage**, indicates that a perfect man does not sin with his words. Jesus alone remained perfect even in how he spoke.

By way of **cause and effects**, when Jesus was reviled (cause), He did not revile in turn nor did He threaten anyone (effects; 2:23a). Here, Peter alluded to Isaiah 53:7. The **key word** reviled means to hurl verbal insults at someone. Jesus did not open His mouth to insult. What did He do? In way of **contrast**, Peter noted that Jesus “committed himself to him that judgeth righteously” (2:23b). Jesus knew that His Father would exalt Him in due time. Believers need not worry about those

who revile them, because God will judge all things righteously one day. Believers just need to commit themselves to God and let God bring the judgment.

C. He suffered for our sins (2:24)

Jesus' suffering led to the greatest event in all of history. The One who knew no sin bore our sins on His body while on the cross (2:24a; Isaiah 53:4). History's greatest **cause and effect** comes to light here. Jesus bore our sins (cause) so that those being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness (effect; 2:24b). Christ's death brought about life! Note that while Jesus died for our sins, believers are to die to sin. Paul told believers in Romans 6:7, a **related passage**, to consider themselves dead to sin. Peter alluded to Isaiah 53:5 when he wrote, "by whose stripes ye were healed" (2:24c).

D. He suffered for those who went astray (2:25)

Peter **compared** believers to "sheep going astray" (2:25a; Isaiah 53:6). We were not deserving of Christ's sacrifice. We were the sinners who deserve punishment. But Jesus took our place on the cross, becoming a substitute for His wayward sheep. Peter **contrasted** what believers were as wayward sheep, to what they are as having returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls (2:25b). Peter **compared** Jesus to a shepherd. Jesus referred to Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10:11, 14. The **key word** Bishop means overseer or guardian. Who better to shepherd and oversee us but Jesus Himself!

Conclusion

The Scripture clearly commands believers to submit to authorities, honor all people, love believers, and endure suffering patiently. Submission is often hard because it requires swallowing one's pride. Of course, no one enjoys suffering. But what an example believers have in Christ who submitted Himself to suffer ill-treatment and did so with a proper attitude. Jesus did not revile or threaten those who persecuted Him, but He endured it all to pay the penalty for our sins. What an example Christ has left us to follow in His steps!

Apply It

- **Follow the example** of Christ in how He handled suffering.
- **Obey the commands** to
 - submit to human institutions.
 - honor all men.
 - love fellow believers.
 - fear God.
 - honor governmental leaders.
 - obey those we work for with all fear.

LESSON 7: FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS

1 Peter 3:1-12

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
4. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
3. Is there an example to follow in this passage?

Lesson 7: Follow the Instructions

1 Peter 3:1-12

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Instructions to _____ (3:1-6)

A. Subjection as it relates to behavior (3:1-2)

B. Subjection as it relates to inward character (3:3-4)

C. Examples of subjection (3:5-6)

1. Holy women of old (3:5)
2. Sarah (3:6)

Part Two: Instructions to _____ (3:7)

A. Live with your wife in an understanding way (3:7a)

B. Honor your wife (3:7b)

C. An unhindered prayer life (3:7c)

Part Three: Instructions to All _____ (3:8-12)

A. Treat fellow believers well (3:8)

B. Bless the lost (3:9)

C. Experience good days (3:10-11)

D. Receive the comfort from the Lord (3:12)

Apply It

- ***Believe the truths***
- ***Praise God***
- ***Follow the examples***

Lesson 7: Follow the Instructions

1 Peter 3:1-12 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will follow the instructions given to wives and husbands and those given to all believers on how to treat all people.

Introduction

Most products come with instructions regarding proper assembly, operation, and care. Failure to adhere to these instructions could result in harm to one's person or damage to the product. Peter provided instructions to wives, husbands, and all believers regarding the proper treatment they should exhibit toward one another. Failure to adhere to these biblical instructions can certainly result in harm to one's relationships. These biblical instructions are more than mere suggestions but should be carefully followed to ensure success in one's various relationships.

Part One: Instructions to Wives (3:1-6)

In the *immediate context*, Peter previously called for submission to government rulers (2:13) and for servants to submit to their masters (whether those masters were good or cruel; 2:18). He then cited Christ as the ultimate example of One who suffered unjustly by ungodly men (2:21). The text now turns its attention to wives submitting to their husbands beginning in 3:1.

A. Subjection as it relates to behavior (3:1-2)

Peter wrote, "Likewise ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands," a **command** for wives to **obey** (3:1a). The word "likewise" demonstrates a **comparison**, but the comparison must be interpreted carefully. The Bible here does not compare wives to slaves, but as the slave submits to his master, so, likewise, must the wife submit to her husband. The husband should not view his wife as a slave, but as a fellow partner in the marriage.

The **key word** subjection is a **repeated word** from 2:13 ("submit"), 18 ("subject"), and means to place oneself under the authority or rule of another. Subjection here in no way equates to inferiority, but rather the wife fulfilling her God-designed role in the family to promote the orderly operation of the home. In other **related passages**, the apostle Paul also called for wives to submit to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5). Wives can demonstrate submission to their "own" husbands through their behavior, especially toward unbelieving husbands who "obey not the word" (3:1b). This **key phrase** specifically refers to disobedience to God's Word or the gospel. Note the beautiful **cause and effect**. Husbands who do not obey "the" Word (cause) can be won by the conversation (behavior) of their wives without them speaking "a" word (effect; 3:1c). Such men will behold the chaste or holy behavior of their wives with fear (3:2). Good behavior by a believing wife can cause her husband to think deeply about his own behavior and eternity.

B. Subjection as it relates to inward character (3:3-4)

Outward behavior matters, but so does inward character. Again, careful interpretation must be done. Peter does not strictly prohibit a woman from adorning herself with nice kept hair, jewelry, or nice clothes in 3:3. The text emphasizes

that the woman's first priority should not be how she looks on the *outside*, but, in **contrast**, how she looks on the *inside*, "the hidden man of the heart" (3:4a). This **key phrase** refers to a person's inward character. Such character is further described as the incorruptible (imperishable) character of a "meek (gentle) and quiet spirit." The good outward behavior of a wife (or anyone) comes from the inward character of a born-again believer as noted in 1:23. As a **truth to believe**, such inward character is precious or very valuable in God's sight, as opposed to the costly jewelry and clothes that one might wear.

C. Examples of subjection (3:5-6)

After describing how a wife can demonstrate submissiveness through her outward behavior and inward character, Peter gave **examples** for women **to follow** from women who exhibited such traits.

1. Holy women of old (3:5)

The first example is more general in nature – "holy women" living in the "old time" (3:5a). This likely refers to the women of the Old Testament period. They demonstrated their inward character through their trust in God (3:5b). A woman who trusts in God will be obedient to God's desire for her life. These holy women of old subjected themselves to their own husbands (3:5c), showing God's consistent design for marriage.

2. Sarah (3:6)

Peter then moved to a more specific example in Sarah. The Bible says that she obeyed Abraham, calling him "lord" (3:6a). The **key word** obeyed means to listen to someone with the intent of being submissive or obedient. The fact that she called him "lord" does not mean women today should view or call their husbands "lord." **Historical background** indicates that this was a cultural way for a woman to show respect to her husband in the Old Testament.

Peter further stated to his female recipients that they are daughters of Sarah (effect) "as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement" (causes; 3:6b). The **key phrase**, "not afraid with any amazement," refers to fearing human intimidation or giving way to fear. A woman who truly fears the Lord will find the Lord's protection even while living with an unbelieving spouse.

Part Two: Instructions to Husbands (3:7)

Wives are not the only ones who need instruction on how to live with their significant other. First Peter 3:7 begins the same way that 3:1 does, "likewise." Just like the wives need instruction, so do the husbands.

A. Live with your wife in an understanding way (3:7a)

Peter commanded husbands to "dwell with them according to knowledge" (3:7a). This unique phrase has been interpreted in different ways. Some scholars see this as referring to Christian knowledge. In other words, husbands should dwell or live with their wives according to biblical truth. While this is true, maybe a better interpretation in context is for husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way. Peter then describes that understanding way in the remaining part of 3:7.

B. Honor your wife (3:7b)

Husbands are further commanded to give honour to their wives (3:7b). This

key word is **repeated** from 2:4, where God views His Son as “precious”; and 2:17, where believers should honor all people and the king. This word means to place a high value upon another. In Proverbs 31:28-29, a **related passage**, the children and husband of the virtuous woman give praise to her. A husband who has a submissive wife with beautiful inward character should honor such a woman!

The text provides two reasons why a husband should honor his wife.

First, she is the weaker vessel, being a woman. This likely refers to her weakness in physical strength when compared to the man. Typically, men are stronger than women. The husband should be protective of his wife and make sure no harm comes to her. **Second**, the husband and wife are heirs together of the grace of life, a **truth to believe**. Women are not inferior to men just because men are physically stronger. Women are on an equal plane with men regarding their spiritual inheritance as noted in Galatians 3:28, a **related passage**.

C. An unhindered prayer life (3:7c)

Noted as a **cause and effect**, the reason why husbands should honor their wives (cause), is so that their “prayers be not hindered” (effect; 3:7c). This should serve as a warning to husbands to honor their wives. If they fail to heed these instructions, God will withhold answering their prayers. Husbands, may we **obey the commands** to live with our wives in an understanding way and honor them!

Part Three: Instructions to All Believers (3:8-12)

Peter addressed specific instructions to wives and husbands in 3:1-7. The remainder of the study passage turns its attention to all believers.

A. Treat fellow believers well (3:8)

Believers should be of one mind, which speaks of unity (3:8a). A united group of believers can accomplish much. A divided group will experience very little success. A united group of believers will have compassion for one another (3:8b). This **key word** means to show genuine sympathy.

True compassion demonstrates itself in different ways. Peter offered three **commands to obey** that unified and compassionate people should live out. **First**, “love as brethren” (3:8c). Such love is a repeated theme from 2:17, the **immediate context**. **Second**, “be pitiful” (3:8d). This word means to show deep-seated concern for another. The Greek word literally refers to one’s intestines. The ancients believed one’s true emotions came from the bowels. **Third**, “be courteous” or friendly-minded toward others (3:8e).

B. Bless the lost (3:9)

Lost people may treat the believer poorly, even persecute him; but the believer should not render “evil for evil” or “railing for railing” (3:9a). The **key word** railing refers to abuse or insult. While it may be tempting to return unkind behavior with our own, in **contrast**, the believer should respond with blessing as he has been called (cause) to inherit a blessing (effect; 3:9b). How can Christians who are set to inherit a blessing not offer blessings to others? After all, we were enemies of God in our lost condition, yet God blessed us with an eternal inheritance through Jesus Christ.

C. Experience good days (3:10-11)

The remainder of our study passage is a quote from Psalm 34:12-16. The first part of the quote contains a **causes and effects**. Those that love life and desire to see good days (effects; 3:10), should **obey the** following five **commands** (causes; 3:11). First, as a parallel statement, one should “refrain” his tongue from speaking evil and speak no guile (deceitful words) with his lips (3:10). Our tongue can get us in the biggest trouble. We should follow Jesus’ example who did not speak guile even when He was persecuted, 2:22. The next two commands come in the form of a **contrast**, “eschew” or turn aside from evil, and “do” good (3:11a). There is enough evil in the world. Believers should strive for good in their lives. The last two commands pertain to peace. One should “seek” peace and also “ensue” or pursue it (3:11b). The second word speaks of a more intense search and carries with it the sense of hunting.

D. Receive the comfort from the Lord (3:12)

The final verse in this section should provide comfort for believers. Two things are true for believers: (1) the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and (2) the Lord will hear their prayers (3:12a). Believers who face persecution from a hostile world need to know these two truths. **Praise God** for His ever-watchful eye over His people and His attentiveness to their prayers. By way of **contrast**, the Lord is against those who do evil. This should also bring comfort to the believer knowing that the Lord will deal with those who practice evil, a great **truth to believe**.

Conclusion

Believers can avoid trouble in their lives by simply following the instructions found in this passage. God instructs married couples on how to live well in their relationships. God instructs all believers on how to treat people, whether they are fellow believers or part of the lost world. This does not mean that believers will avoid “all” trouble in this life by following the instructions. Difficult days will come and believers may face persecution, but the Lord will provide the help and comfort that believers need to persevere.

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that
 - inward character is of great price in God's sight.
 - men and women are equally spiritual heirs.
 - the Lord is against those who do evil.
- **Praise God** that His eyes are upon the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers.
- Wives should **obey the command** to submit to their own husbands.
- Husbands should **obey the commands** to dwell with their wives according to knowledge and honor them.
- All believers should **obey the commands** to
 - cease to use their tongue for evil or speaking guile.
 - turn away from evil and do good.
 - seek and pursue peace.
- Wives should **follow the examples** of the holy women of old and Sarah who subjected themselves to their husbands.

LESSON 8: SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE

1 Peter 3:13-22

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
4. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
3. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?

Lesson 8: Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

1 Peter 3:13-22

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The _____—Suffering for Righteousness (3:13-17)

A. Eagerness to do good in the midst of suffering (3:13)

B. The _____ state of suffering (3:14)

C. The key to facing suffering (3:15a)

D. Bearing a Christian witness while suffering (3:15b-16)

E. Better to suffer for doing right (3:17)

Part Two: The _____—Suffering for Sin (3:18-22)

A. The _____ of His suffering (3:18a)

B. The preaching of victory beyond His suffering (3:18b-20)

C. The picture of salvation through His suffering (3:21)

D. The position of the One who suffered (3:22a)

E. The _____ of the One who suffered (3:22b)

Apply It

- *Believe the truths*
- *Obey the command*
- *Praise God*

Lesson 8: Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

1 Peter 3:13-22

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand the blessedness of suffering for righteousness' sake and appreciate the salvation and victory Christ achieved through His suffering.

Introduction

First Peter 3:13—4:19 marks a new major section in this epistle. This section focuses primarily on Christian suffering. No believer wants to endure suffering for the gospel, but it is good to know that Scripture provides encouragement and help for those who do. Jesus reminded Peter and His other disciples that they would experience persecution on account of Him (John 15:20). Peter witnessed Jesus' persecution and endured his own. Peter wrote this epistle, in part, to help other believers who were facing persecution. This lesson focuses on believers suffering for righteousness' sake and examines Christ's own suffering in light of the salvation He provided.

Part One: The Christian—Suffering for Righteousness (3:13-17)

There are different types of suffering a person can endure. One can suffer through sickness, the loss of something or someone, emotional pain, or because of the results of bad choices. The kind of suffering described in 3:13-17 involves suffering for the sake of righteousness.

A. Eagerness to do good in the midst of suffering (3:13)

Peter began with a rhetorical question at the beginning of this section, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (3:13). Paul posed a similar question in Romans 8:31, a ***related passage***, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Peter's question, as well as Paul's, demands an answer of "No one!" Now it is true that people might abuse or mistreat Christians because of their beliefs, but God will see to it that Christians can endure such treatment.

Following that which is good becomes the best way to handle those who might harm the believer. The ***key word*** followers literally refers to a zealot, one who enthusiastically follows a certain belief or movement. The believer should have great zeal for that which is good, even becoming a zealot of goodness. Spiritually lost people may have evil intentions toward believers, but the believer should be intent on promoting what is good.

B. The blessed state of suffering (3:14)

Not every believer will suffer persecution to the same extent. Peter began with a conditional statement in 3:14a that refers to a probable future of suffering. While there is no guarantee that a believer will suffer for righteousness, the likelihood remains strong that it might happen. So, every believer should be prepared for such an experience. Notice the ***cause and effect***. Those who do suffer for righteousness' sake (cause) are considered blessed (effect). Jesus used the same word "blessed" to describe Christian suffering in Matthew 5:10, a ***related passage***.

The blessed state of suffering should overshadow any fear of the

persecutor. Peter quoted from Isaiah 8:12 in 3:14b when he stated that the believer should not fear the terror that the persecutor can produce, nor be troubled by it. The **key word** troubled literally means to stir or shake something up; thus, the believer need not be intimidated by those who cause suffering. God's people do not have to shake in fear because "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous" as noted in 3:12, the **immediate context**.

C. The key to facing suffering (3:15a)

Instead of fearing the persecutor, in **contrast**, Peter **commanded** believers to "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (3:15a), taken from Isaiah 8:14. Possibly the better reading of this verse is to "sanctify Christ as Lord." The **key word** sanctify means to treat the Lord as holy or revere Him. This may be the main key to facing Christian suffering. The heart is considered the center of a person's being. Reverencing the Lord and keeping Him close to one's heart will help the believer stand strong in an intimidating world.

D. Bearing a Christian witness while suffering (3:15b-16)

Peter called upon his readers to be a witness even if suffering should come. A believer's witness can be observed in one of two ways. **First**, the believer should always be ready to answer anyone who might ask of the hope that is in them (3:15b). When the world sees the Christian's zeal for good and reverence for God, it just might spark a question as to how hope can be maintained through suffering. What a great witnessing opportunity! Of course, such a response to the lost must be done with a spirit of meekness and fear, or gentleness and respect.

The **second** form of witness a believer possesses involves his behavior. The believer can have a good conscience by maintaining "good conversation [behavior] in Christ" (3:16). Maintaining good behavior (cause) will result in shame to the one speaking evil of the Christian and falsely accusing him (effect). How a believer behaves truly matters. One commentator wrote, "One cannot explain the hope we have in Christ while living in ways that contradict that hope."

E. Better to suffer for doing right (3:17)

As a word of summary, Peter reminded his readers that it is much better to suffer for doing right than for doing evil (3:17). Peter previously noted that there is no glory when suffering for doing wrong in 2:20. As stated in 3:17, when believers do suffer, it is because of God's will. What a great reminder that God is in control of our suffering!

Part Two: The Christ—Suffering for Sin (3:18-22)

Peter focused on Christ's suffering in 2:21-24. He does the same here in 3:18-22. The believer suffers for righteousness' sake; Christ suffered for sin.

A. The purpose of His suffering (3:18a)

The purpose of Christ's suffering is straight forward. He "hath once suffered for sins" (3:18a). Before Christ's sacrifice on the cross, Israel sacrificed countless animals upon the altar. Yet, Christ only suffered "once." His one-time sacrifice was "for sins," possibly the greatest **truth to believe** in Scripture. Christ dying for sins

speaks of His role as our substitute. He died in our place and “bare” our sins (2:24). Christ, the just (righteous) one, dying for the unjust (unrighteous). This leads to a great **cause and effect**. Christ suffered for sins (cause) that He might bring us to God (effect). **Praise God** it is only through Christ that believers have access to the Father!

B. The preaching of victory beyond His suffering (3:18b-20)

Part of the good news of the gospel is that Christ did not remain dead. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit quickened or resurrected Him, a most glorious **truth to believe** (3:18b)! Jesus rose from the dead just as the four Gospels record. By the same Spirit’s power, Jesus also went and preached to the spirits in prison (3:19). This verse has been deemed one of the most difficult verses to interpret in the New Testament. These spirits likely refer to fallen angels who demonstrated their disobedience during the days of Noah when the ark was being prepared (3:20a). They may have played a role in the corruption of the human race in Noah’s day (Genesis 6:5). What they did was so horrible that God placed them in some sort of holding place (i.e., prison) and may be the very ones described in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.

What kind of message would Christ preach to fallen angels? The most appropriate message for them would be a message of victory, that is, Christ’s victory over sin and death. What Satan may have been trying to accomplish in the days of Noah by corrupting the human race, was to keep the promised “Seed” of Genesis 3:15 from coming. However, God still had Noah and his family through whom the line of the promised Seed would continue. In all, God preserved eight souls in the ark and carried them safely “through” the water (3:20b). Jesus, the promised “Seed” likely proclaimed to those in prison the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 and His victory over sin and death.

C. The picture of salvation through His suffering (3:21)

Through Noah’s ark, God preserved a family in the midst of His watery judgment upon sinful humanity. In essence, God saved them. What a beautiful picture of salvation! Baptism, the “like figure” also speaks of salvation. This **key phrase** means corresponding to something. Baptism itself does not save a person, as some religious groups propose. Rather, baptism “corresponds to” salvation. Peter clearly stated that water baptism does not wash away the filth of the flesh, but, in **contrast**, salvation comes through a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (3:21b). That is what baptism corresponds to or symbolizes—the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the core of the gospel message. What baptism symbolizes is what saves a person, a **truth to believe**.

D. The position of the One who suffered (3:22a)

Jesus ultimately ascended into heaven after His resurrection. Luke 24:51 and Acts 1:9 record His ascension. When Jesus did ascend back to Heaven, He took His rightful position at the right hand of God, a **truth to believe** (3:22a). Other **related passages** that speak of Christ seated at the right hand of God include Psalm 110:1; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 1:3; 10:12; 12:2. According to **cultural background**, being seated at someone’s right hand, especially at a

great feast, was a seat of the highest honor. There is none other qualified or worthy than Jesus to be seated at the Father's right hand.

E. The power of the One who suffered (3:22b)

If Christ did indeed preach a message of victory to fallen angels, then 3:22b fits beautifully into that context. There has been a great deal of discussion surrounding subjection ever since 3:13. Now we see that after Christ's suffering, preaching to the spirits in prison, and ascension, that angels, authorities, and powers were subjected to Him, a ***truth to believe***. The reference to angels likely refers to both good and bad angels. Jesus told His disciples shortly before His ascension, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" in Matthew 28:18, a ***related passage***. Likewise, the writer of Hebrews in 2:5-8 (quoting Psalm 8:4-6) spoke of all things being subjected under His feet.

Conclusion

Peter definitely wrote to an audience that endured Christian persecution. He wrote to them that they are blessed if they endure persecution for righteousness' sake. He encouraged them to reverence Christ and keep Him close to their hearts. This would allow them to be a strong witness both with their lips and their life. He quickly moved to discuss Christ's own suffering for the sins of mankind which resulted in the believer's ability to approach the Father. Christ was gloriously raised to new life by the Holy Spirit, thus having complete victory. He went and proclaimed that victory to the spirits in prison and then took His rightful place in Heaven and secured His rightful power over all angels and authorities. All of this culminates in Noah's ark and baptism as beautiful pictures of God's salvation.

Believers today continue to be Peter's audience as they read and study his first epistle. They too can experience Christian persecution at the hands of evil men. May Peter's message to his original audience continue to ring in the ears of today's believers. Not all believers experience persecution to the same degree. But, it is very possible that if you have not yet experienced persecution that you may in the near future. If such persecution comes to your life, be sure to consult Peter's first epistle for help in enduring difficult days.

Apply It

- ***Believe the truths*** that
 - Christ has suffered once for our sins.
 - Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.
 - Baptism pictures the believer's salvation.
 - Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven.
 - All angels, authorities, and powers are subject to Christ.
- ***Obey the command*** to sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart.
- ***Praise God*** that Christ can bring us into a relationship with the Heavenly Father.

LESSON 9: FAR BETTER TO DO THE WILL OF GOD

1 Peter 4:1-6

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
4. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
3. Is there an error to avoid in this passage?

Lesson 9: Far Better to Do the Will of God

1 Peter 4:1-6

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Live According to God's _____ (4:1-2)

A. Arm yourself with the mind of _____ (4:1a)

B. Cease from sin (4:1b-2)

Part Two: Walk No More According to the Will of _____ (4:3-5)

A. The days of walking like the lost are over (4:3)

B. The lost do not understand the ways of the believer (4:4)

C. All will stand before God's judgment (4:5)

Part Three: The Purpose of the Preached _____ (4:6)

A. Believers will be judged according to men in the flesh (4:6a)

B. Believers will live according to God in the spirit (4:6b)

Apply It

- ***Believe the truths that***
- ***Obey the command***
- ***Believers should avoid the error***

Lesson 9: Far Better to Do the Will of God

1 Peter 4:1-6

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand the importance of living out God's will and avoiding the sins of the past knowing that all people will give an account of their lives before God.

Introduction

This writer has often said that the safest place for any believer is to be found dead center in God's will. Peter mentioned to his readers that slaves must be in subjection to their masters (2:18). Peter stated at the opening of his second epistle that he was a slave of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1). All believers should view themselves as slaves of God (Romans 6:22). With God as our Master, our wills are bound up in His will.

The whole of the Christian life should be marked by strict obedience to the will of God. Our God is not some harsh taskmaster either, because Jesus said, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30). Even when facing Christian persecution, the believer is not exempt from continuing to fulfill God's will. Before coming to Christ, believers followed the will of a pagan world, but now God expects more from His people. Knowing that all people will stand before God's judgment should be motivation enough for the believer to follow God's will.

Part One: Live According to God's Will (4:1-2)

In discussing God's will, Peter continued his thoughts on Christian suffering as it relates to both Christ and the believer. Christ's suffering serves as a great example for the believer as he or she faces suffering.

A. Arm yourself with the mind of Christ (4:1a)

The "forasmuch" or "therefore" at the beginning of 4:1 points the reader back to a previous passage. Most scholars agree that the word "therefore" points back to 3:18, the ***immediate context***, where Peter wrote about Christ's suffering once for sins, thus picking up this theme of suffering once more.

Peter ***compared*** believers to Christ when he stated, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (4:1a). Peter employed a military term with the ***key phrase***, "arm yourselves," which means to equip oneself for battle. Just like a soldier must strap on his protective gear and take up his weapons for battle, the Christian must prepare for the spiritual battle involved in suffering. Paul, likewise, in other ***related passages***, encouraged believers to pick up their spiritual weapons and put on their spiritual armor (Romans 13:12; 2 Corinthians 6:7; 10:4; Ephesians 6:11).

Believers are called upon to arm themselves with the "same mind" as Christ. This ***key phrase*** refers to possessing the same way of thinking. Christ willingly suffered in the flesh when He endured harsh physical persecution at the hands of sinners. Believers should possess the same mind when it comes to their own suffering. No one wants to endure suffering; however, when suffering for righteousness' sake, the believer enters into a blessed state (3:14).

B. Cease from sin (4:1b-2)

Peter mentioned a **cause and effect** worth pointing out to the reader, “for he that hath suffered in the flesh (cause) hath ceased from sin” (effect; 4:1b). The first time the phrase “hath suffered in the flesh” was used at the beginning of 4:1, it referred to Christ’s suffering. The second time Peter used the phrase, it referred to believers. Christ Himself never had to cease from sin because He never sinned, as noted in 2 Corinthians 5:21, a **related passage**. The **key word** ceased means to stop doing something or discontinue an activity. Furthermore, according to the grammar, this word conveys the idea “to cease and continue to cease.” In other words, there should be an ongoing effect of believers ceasing from sin.

Peter further explained the idea of ceasing from sin in 4:2. The believer should no longer live the rest of his time on earth “in the flesh” by participating in the lusts of men, a **truth to believe**. The **key word** lusts means to crave or desire something bad. In **contrast**, the believer should strive after the will of God, a key point in the discussion about suffering. The believer’s suffering should not be an excuse to drop one’s guard and fall into sin. The believer should have an ever-increasing desire to fulfill God’s will.

The question remains, “How then does suffering in the flesh (i.e., persecution) result in a believer’s ceasing from sin?” Some hold that somehow suffering purifies a person from his sins. This view cannot be right as it is taught nowhere else in Scripture. Others believe this passage to teach that the literal death of the Christian will result in him ceasing from sin. However, Christian suffering does not always end in one’s death. Rather, what Peter seems to be saying, is that the believer’s resolve to take on the mind of Christ with regards to suffering also causes him to be resolved to turn away from sin. Commentator Donald W. Burdick noted, “Serious suffering for Christ advances the progress of sanctification.” Christ chose obedience to God’s will despite the suffering He endured. Christians should be so resolved to obeying God’s will that they will, by God’s grace, be done with sin as a way of life (see Romans 6:18; 1 John 3:9).

Part Two: Walk No More According to the Will of Gentiles (4:3-5)

Believers should indeed follow after God’s will in every aspect of their lives. Peter further reminded his readers that they used to follow the will of another.

A. The days of walking like the lost are over (4:3)

Peter reminisced for a moment concerning his readers’ past lives of walking according to the will of the Gentiles (i.e., the lost). There are two wills in opposition to one another—the will of God vs. the will of man. Concerning the will of man, Peter stated that it “may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles” (4:3a). This phrase basically means, “We have spent enough time living like pagans.” In what ways did these believers live before Christ? Peter mentioned six ways his recipients formerly lived, all noted as **key words** and **errors to avoid**.

- lasciviousness (lah-shiv-ee-uhs-ness) - This word means to live with no moral restraint, even engaging in sensual or outrageous sexual behavior.
- lusts - This **repeated word** from 4:2, means to crave or desire something bad. In the context of Peter’s list, it likely refers to sexual lusts.

- excess of wine - This word literally means to bubble over with wine and clearly speaks of drunkenness. Such excess of wine often resulted in drunken orgies.
- revellings - This word refers to excessive feasting and originally referred to a feast in honor of the god for wine.
- banqueting - This word basically refers to a drinking party.
- abominable idolatries - This word refers to the unlawful (that is, opposing God's law) worshipping of images.

One cannot help but notice that all the words in this list refer to drunkenness and sexual impurity. These are the types of things the world craves, but the believer should no longer engage in such activities.

B. The lost do not understand the ways of the believer (4:4)

According to **historical background**, when a believer stopped engaging in the immoral practices noted in 4:3, their abstinence served as a condemnation to those who still practiced them. Noted as a **cause and effect**, the lost Gentiles thought it strange (or they were surprised; effect) that the believers no longer engaged in the same "excess of riot" (cause; 4:4a). This **key phrase** refers to the extreme degree of reckless immoral behavior. They not only think it strange, but they also speak evil of these believers (4:4b). Believers today can still face this issue. Sometimes, in wisdom, believers might need to disassociate from some people of their past. Such people may not understand the believer's lack of engagement with past sinful behaviors. Instead, believers need to associate more with like-minded people of faith.

C. All will stand before God's judgment (4:5)

When the subject of God's judgment comes up, people often think of the lost being judged. And it is true, that lost people who engage in such activities as listed in 4:3 will have to give an account of their lives before God (4:5a). However, believers are not exempt from facing God's judgment, as Paul told the believers at Corinth, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:10). God is "ready to judge the quick (living) and the dead" (4:5b). It matters not whether one has already died or is still living when God judges, all will face Him, a **truth to believe**. It will certainly be better to face God's judgment as a believer. As Paul stated in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The lost who stand before God's judgment will face eternal punishment, as stated in Revelation 20:11-14, a **related passage**.

Part Three: The Purpose of the Preached Gospel (4:6)

Peter closed this section with thoughts about the gospel being preached. After all, it was the gospel that caused Peter's recipients to suffer under persecution. Therefore, it is important to understand the preached gospel as it relates to Christian suffering.

A. Believers will be judged according to men in the flesh (4:6a)

Peter wrote 4:6 as a **cause** followed by two **effects**. The gospel was preached to those who are now dead (cause) so that they might be judged

according to men in the flesh (first effect; 4:6a). The dead mentioned in 4:6 likely refers to believers. They heard the gospel preached and responded positively toward it and were persecuted because of it. They may have even suffered martyrdom for their faith. The phrase, “that they might be judged according to men in the flesh,” probably refers to persecution of believers by the lost because of the gospel. If martyrdom is in mind here, the pagans who judged them likely viewed their deaths as a judgment upon them (i.e., upon the martyred believers).

B. Believers will live according to God in the spirit (4:6b)

The second effect, which also serves as a **contrast** to the first effect, is that even though men judged these believers, they “live according to God in the spirit,” a great **truth to believe**. Once these believers died, they found themselves in the presence of God. Paul also stated that to be absent from the body meant to be present with the Lord in 2 Corinthians 5:8, a **related passage**. Believers that die in the Lord are “in the spirit” until the time they receive new resurrected bodies according to other **related passages** (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 3:21).

Conclusion

Once a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, God instills new desires into him. Believers possess a longing to fulfill God’s will in their lives and depart from fulfilling the will of the lost world. Those who are still in their sins may not understand the believer’s new way of life, and may even persecute believers because of righteousness. This, however, should not deter the believer from living the kind of life God desires. All people, the lost and the saved, will one day stand before God to give an account of their lives. May believers today continue to practice faith to live for the Lord even when persecution comes!

Apply It

- ***Believe the truths*** that
 - believers should not live according to the lusts of men.
 - that both the living and dead will give an account of their lives before God’s judgment.
 - believers will live eternally with God.
- ***Obey the command*** to arm yourself with the same mind as Christ when it comes to suffering.
- Believers should ***avoid the error*** of living like lost people.

LESSON 10: LIVING WITH THE END IN SIGHT

1 Peter 4:7-11

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. How is the passage affected by its cultural/historical background?
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
4. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe or promises to claim in this passage?
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
3. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?

Lesson 10: Living with the End in Sight

1 Peter 4:7-11

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: How to Prepare for the _____ (4:7-9)

A. Be of sound mind for the purpose of prayer (4:7)

B. Have fervent love for one another (4:8)

C. Show hospitality to one another (4:9)

Part Two: How to _____ Until the End (4:10-11)

A. Be good _____ of spiritual gifts (4:10)

B. Know the different types of spiritual gifts (4:11a-b)

C. Know the purpose of spiritual gifts (4:11c-d)

Apply It

- *Believe the truth*
- *Claim the promise*
- *Obey the commands to*
- *Praise God*

Lesson 10: Living with the End in Sight

1 Peter 4:7-11

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will prepare his/her mind for effective prayer, love fellow believers, and serve the Lord faithfully through spiritual gifts as the end of all things draws near.

Introduction

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ and God's final judgment upon this world are the next monumental events on the biblical calendar. The angel told the disciples as they watched Jesus ascend into heaven that He would one day return to earth (Acts 1:11). The Bible never says when that day will be. Jesus stated, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36). The way believers wait for this event becomes very important. Believers should not just sit back and do nothing as they await the Lord's return. The passage for this study helps to address how to live with the end in sight. It requires both preparation and active service.

Part One: How to Prepare for the End (4:7-9)

Christians often cite a portion of Revelation 22:20, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," or some variation of it, when facing difficult times. This world can be full of trouble which often causes believers to wish for the Lord's return. Many of Peter's recipients were facing persecution, and so thoughts about the end drawing near likely brought comfort to them. Peter let them know in 4:7-9, how best to prepare for the end.

A. Be of sound mind for the purpose of prayer (4:7)

The phrase, "The end of all things is at hand" (4:7a), comes on the heels of Peter writing about God's judgment in 4:5-6, the ***immediate context***. The end of all things likely refers to God's final judgment and the return of Jesus. "At hand" means that these events are drawing near. ***Believe the truth*** that we are living in the last days. Peter challenged his readers to do certain things as they awaited these final events.

Noted as a ***cause and effect***, because the end of all things is at hand, believers should be sober and watch unto prayer (effects; 4:7b). Both of these ***key words*** have to do with the mind. The word "sober" means to have a sound mind or think straight. One who has such a mind can make reasonable and wise decisions. The word "watch" means to have a well-balanced state of mind, and is a ***repeated word*** from 1:13, where it is translated as "sober." Believers living in difficult days, whether first-century Christians or modern-day Christians, need to have clarity of thinking. Believers must remain focused on living holy in a hostile world and serving the Lord faithfully. Clear thinking will help facilitate such godly living. Believers should ***obey the commands*** to have a sound and well-balanced state of mind.

The main reason offered by Peter for Christians to be sober and watchful is so they can pray. Peter used the common word for prayer which refers to prayer in general. Prayer affords the believer the opportunity to fellowship with God and seek His help or wisdom. The most effective prayers can be uttered from those who possess sound minds. A believer with a sound mind will be focused on God's will

in their prayers, not seeking their own will or selfish things. Believers should never neglect the power of prayer in their lives.

B. Have fervent love for one another (4:8)

Another effect of knowing that the end of all things is at hand involves having “fervent charity among yourselves” (4:8a). The Greek word for charity is often translated as “love” in many places in the New Testament. This word refers to unconditional love. Peter further clarified that this love should be fervent, a **key word** that means earnest or constant. Believers should be eager to love one another on a constant basis. Peter stressed that such love should be a priority among believers when he stated, “Above all.” The outside world brings enough hatred and persecution against believers. The last thing believers need is strife and hatred coming from within the church. Unconditional love between believers will help to sustain each other through difficult days. Peter likely recalled Jesus’ own words to the disciples to love one another in John 13:34 and 15:12, **related passages**.

Peter also stated that “charity shall cover the multitude of sins,” a wonderful **promise to claim** (4:8b). This **key phrase** from Peter seems to indicate that Christians should extend love to fellow believers and offer forgiveness for wrongs committed against them. The specific word “cover” means to hide or conceal. This does not mean to “cover up” sin, as no sin should be overlooked or minimized. Peter may have in mind passages such as Proverbs 10:12 and 17:9 that speak of forgiveness as opposed to holding a grudge or holding a wrong to someone’s account.

C. Show hospitality to one another (4:9)

The third effect stemming from the knowledge of the end of all things includes showing hospitality to one another (4:9a). The **key word** hospitality means to show kindness to strangers. Peter’s readers were scattered across the five provinces or regions mentioned in 1:1, which indicates these believers were displaced from their homes. According to **historical background**, without many lodging places available in the first century, people depended upon the hospitality of others. Also, these scattered Christians would need places to gather for worship. What a glorious use of one’s home!

Peter made a qualifying statement regarding showing hospitality. It must be done without grudging. This **key word** means to grumble or complain. It is not enough merely to do the right thing, but it must be done with the right attitude. Believers today should still strive to demonstrate hospitality to one another. It might seem easy to secure a hotel room for someone who needs a place to stay (such as an evangelist or missionary). But, we should not use this as an excuse not to show hospitality. Psalm 24:1 states that everything in this world belongs to the Lord. Our homes and vehicles (along with all our possessions) belong to the Lord, and we are called to be stewards of these possessions. Serving and helping others with our possessions marks a good use of these resources.

Part Two: How to Serve Until the End (4:10-11)

Preparing for the end involves possessing a sound mind so that we might

pray and love one another with the proper actions. The believer also has the responsibility to serve the Lord actively until He returns. Peter reminded his readers of service involving their spiritual gifts.

A. Be good stewards of spiritual gifts (4:10)

Peter acknowledged that every believer has received a gift (4:10a). The **key word** gift refers to God's granting special ability so that believers might serve Him faithfully according to His will for each person. We commonly refer to these varied abilities as spiritual gifts. Paul also mentioned in Romans 12:3, a **related passage**, that God has given a measure of faith to every believer in his discussion of spiritual gifts.

Peter expects his readers to minister to or serve one another with these gifts. This **key word** literally referred to those who waited on tables but also spoke of general service of various kinds. Believers receive these gifts from God and are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (4:10c). The **key word** steward literally refers to the manager of a household or estate. On a more spiritual level, the word carries the connotation of using one's spiritual gift in a responsible way. God gifts His people not to sit around and do nothing, but to serve the church actively.

Obviously, believers must know their gift before they use it to serve. One can study passages where spiritual gifts are mentioned such as Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, and Ephesians 4:11. As one studies Scripture, it is also important to pray and ask God to reveal His gift. God might also use other believers to point out abilities in your life that would point toward a specific gift. There are spiritual gift questionnaires that believers can take which can help to determine where they might be gifted. While such questionnaires are not full proof, they can point one in the right direction.

B. Know the different types of spiritual gifts (4:11a-b)

Paul used the parts of a human body working together to function as a healthy body to illustrate how members of the church should function (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31). Peter seems to summarize or categorize spiritual gifts in terms of speaking and serving.

1. Speaking gifts (4:11a)

Those who have gifts that involve speaking must speak "as the oracles of God" (4:11a). The **key word** oracle refers to a message originating from God. Those who are gifted to teach must make sure they are declaring God's Word accurately when they speak and that their words line up with Scripture. Even those who have the gift of mercy or exhortation (Romans 12:8) will also use their voice to offer words of compassion or encouragement. All speaking gifts must be done with great care, speaking words that come from God. If one claims to be speaking from God, but such speech violates or goes against God's Word, that person's words did not come from God.

2. Serving gifts (4:11b)

Other gifts fall under the category of service and do not necessarily involve

speech. Those who minister (a **repeated word** from 4:10) or serve must do so with the ability that God gives (4:11b). No believer should speak or serve depending on his or her own ability. Such service will prove to be ineffective. God not only grants the gift but gives the power to perform it.

C. Know the purpose of spiritual gifts (4:11c-d)

The primary purpose of spiritual gifts is meant to glorify God through Jesus Christ (4:11c). A great **cause and effect** should be noted here. Those who speak the oracles of God and serve with God's ability (causes), should glorify God (effect). The whole of one's life should be to glorify God. Believers should serve so that others see God at work through them, rather than for personal recognition. Only God is worthy of such glory. Peter further described Jesus as One who should receive "praise and dominion for ever and ever" (4:11d). Just as believers glorify God, so they should give praise to Jesus, the Son of God. The **key word** dominion speaks of Christ's supremacy and mighty power. Such dominion belongs to Him forever and ever. Peter closed 4:11 with the word "Amen" to highlight these words about Jesus. **Praise God** that Jesus has dominion forever and ever!

Conclusion

Persecution causes tense and difficult moments. Believers must learn to remain focused under such trying circumstances. This requires believers to have clear-headed thinking so that they can enjoy an effective prayer life. To endure times of persecution, believers must seek God in prayer for help and guidance to navigate through the turmoil. During times of persecution, believers also need to depend upon one another. The command to love one another cannot be overstated. On top of prayer and love, the church must still be the church during persecution. Believers must exercise their spiritual gifts so that the church may function as the healthy body of Christ. The good news for the persecuted church—the end of all things is drawing near! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that we are living in the last days.
- **Claim the promise** that love will cover a multitude of sins.
- **Obey the commands** to
 - be of sound mind.
 - have a well-balanced state of mind.
- **Praise God** that Jesus has dominion forever and ever.

LESSON 11: REJOICING IN SUFFERING

1 Peter 4:12-19

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. Who is being addressed in this passage?
2. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
3. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
3. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
4. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?

Lesson 11: Rejoicing in Suffering

1 Peter 4:12-19

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Proper _____ in Suffering (4:12-14)

A. Do not view suffering as strange (4:12)

B. Rejoice in suffering (4:13-14)

Part Two: The Proper _____ of Suffering (4:15-16)

A. Not the kind that characterizes sinners (4:15)

B. The kind that leads to glorifying God (4:16)

Part Three: _____ as it Relates to Suffering (4:17-18)

A. Judgment begins from the house of God (4:17a)

B. God reserves worse judgment for sinners (4:17b-18)

Part Four: God's _____ as it Relates to Suffering (4:19)

A. God is in control of suffering (4:19a)

B. Those who suffer should commit themselves to God (4:19b)

Apply It

- *Believe the truth that*
- *Obey the command to*
- *Avoid the error*
- *Praise God that*

Lesson 11: Rejoicing in Suffering

1 Peter 4:12-19

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: learner will rejoice and glorify God during times of suffering as a Christian.

Introduction

When one thinks of the word “rejoicing,” it often invokes thoughts of being happy during positive or uplifting occasions. People rejoice over the birth of a new baby, receiving a new job or promotion at work, graduating from high school or college, etc. Rarely does one think about rejoicing over something that might cause discomfort or pain. However, this is exactly what Peter called for in his final section about Christian suffering in 1 Peter 4:12-19. Rejoicing in suffering may not be a popular thought amongst Christians, but it most definitely should be considered. The Bible teaches that suffering needs to be viewed as a norm for believers. Jesus told His disciples that they would be hated and persecuted for His name’s sake in John 15:19-21, a **related passage**. Since Jesus promised persecution would come, it would be wise to consider what the believer’s attitude should be when suffering becomes reality.

Part One: The Proper Attitude in Suffering (4:12-14)

An old saying states, “Attitude is everything.” One’s attitude about circumstances can impact one’s perspective about what is happening. Peter offered two commands— (1) what not to think and (2) what to think when suffering comes.

A. Do not view suffering as strange (4:12)

Peter’s heart comes to the forefront right at the beginning of 4:12 when he **addressed** his recipients as, “Beloved.” This term describes an emotion of endearment and attachment Peter had with these recipients. He knew them well and desired the best for them. He addressed them the same way in 2:11 when he encouraged them to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Peter commanded these beloved believers not to think it strange when suffering comes. The **key word** strange means to be struck with amazement or wonder. Peter used this word in 4:4, the **immediate context**, when the pagans thought it strange that these believers no longer lived as they did in unholy behavior. Jewish believers in Christ were all too familiar with persecution as they endured it first at the hands of the Jewish authorities. Peter’s primary recipients for this letter were likely Gentiles. Persecution for them may have been a new experience. Peter referred to their suffering as a “fiery trial.” This **key phrase** refers to an extremely difficult circumstance. In the context of the passage, it seems that God allowed it to test their faith.

Remember, attitude is everything. First-century Christians found themselves at odds with a pagan Roman society. Twenty-first-century Christians are also at odds with their pagan society. If believers expect fiery trials to come, then they will not be surprised when they do. **Obey the command** not to think it strange when suffering comes for following Christ.

B. Rejoice in suffering (4:13-14)

If believers are not to think it strange when suffering comes, what attitude should they take? Peter commanded his recipients in way of **contrast** to rejoice that “ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings” (4:13a). The grammatical construction of the word “rejoice” indicates that believers are “to keep on rejoicing.” Rejoicing should be a constant attitude for the Christian. What a privilege that believers can partake or share in the sufferings of Christ! Note the **cause and effect**. By being partakers of Christ’s sufferings, then when His glory is revealed (cause), the believer can be glad with exceeding joy (effect; 4:13b). Peter noted the revelation of Jesus Christ, also in 1:7. When Christ returns to this earth and believers behold His glory, they will be glad and rejoice with supreme gladness that they lived faithfully for Him.

Believers need to be cautious on how they handle Scripture texts on suffering. Christians of the past sought to experience suffering by provoking certain situations or buffeting their bodies thinking that this would make them more spiritual. Peter is not telling believers to enjoy suffering or even seek it. But, when suffering comes naturally for the cause of Christ, believers should **obey the command** to rejoice. Never should a believer go out of his or her way to bring on suffering.

Notice the **cause and two effects** in 4:14a. Believers who are reproached for the name of Christ (cause) are happy and the spirit of glory and of God rests upon them (effects). The **key word** reproached means to revile or insult someone. Earlier in Peter’s ministry, he did rejoice that he was able to suffer for His name (Acts 5:41). The **key word** happy could also be translated as “blessed.” Jesus spoke of the same blessed state for believers being persecuted in Matthew 5:11-12, a **related passage**.

Peter appears to be referring to Isaiah 11:1-2 when he mentioned the “spirit of glory and of God.” Isaiah prophesied of the same spirit that would rest on Christ. Peter opened his letter by mentioning the sanctifying work of the Spirit in 1:2. Believers can find comfort that God’s presence remains with them during times of suffering.

Peter further noted a **contrast** of thought in 4:14b. Unbelievers (i.e., persecutors) speak evil of God, but believers glorify Him. To glorify God means to give Him praise. God’s presence and help during difficult times should cause believers to give Him due praise.

Part Two: The Proper Kind of Suffering (4:15-16)

A person can experience suffering for different reasons. When a person does something wrong or illegal, he should expect some sort of punishment. For the believer, however, sometimes suffering comes from doing the right thing. Peter already told his recipients that it would be better for them to suffer for doing right than doing wrong in 3:17. He emphasized once again that they should endure the proper kind of suffering.

A. Not the kind that characterizes sinners (4:15)

There is one kind of suffering reserved for those who murder, steal, and participate in evil acts. These are obvious examples of wrongdoing, indeed **errors to avoid**. Those who commit these actions deserve the punishment that comes to

them. Peter also mentioned a not-so-obvious action when he included a “busybody in other men’s matters.” The **key word** busybody refers to someone who meddles or gets involved in someone else’s business. The believer should not bring on undo trouble by being too nosy in the business of others. As a “lesser” sin, some might not think of being a busybody as wrong. Peter, however, included this wrongdoing that can bring unnecessary stress to one’s life.

B. The kind that leads to glorifying God (4:16)

Noted as a **cause and effect**, if anyone suffers as a Christian (cause), he is commanded not to be ashamed (effect). Believers should not feel dishonored or embarrassed for being a Christian. The term “Christian” is used only two other times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28). Based on its usage in Acts, the term appears to be a title of disdain given to believers by the lost. Believers claimed the term, however, and perceived it as a title of honor to be considered a follower of Christ. In **contrast** to feeling ashamed, believers should glorify God, a **repeated idea** from 4:14.

Part Three: Judgment as it Relates to Suffering (4:17-18)

When it comes to suffering, it is far better to suffer on this earth than to suffer for all of eternity. There is one kind of judgment for the believer and another type for the unbeliever. Peter stressed both in 4:17-18.

A. Judgment begins from the house of God (4:17a)

Peter used an unusual phrase in 4:17a concerning God’s judgment beginning “at” or from the house of God. Believers will stand before God’s judgment as stated by Paul in Romans 14:10 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15. But those references to judgment refer to a future time when all will stand before God and give an account of their lives. Peter has something different in mind here. He stated in 1:7 that the believer’s faith will be tested by fire, just like gold is tested and purified by fire. Likewise, in 4:12, he mentioned the fiery trial of believers. In context, the judgment regarding the house of God seems to be equated with the persecution that believers face.

B. God reserves worse judgment for sinners (4:17b-18)

So, if God’s people face judgment or suffer on this earth, what kind of judgment awaits those who are not part of God’s house? In 4:17b, Peter basically asked, “What sort of end awaits those who do not obey the gospel of God?” Stated simply, their end will not be good! Peter asked another question in 4:18, “And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?” The **key word** scarcely means with great difficulty or just barely. This does not mean that God has a hard time saving His people. What Peter means is that persecution makes it hard for the believer to stay strong in faith to the end. If God allows believers’ lives to be wrought with such difficulty on this earth, the lost will have no chance before God’s judgment.

Part Four: God’s Will as it Relates to Suffering (4:19)

It should comfort the believer to know that Christian suffering serves

a purpose. There remains One whom the believer can look to during times of suffering. Peter reminded his recipients not to forget God when enduring persecution.

A. God is in control of suffering (4:19a)

Peter acknowledged that believers suffer according to the will of God, a **truth to believe** (4:19a). Did you catch that? God is in control of suffering. He is the One who allows it to happen and to endure for a certain length of time and intensity. God allows it to test the believer's faith (1:7). Believers do not suffer just for the sake of suffering, but God has a distinct purpose in it. He is after our growth and dedication to Him that we might be a strong witness to a lost world.

B. Those who suffer should commit themselves to God (4:19b)

Stated as one last **cause and effect**, believers who suffer according to God's will (cause) should commit the keeping of their souls to a faithful Creator (effect), a **command to obey** (4:19b). The **key word** commit means to entrust one's life to another. Jesus entrusted His very spirit to the Father right before He died upon the cross (Luke 23:46). Believers, too, can commit or entrust their lives to God. As believers commit themselves to God, they should also be focused "in well doing." This **key phrase** refers to living the right way. Even while facing persecution, believers should strive to live holy in a hostile world.

Conclusion

The apostle Paul stated in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." The idea of rejoicing is not only reserved for positive experiences in life that make us feel good. Sometimes believers are called upon to rejoice when things are not going so well. Persecution of Christians may not be enjoyable, but we can still rejoice in it because we are suffering for the name of Christ. They should not only rejoice, but believers should also glorify God in moments of suffering. Give God praise for the opportunity to suffer for Him. Believers should constantly be reminded to pray for each other so that they might stand strong in the midst of an evil world that despises biblical truth.

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that
 - believers are blessed if they are reviled for the name of Christ.
 - believers suffer persecution according to God's will.
- **Obey the command** to
 - not think it strange when suffering comes.
 - rejoice that you can share in the sufferings of Christ.
 - not be ashamed if you suffer as a Christian.
 - glorify God when you suffer as a Christian.
 - commit yourself to a faithful Creator during times of suffering.
- **Avoid the error** of suffering because of wrongdoing.
- **Praise God** that the spirit of glory and of God rests on believers.

LESSON 12: EXHORTATION TO ELDERS

1 Peter 5:1-4

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. Who is being addressed in this passage?
2. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
3. What contrasts are noted in this passage?
4. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
3. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
4. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?

Part One: _____ the Elder (5:1)

A. His role among the elders (5:1a)

B. His privilege as a witness of Christ's sufferings (5:1b)

C. His status as a partaker of the future glory (5:1c)

Part Two: The _____ to Elders (5:2-3)

A. The command stated (5:2a)

B. The command specified (5:2b-3)

1. Obey it willingly (5:2b)
2. Obey it eagerly (5:2c)
3. Obey it to provide an example (5:3)

Part Three: The Elder's _____ (5:4)

A. Identity of the Chief Shepherd (5:4a)

B. Receiving the crown of glory (5:4b)

Apply It

- ***Believe the truth*** that

- Elders should ***obey the command***

- Elders should ***avoid the errors*** of

- Elders should ***praise God*** for

Lesson 12: Exhortation to Elders

1 Peter 5:1-4

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand how elders are to serve the congregations entrusted to them.

Introduction

Sports teams need good coaches or managers who can lead their teams as they prepare for competition and guide them throughout the games. A team may have tremendously talented and gifted athletes, but without a coach to lead them, they may not experience much success. Likewise, churches are full of gifted people. Peter noted in 4:11, the **immediate context**, that God gifts believers with various abilities related to speaking and serving. As gifted as the body of Christ may be, the church still needs leaders who can guide them.

God has provided churches with leaders called “elders” or “pastors.” Peter exhorted the elders in 5:1-4. They can help churches navigate both in general areas of service and through the rough times that a church might endure. Peter wrote this letter to Christians facing persecution. They desperately needed the leaders of the church (i.e., elders) to guide them.

In modern times, churches might equate elders with a more familiar term, “pastors.” This section of 1 Peter gives insight into the role and responsibilities of those men God calls to lead His congregations. As you study this passage, be reminded to be prayerful over your pastor or pastors whom God has called to watch over your congregation.

Part One: Peter the Elder (5:1)

Peter identified himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ in 1:1. As an apostle, God both called and sent Peter to be a leader of the early church. Peter never viewed his title in a domineering sense, but humbly and faithfully served the church. Peter identified himself further in 5:1.

A. Peter’s role among the elders (5:1a)

Peter specifically **addressed** the elders in 5:1-4. Even if you have not been called to be an elder or pastor, please pay attention to this section. There are many insights a church member can take away from this section regarding the role and function of elders. Such information should prompt church members to pray for their pastor.

The **key word** elder can be defined simply as an older man, such as in Acts 2:17. The word can be a reference to one’s ancestors or previous generations as noted in Hebrews 11:2, a **related passage**. Peter used the term “elder” in 5:1 to refer to Christian leaders over the churches. An example of this usage can also be observed in Acts 14:23 and 15:2, **related passages**. When it comes to religious leaders or elders, it does not necessarily denote older men only. Younger men can also serve as elders. Both older and younger elders must meet the biblical requirements for an elder/bishop or pastor (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

The primary goal Peter had in mind when addressing these elders was

exhortation, “The elders which are among you I exhort” (5:1a). The **key word** exhort means to encourage someone or urge them on to action. Peter further identified himself as a fellow elder. Even though he was an apostle, Peter placed himself on the same level as those he addressed. As a fellow elder, he wanted to give them both an encouraging and challenging word of exhortation. Some religious traditions consider Peter to be the first pope of the church; however, Peter’s reference to himself as a fellow elder seems to diminish such an idea.

B. Peter’s privilege as a witness of Christ’s sufferings (5:1b)

Not only was Peter a fellow elder, but he was also a fellow witness of Christ’s sufferings (5:1b). The **key word** witness may refer to one who gives eyewitness testimony or one who proclaims the truth. Both meanings can be applied to Peter. **First**, Peter observed Christ’s suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-37) and His trial before the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:58). **Second**, Peter also faithfully preached the gospel in the early days of the church as noted in Acts. Believers today cannot claim to have witnessed Christ’s suffering literally, but they can proclaim the truth of His suffering from Scripture.

C. Peter’s status as a partaker of the future glory (5:1c)

Peter also stated that He is a “partaker of the glory that shall be revealed” (5:1c). The **key word** partaker means to be a fellow participant or to share something in common with another. As a **repeated idea**, Peter previously noted the revelation of Jesus’ future glory in 1:7 and 4:13. All believers will participate in this future glory, not only of Jesus in all of His glory, but the glory of the new heaven and earth (Revelation 21:1).

Part Two: The Command to Elders (5:2-3)

In 5:2-3, Peter gave a specific exhortation or command. He not only stated the **command for these elders to obey** but also how best to obey that command.

A. The command stated (5:2a)

The main command Peter gave was to, “Feed the flock of God which is among you” (5:2a). The **key word** feed literally refers to shepherding or taking care of a flock of animals. Peter used the word in a figurative sense and **compared** the church to a flock of animals. Jesus gave Peter a similar command in John 21:15-19, a **related passage**. One might automatically think of preaching the Word when hearing the word “feed.” The elder or pastor’s primary job involves prayer and accurate study and preaching of the Word (Acts 6:2, 4). This should never be neglected in the pastor’s duties.

Part of this command included “taking the oversight” of the flock. The **key word** oversight in the original language comes from combining the words meaning “upon” and “to look.” Thus, the idea is to look upon another or to keep a careful and watchful eye for the health and safety of a group.

A shepherd’s job is twofold: (1) make sure the flock can find pasture for nourishment, and (2) protect the flock from wild animals that might harm them. That is the job of a pastor! God brings a pastor alongside a congregation to care for their spiritual health by feeding them the Word and protecting them from evil. Pray for

your pastor as he fulfills these duties for your church.

B. The command specified (5:2b-3)

Peter not only gave the command, but he specified how the command should be carried out. Peter did this through a series of three **contrasts**. In each contrast, he noted first how **not** to obey this command followed by how **to** obey it.

1. Obey it willingly (5:2b)

Peter stated for elders to shepherd the flock, “not by constraint, but willingly” (5:2b). The **key word** constraint means to do something in a forced manner or merely out of obligation. It carries the sense of doing something unwillingly or reluctantly. A pastor should never perform his duties begrudgingly, but rather willingly. There should be a sense of joy and fulfillment for what God has called the pastor to do. Giving oversight to a church should be viewed as a glorious work!

2. Obey it eagerly (5:2c)

Peter further stated, “not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (5:2c). The **key phrase** “filthy lucre” refers to a fondness for dishonest gain. Peter and Jude both mentioned that false teachers seek after such things in 2 Peter 2:3 and Jude 11, **related passages**. In other **related passages**, Jesus Himself stated that “the labourer is worthy of his hire” in Luke 10:7, and Paul taught that elders should be compensated in 1 Timothy 5:17-18. Indeed, churches should take care of their pastors financially, but this should never be the elder’s goal for ministry. A man should not view the pastorate as an easy job with easy pay. Such an attitude causes one to seek after dishonest gain. Rather, an elder or pastor should serve “of a ready mind.” This **key phrase** refers to one’s eagerness to serve regardless of compensation.

3. Obey it to provide an example (5:3)

Lastly, Peter stated, “neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” (5:3). The **key phrase** “being lords over” refers to a domineering dictator. Jesus reminded His disciples not to lord their positions over the people (Matthew 20:25-27; Mark 10:42-45; Luke 22:25-27). The pastor should not have some great lust for power. Just as Peter said he was a fellow elder, so the pastor must see himself as a fellow member of the congregation he serves.

The **key word** heritage refers to what is assigned or allotted to another. This word provides a beautiful image of God giving the elder a certain allotment of people to shepherd and oversee. These are the sheep God has assigned to each elder or pastor for which to provide care. Elders and churches should take seriously such a charge!

In contrast to a domineering persona or lording over God’s heritage, elders should be “ensamples to the flock” or examples to the congregation. Jesus demonstrated this **key word** beautifully to Peter and the other disciples when He washed their feet in John 13:5 and later stated that what He did served as an “example” for them (John 13:15). If Jesus, the Master of all can serve in a lowly manner, believers should desire to do the same.

Part Three: The Elder's Reward (5:4)

As noted above, the elder should not serve for personal gain or prestige. However, the Bible does promise a reward for elders who serve faithfully.

A. Identity of the Chief Shepherd (5:4a)

Peter compared the elder's job to a shepherd and the congregation he serves as a flock. He also compared and identified Jesus as the chief Shepherd (5:4a). Jesus referred to Himself as the good shepherd in John 10:11, 14, **related passages**. The **key phrase** "chief Shepherd" referred to an overseer of shepherds who were taking care of several flocks. Elders and pastors today are "under shepherds" serving under the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

B. Receiving the crown of glory (5:4b)

Stated as a **cause and effect**, "when the chief shepherd shall appear (cause), ye shall receive a crown of glory" (effect; 5:4b). This verse serves as a great reminder and **truth to believe** that the Lord will return one day. When He does return, He will have His reward with Him for those elders who served their allotments well. Scripture refers to this reward as a crown of glory. The image of the crown likely invoked for Peter's recipients the thoughts of wreaths given to athletes who competed in the Roman games. The winner would be given a wreath as a crown to wear. The Lord has some kind of reward or recognition for faithful elders who serve as Peter described in 5:2-3. This reward is further described as one that "fadeth not away." **Praise God** that He awards His elders for their faithful service.

Conclusion

The best leaders for God's churches are the elders He gives to serve them. God gives each elder an "allotment" of people to care for and watch over. The way elders provide oversight definitely matters. They must do so willingly and eagerly, and not for dishonest profit or personal prestige. Above all, elders should provide a good example for those to whom they minister. Just as it was not easy for Peter's recipients to live holy in a hostile world, neither is it easy for Christians today. Thank God for the faithful pastors He provides for His churches who can help guide them through difficult times. Let us commit to praying for pastors consistently as they shepherd the flock of God.

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that the Chief Shepherd, Jesus, will appear one day.
- Elders should **obey the command** to feed the flock of God.
- Elders should **avoid the errors** of
 - feeding the flock by constraint.
 - feeding the flock just for money.
 - feeding the flock for personal prestige and power.
- Elders should **praise God** for the crown of life that the Chief Shepherd will reward them for faithful service.

LESSON 13: FINAL ADMONITIONS FROM THE APOSTLE

1 Peter 5:5-14

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
2. What contrasts or comparisons are noted in this passage?
3. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
3. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe or promises to claim in this passage?
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
3. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?

Lesson 13: Final Admonitions from the Apostle

1 Peter 5:5-14

Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Importance of _____ and _____ (5:5-7)

A. Submit to elders and each other (5:5a)

B. Be humble before others (5:5b)

C. Be humble before God (5:6-7)

Part Two: Watch Out for the _____ (5:8-9)

A. Be sober and vigilant (5:8a)

B. The adversary seeks to devour (5:8b)

C. Resist the adversary (5:9)

Part Three: Embrace the _____ God Supplies (5:10-11)

A. God will strengthen His people (5:10)

B. God Himself is strong (5:11)

Part Four: Purpose of the Epistle and Greetings (5:12-14)

A. The purpose of the letter (5:12)

B. Final greetings (5:13-14a)

C. The final word (5:14b)

Apply It

- *Claim the promise*
- *Obey the commands*
- *Praise God*

Lesson 13: Final Admonitions from the Apostle

1 Peter 5:5-14

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: Learners will understand the need for submission and humility, along with resisting the devil and embracing God's strength.

Introduction

When writing a letter to a family member or friend, it can be difficult to say everything that needs to be said. People often close out a letter with some brief last words for their loved ones to consider. Peter closed out his letter with several admonitions and commands and seems to do so in a hurried fashion. There was probably much more Peter wanted to say to his scattered recipients, but these final admonitions would suffice for now. He would write to these same recipients again in 2 Peter. Pay special attention to the **commands** in 5:5-14, and seek **to obey** them in your own walk with Christ.

Part One: The Importance of Submission and Humility (5:5-7)

Peter wrote about submission and humility in 2:13–3:12. He picked up these themes again in 5:5-7. True godly submission and humility are important virtues to live out before others and God.

A. Submit to elders and each other (5:5a)

The **immediate context** of 5:1-4 included an exhortation to the elders. Now Peter commanded the younger men to submit themselves to the elders (5:5a). The **key word** submit means to place oneself voluntarily under the control of another and is a **repeated word** from 2:13, 18; 3:1, 5. In Peter's time and culture, the younger men revered older men. It should be noted that some younger men could be categorized as biblically qualified elders. So, this command could be viewed as the least qualified and least mature men submitting to the most qualified.

In a more general fashion, Peter also noted that everyone should practice mutual submission, "be subject one to another." While some believers may have positions of authority in the church, such as elders, no believer should view himself as more important in the church than another. Believers should treat and respect others as they wish to be treated and respected.

B. Be humble before others (5:5b)

Along with submission comes another command, "be clothed with humility" (5:5b). In this context, the phrase refers to humility before others. A truly humble person does not place himself first nor view himself as more important than others. The **key word** clothed referred to the apron a slave might put on to distinguish himself from others. A Christian who puts on humility distinguishes himself as a true follower of Christ.

The opposite of humility is pride. Peter quoted Proverbs 3:34, a **related passage**, when he wrote, "for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." The **key word** resisteth means to oppose or set oneself against another. No believer wants to be opposed by God. Notice the **contrast** in the above quote. God resists or opposes the proud, **but** gives grace to the humble. Believers must guard themselves against a prideful spirit and seek to embrace a spirit of humility.

C. Be humble before God (5:6-7)

Not only should humility be demonstrated toward others, but also toward God. As a **cause and effect**, those who humble themselves under God's mighty hand (cause) will be exalted in due time (effect; 5:6). The **key word** exalt means to lift up or raise high. Enduring persecution may not be enjoyable and often makes one feel low. But, in God's perfect timing, He will one day lift Christians high by His mighty hand.

One way that believers can truly humble themselves before God is to cast all their care upon Him (5:7). The **key word** casting calls for a deliberate act. It literally refers to throwing an object onto something else. Who better to throw our cares onto than God! The reason we should throw our cares upon Him (effect) is *because* He cares for us. It takes a truly humble person to show this kind of dependence upon God.

Part Two: Watch Out for the Adversary (5:8-9)

First Peter 5:8-9 marks the letter's only reference to the devil, the believer's primary adversary. The believer may face persecution from other humans, but the devil is the main one behind it.

A. Be sober and vigilant (5:8a)

Peter gave two more commands, "Be sober, be vigilant," both noted as **key words** (5:8a). The word sober is a **repeated word** from 1:3 and 4:7 and means to be clear-headed. It literally means not to be drunk with wine but has the general connotation to be of a sound mind. A clear-headed person stands ready to obey the next command, to be vigilant. This word means to be on the alert or watchful. Believers must possess a clear mind and stay alert.

B. The adversary seeks to devour (5:8b)

Noted as a **cause and effect**, the reason for clear-headedness and watchfulness (effects) is *because* our adversary the devil walks around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (5:8b). Peter **compared** the devil to a lion. A lion is known as a ferocious beast that hunts down and kills its prey. Just as a lion does not care about the feelings of its prey, so the devil does not care about you. He is the master of destruction and will take everyone down that he can. So, believers need to keep their minds clear and stay alert, because the devil is constantly lurking around the corner.

C. Resist the adversary (5:9)

The good news for the believer is that he can resist the devil by being "stedfast in the faith" (5:9a). The **key word** resist comes from a different word than the one used in 5:5. The word in 5:9a also means to oppose but carries a sense of standing firm and refusing to yield. The believer does not have to yield to the devil for one proverbial minute as long as he remains stedfast. This **key word** means to be firm or strong. The stronger the believer is in his faith, the better he can resist the devil. The devil is powerful, but he can be resisted. Peter's recipients were not alone in their affliction. Peter reminded them that their fellow brothers in the world have suffered the same kind of afflictions they have (5:9b).

Part Three: Embrace the Strength God Supplies (5:10-11)

The devil wants to seek and devour. God wants to lift up and strengthen His people, a strong **contrast** indeed from the devil! Many scholars agree that 5:10-11 is a prayer of Peter for his recipients.

A. God will strengthen His people (5:10)

Scripture notes that the source of grace comes from God as He is the “God of all grace” (5:10a). This same God has called believers unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus (5:10b), something for which to **praise God**. Peter previously mentioned the believer’s calling in 1:15; 2:9, 21; 3:9. The believer must first suffer a little while on this earth before experiencing this eternal glory. It often has been said that suffering is the pathway to glory. Thankfully, the suffering endured on this earth only lasts a little while, especially when compared to the eternal glory that will follow. Suffering can be endured if one is assured a good outcome. What better outcome can a believer expect than eternal glory!

Peter mentioned four things God does to strengthen believers. All of these can be noted as **key words** and **promises to claim**. These are all future tense verbs that find their ultimate fulfillment in eternity. However, the believer can experience a taste of these actions from God while on this earth. **First**, God will perfect believers. This word means to repair what is broken or make one fully qualified or adequate for a task. God equips believers for serving Him now and will bring them to a completed state in glory. **Second**, God will stabilish believers, which means to make one immovable. **Third**, God will strengthen believers. The believer’s true strength comes from God Himself. **Fourth**, God will settle believers. This word speaks of a foundation. God alone provides believers a firm foundation in Jesus Christ where they can stand unwavering in their faith.

B. God Himself is strong (5:11)

The reason God can help and strengthen believers is because He Himself possesses strength. Peter ascribed to God glory and dominion (strength) forever and ever (5:11). Peter offered a similar doxology or word of praise in 4:11. He appropriately closed this short prayer with an “Amen!” This word means truly, or let it be so. Believers may experience suffering temporarily, but **praise God** that His dominion lasts forever!

Part Four: Purpose of the Epistle and Greetings (5:12-14)

As Peter came to the end of his letter, he wrote his benediction or closing words. These closing words remind the reader of Peter’s purpose for writing and for receiving and giving greetings to others.

A. The purpose of the letter (5:12)

Peter mentioned that it was through Silvanus that he wrote this brief letter (5:12a). This is likely the same Silvanus from the book of Acts, also known as Silas, the traveling companion of Paul. Writing a letter with the help of a scribe was a common practice in the first century. For example, Paul employed Tertius who helped him write the book of Romans (Romans 16:22). Even though Silvanus may have helped pen the letter, the words and content came from Peter.

Peter wrote this letter to exhort and testify of the true grace of God. The believer can stand firm in this grace and truth found within this letter.

B. Final greetings (5:13-14a)

Peter gave a greeting to his recipients from the church at Babylon (5:13a). The word “Babylon” is likely a code name for Rome. Babylon represents the evil system that opposes God. Rome was a mighty empire in the first century and stood in opposition to Christ’s churches.

Not only did the church at Rome offer a salutation or greeting, but so did Marcus, whom Peter noted as his son (5:13b). This is probably the same Mark or John Mark mentioned in Acts. He was more like a son in the faith like Timothy was to Paul (1 Timothy 1:2). He also encouraged these scattered believers to greet one another with a “kiss of charity” (5:14a). It was common in this culture for people to greet each other with a literal kiss on the cheek. This is still common in some cultures. Giving greetings to one another is still a **command that believers should obey** today.

C. The final word (5:14b)

The final word Peter left his recipients was the word “peace.” Even during persecution, believers can experience God’s peace because they are in Christ Jesus. Peter offered a third “Amen” at the end of his letter.

Conclusion

As believers navigate through a hostile world, they should look to their elders/pastors and submit to their authority. As believers endure persecution together, they must depend on each other through mutual submission and possess a humble attitude before each other and God. The devil is the main adversary and persecutor of God’s people. He is noted as a ravenous lion seeking to destroy believers. The God who has all dominion and power can strengthen His people enabling them to resist the onslaught of the devil. Believers must depend upon God’s strength now and look Forward to experiencing His eternal glory!

Apply It

- **Claim the promise** that God will restore, establish, strengthen, and provide believers a strong foundation.
- **Obey the commands** to
 - submit to elders and each other.
 - clothe oneself with humility.
 - humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.
 - have a sound mind and be watchful.
 - resist the devil.
 - greet one another.
- **Praise God** that
 - He has called believers unto His eternal glory.
 - He has dominion forever and ever.



Baptist Expositor

1 Peter

Maintaining Hope and Holiness Through Suffering



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Leader's Guide

Please note: The purpose of the leader's guide is to provide teachers/leaders with direction in teaching the Bible passage. **It is designed to be flexible enough to be used in varied formats (Sunday school, small group, individual or family).** This leader's guide contains everything found in the student book plus answers and teaching plans. The *Guided Bible Study* questions are answered with content from the comments in the lesson. Directions and additional comments are highlighted for leaders. **The teacher does not have to cover all the material presented for each lesson. Choose the format or method that agrees with your teaching style.**

Bible Study is Not Just for Sunday Morning!

This Bible Study curriculum can be used in different ways. Consider the following opportunities:

Sunday School (Matthew 28:18-20)

This curriculum can be used in a Sunday school class. Using the *Guided Bible Study*, the learner should read the passage, answer the *Guided Bible Study* questions, read the lesson in the student book, and participate in the class session. The class session can either (1) review the learner's answers to the *Guided Bible Study* or (2) study the student book commentary in class or (3) review the *Lesson Outline* option contained in the leader's guide. This page presents the verse-by-verse teaching outline and asks discussion questions. The *Lesson Outline* may also be copied as a handout for learners.

Small Groups (Romans 12:3-8)

Small groups that meet any day of the week can use this curriculum as described above. Interaction with the inductive questions and/or discussion questions from the *Lesson Outline* encourages active learning in the small group setting. A single lesson can be divided into two sessions: the first interacting with the *Guided Bible Study* and the second studying the student-book comments in depth.

DiscipleWay Groups (2 Timothy 2:2)

Those who are familiar with *DiscipleWay* will easily see the *Guided Bible Study* questions are taken from the complete list of inductive questions. *DiscipleWay* groups can study the passage using all the questions and use the student book as a trustworthy reference.

One-on-one Mentoring (Proverbs 27:17)

Individuals in mentoring relationships can use the curriculum for joint study. Mentors can use the curriculum to teach the discipline of effective Bible study. The *Guided Bible Study* can encourage discipleship relationships.

Family or Individual Devotions (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

The curriculum can be used on a daily basis for personal or family devotional study. The Bible study lessons can be studied in parts throughout the week. Use the *Daily Bible Study Guide* to find your own daily Bible readings by reading the context of the passage being studied and locating related passages. Parents can use the *Guided Bible Study* questions to model love and appreciation for God's Word before their children. As children grow older, they can participate in reading and answering questions.

Introduction to 1 Peter

Authorship

The apostle Peter wrote the book of 1 Peter according to 1 Peter 1:1. Peter also acknowledged the scribal help of Silvanus (also known as Silas) for the composition of this letter (5:12). Peter is also accredited with writing 2 Peter where he likely addressed the same recipients (see 2 Peter 3:1). According to early church fathers, Mark used Peter as a primary source when he wrote the Gospel of Mark. Peter was one of the twelve disciples and a leader of the early church.

Date and Place of Writing

Most conservative scholars believe Peter wrote this book in AD 64 from Rome. In 5:13, Peter referenced “Babylon” which most scholars believe stood as a code name for Rome. Babylon stands as a symbol for those who have persecuted God’s people.

Original Recipients

Peter wrote this letter to scattered Christians living in the Roman provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. These areas make up modern Turkey. Peter knew these believers well as he addressed them as “Beloved” twice in this letter (2:11; 4:12). During the period when Peter wrote this letter, believers were experiencing persecution from the Roman government with Nero as the Roman emperor.

Themes and Purpose

Peter stated his purpose in 5:12, “I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.” As Peter expanded upon this purpose, he touched on themes such as Christian hope, living in holiness and humility, and how to endure persecution while faithfully serving the Lord and His churches. Peter placed an emphasis on the sufferings of Christ as an example of how to bear up under pressure.

The following is the breakdown of Peter’s letter (note how Peter goes back and forth between doctrinal and practical sections): I. Salutation (1:1-2); II. *Doctrinal* understanding of salvation; III. *Practical* emphasis on holy living (1:13—2:3); IV. *Doctrinal* blessings of election (2:4-10); V. *Practical* living in submission (2:11—3:12); VI. *Doctrinal* understanding of suffering for Christ (3:13—4:19); VII. *Practical* teaching on living in humility (5:1-11); VIII. Benediction (5:12-14).

Unit Aim

Learners will come to know the importance of maintaining personal holiness and faithful Christian service in the midst of a hostile world that persecutes believers for the sake of Christ. Believers find their primary hope in salvation and the ultimate return of Christ. The title for this series of lessons is, “Maintaining Hope and Holiness through Suffering.”

Leader Training

Prepare to Lead: Teacher/Leader Preparation **(Leaders should prepare to lead before every lesson.)**

Overview

Read the passage to be studied before every lesson. Review the Introduction to 1 Peter included here or in the study Bible of your choice. Review the previous lesson's aim and look ahead to the next lesson's aim.

Take Aim

The aim is what the learners should *know*, *feel*, or do as a result of the learning experience.

1. The **general aim** for *Baptist Expositor* is to expound the passages studied and for learners to know how to study the Bible for themselves.
2. The **unit aim** for this study is given at the end of the introduction to the study.
3. A **lesson aim** is supplied for each lesson as a specific way to achieve the overall unit aim.

Keep in mind that “learning experience” is much more than the time spent in a study session. Learning experience includes what the learner does before, during, and after a session together. For example, the learner should read the passage, do the *Guided Bible Study*, read the lesson in the student book, participate in the class session, and do homework. This can be done in a traditional Bible study class, a small group, or even family devotions with few modifications.

Do Your Own Inductive Bible Study

As teacher/leader it is important for you to study the Bible passage better than the most prepared learner. Do a complete inductive study of the passage – not just the selected questions in the student book. You will then be better equipped to lead learners in the Guided Bible Study section. *DiscipleWay Inductive Bible Study Briefly Explained*, with the complete list of inductive questions, is included on the following pages. Use the questions for your study. (You may make copies and distribute to learners.)

DiscipleWay Inductive Bible Study Briefly Explained

(This explanation is condensed from the *DiscipleWay Bible Study Lessons 3, 4, and 5*).

The process of inductive bible study is accomplished by answering basic inductive questions. These questions appear below along with explanation that will aid you in answering them. Although every question should be asked in every study, **not all the questions will have an answer**. In this event **do not force an answer, simply move to the next question**.

Observation

The inductive method of Bible study involves three major steps with the first being *Observation*. The purpose of *Observation* is to gain a sense of what the passage is saying without getting into the details.

1) *Who is the author of the book being studied?* At times the answer to this question appears within the text itself in what is referred to as the “salutation.” At other times the author's identity is not *specifically* stated in the text. In instances such as these, the author's identity may be determined by consulting reference works outside the Bible. Even then, however, you may find no definite answer, but that is ok. Just move to the next question.

2) *When was the book written and under what circumstances?* As with question one this information can often be found in the salutation of the book you are studying. For example, many of the prophets identify what king was in power during the time of the prophet's writing. In other cases, you may be forced to find the answer to these questions within the book itself.

3) *Who is involved in the passage being studied?* To answer this question, simply identify the main characters that appear in the passage to be studied. Look for the names of individuals and/or groups of individuals (disciples, Pharisees, etc.).

4) *Who is speaking and being addressed in the passage?* Although the answers to these questions can also be found in the opening verses (salutation) of many books of the Bible (1 Corinthians 1:1-2 for example), narratives such as those found in the Gospels may require you to read the verses which precede the passage you are studying to acquire pertinent information.

5) *What are the key words and/or phrases in the passage?* When answering this question identify those nouns, verbs or descriptive phrases which play a major role in shaping the author/speaker's original intent in a passage. Give special attention to those which are repeated as well as those whose meaning is not readily apparent or obvious.

6) *What words or phrases are repeated?* By answering question 5, you will have more likely answered this question. However, for the sake of being thorough, scan through the passage again identifying those terms or phrases used two or more times.

7) *What is being compared and/or contrasted in the passage?* A *comparison* occurs when word, thought, truth, or action is being likened to something else in order to make a point more clear. Although they are not always a definite sign of a comparison, the terms "like" and "as" are good indicators to watch for. In Psalm 1:3, for example, the "blessed man" is described as being "*like a tree planted by rivers of water.*" *Contrasts* occur when a word, thought, truth, or action is set alongside its opposite. Conjunctions such as "but" are often (but not always) good indicators to look for.

8) *What are the cause/effect relationships in the passage?* Cause and effect relationships occur when one portion of a passage (cause) leads to or results in another portion of the passage (effect). Cause and effect relationship are often (but not always) indicated by the following terms: *therefore, for, that, for this reason, etc.*

9) *What literary form is used in the passage?* Literary forms can be divided into two main groups: poetry and prose. Prose includes historical narrative, gospel, letter, and prophecy. Poetry includes psalms and wisdom literature.

Interpretation

The purpose of *interpretation* is to determine what a passage of scripture means. As with the step of observation, this purpose is accomplished by addressing certain inductive Bible study questions. Those questions appear below along with explanation and examples that will provide you with help in answering them.

1) *How is the passage affected by its cultural/historical background?* As timeless as the message and meaning of the Bible is, one must not ignore the fact that it was addressed to specific people who lived in specific places during specific periods in human history. Because certain cultural, social, geographical, and political factors often exerted an influence on what biblical writer's both had to say and meant to say, Bible students must be mindful of those factors when interpreting scripture. Although background information is at times implied in the text being studied, familiarizing oneself with it usually requires the use of reference materials outside the Bible such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and works devoted to historical-cultural issues of Bible lands.

2) *What is the immediate context of the passage?* When referring to "context," we mean the "setting" in

which a passage occurs. The context of a passage can be as broad as the entire Bible and as narrow as the paragraph in which the passage occurs. Here the concern lies with identifying the “immediate” context of a passage of scripture. Steps which should always be taken to identify the immediate context of a passage include: 1) reading the chapter which precedes and follows the passage being studied (or the entire book if it is only a few chapters), and 2) conducting a thorough observation of the passage. Be especially vigilant of repeated words and/or phrases that might indicate an ongoing theme.

3) *What key terms or ideas need to be researched?* Here you will work to identify the precise meaning of key terms or phrases from your observation whose meaning influences the author’s intent and/or whose meaning is not readily apparent. Like question one above, this type of research requires the use of reference materials outside the Bible such as an exhaustive concordance and/or a Bible dictionary.

4) *How does the passage relate to its immediate context?* Here you will utilize all the knowledge you have acquired from observation and interpretation to determine how the passage you are studying specifically contributes to the major issue being addressed by the author or speaker.

5) *Are there any related passages which need to be studied?* A long-standing rule of Bible study is that one should “always allow scripture to interpret scripture.” One way this is accomplished is by studying passages “related” to your primary text of consideration. One of the best ways to identify related passages is by cross referencing scripture with scripture. Some Bibles also provide cross references in their margins that can be helpful.

6) *Summarize the passage in your own words.* With the steps of observation and interpretation complete, you simply put into your own words what the passage means.

Application

The purpose of *application* is to determine how to put into practice the meaning of a given passage of scripture.

1) *Is there a promise to claim or a truth to believe?* When answering this question look for specific promises or truths that are stated obviously in the text.

2) *Is there an example to follow?* The answer to this question lies in identifying specific examples alluded to in the passage that are worthy of following.

3) *Is there an error to avoid?* In contrast to the previous question, this one requires you to identify specific examples in the text that God would have you not imitate.

4) *Is there an attitude to change or a sin to confess?* This question must be answered in two ways. In one sense you must deal with it objectively by determining if the passage you are studying reveals a specific attitude or behavior that is unacceptable before God. With these things in mind you would then examine your own heart and determine if your attitude needs adjustment or if there is an area of sin in your life that you need to acknowledge before God and turn from.

5) *Is there a command to obey?* A command is a verb in the imperative/volitional mood used by an author/speaker to call for a deliberate course of action. Some commands appear in the form of a prohibition and call for abstinence or cessation from certain attitudes or activities.

6) *Is there something to praise God for?* Here you are simply identifying anything you view as a motive for praising God.

Suggestions for Leading the Lesson

Read the Scripture Passage.

Leaders know that the passage of scripture should be read at the beginning of the session. It should be done in such a way that recognizes the Word of God is valued and clear.

Read the Lesson Aim.

Having an aim for the lesson, “sets up a target” for the learning experience. Everything the leader does should contribute to the aim. It is helpful for learners to know the aim as well. The aim is what the learners should know, feel, or do as a result of the learning experience. Most lessons will have a knowledge aim but some may include feeling or doing. Application at the end of the lesson should “hit the target” set up by the aim.

Lead the Lesson.

There are **three options** for teachers/leaders. Leaders may use any, either, or a combination of options. The teacher does not need to do all three in a single lesson.

Option One: Guided Bible Study

Teachers/leaders have the option to use the class session to review the *Guided Bible Study* alone. This is basically a discussion format that focuses upon facts given in the Bible passage being studied. Leaders should avoid asking “What does this passage *mean to you*?” That becomes very subjective or opinionated. Your goal is to focus a learner’s attention upon the Bible through observing what it actually says, and considering its context, and it’s intended application. Learners should be encouraged to answer the guided questions in advance and the class session can be a stand-alone study used to discuss their answers. The commentary in the student book can be used for reference and help learners discover answers to the Guided questions.

Option Two: Lesson Outline

Follow the *Lesson Outline* page included for each lesson. The one-page outline matches up with the lesson commentary (usually the last four pages of a lesson), discussion questions, and main points of the Bible passage. Learners can use the lesson commentary to find answers to the outline’s fill-in-the-blanks. Learners should still be encouraged to answer the *Guided Bible Study* questions in advance of the class session.

Option Three: Commentary

Follow the **Explore the Commentary in the Student Book** in this leader’s guide. Leaders may conduct a more traditional class session using the **Lead the Lesson** directions. Students should be encouraged to study their lessons by answering the *Guided Bible Study* questions in advance of the class session. The leader may refer to the questions and answers during the traditional class session that examines the commentary in the student book.

Get Attention.

Learning readiness is especially important for the traditional classroom model. Learners may not come to class ready to learn. An opening illustration, example, or activity will help them get ready. A **Get Attention** activity is provided for each lesson or leaders may create one of their own.

Use the Lesson Outline

You may use the optional *Lesson Outline*. Leaders may use the one-page outline, Lesson Outline, which provides a verse-by-verse outline of the main points of the Bible passage and discussion questions to ask learners. Leaders can present the outline in a method that is appropriate for them (lecture, discussion, or small groups).

Explore the Commentary in the Student Book

This leader's guide is designed to assist the leader in helping learners compare their answers to the *Guided Bible Study* with the commentary. Ask learners to answer bolded questions found in the in-depth study. All answers can be found in the Bible text. Encourage learners to compare their answers to the *Guided Bible Study* questions. In the Student Book and in this Leader's Guide, questions will be in **bold print**, key words will be underlined, *related passages*, *context*, etc. will appear in italics. Additional comments and suggestions for leaders are found only in the Leader's Guide.

Make Application

Only after observation and proper interpretation, can appropriate application be made. Review the application questions from the *Guided Bible Study* and suggestions made for specific application at the end of the lesson. Ask learners to make application personal in their lives.

Daily Bible Study Guide

Specific Daily Bible Readings are not prescribed in this curriculum. Instead, a *Daily Bible Study Guide* is offered to teach learners how to use context and related passages to create their own daily readings. Direct learners to fill in the guide as they prepare for the upcoming lesson. If the lesson is on Sunday, instruct learners to follow instructions on the chart beginning the Monday before the lesson. If the lesson is on any other day of the week, instruct them to begin 6 days before the lesson.

Daily Bible Study Guide

Following a Daily Bible Reading guide is a good method of Bible intake.
A Daily Bible Study guide is even better!

Find your own daily Bible readings by reading the context of the passage
being studied and locating related passages.

This page is intended for reuse with each lesson. So, making copies or finding your own method to journal answers may work well for you.

Day of the Week	What to Read.	Fill in Bible Reference
Day 1 (Monday)	Immediate Context: Read the preceding verses or chapter of the passage to be studied. (If no verses or chapter precedes the passage being studied, read the passage itself.)	
Day 2 (Tuesday)	Immediate Context: Read the verses or chapter which follows the passage being studied.	
Day 3 (Wednesday)	Read a related passage. (Study Bibles usually provide cross references in their margins.)	
Day 4 (Thursday)	Read a related passage. (Find where a key word or phrase is used elsewhere in the Bible. Words can be found in a concordance.)	
Day 5 (Friday)	Read a related passage. (Read a related passage referenced in the lesson comments.)	
Day 6 (Saturday)	Read the passage in context. (Read the preceding verses, the passage, and the following verses.)	

Suggestion for a Wednesday evening service (or a mid-week Bible Study): If teaching the lesson on Sunday, instruct learners to follow instructions on the chart beginning the Monday before the lesson. For a **Wednesday evening service**, review the student's progress on Days 1 and 2, when they found and read the *Immediate Context* of the passage being studied. Wednesday is Day 3 so find and discuss related passages. Practice finding *related passages* using cross references and concordances. Instruct students to continue to search out *related passages* on Days 4 and 5.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand that even though believers may suffer for the faith, they can rejoice in the glorious salvation God grants along with His protection.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:1-9

LESSON 1: THE JOY OF SALVATION IN FACE OF PERSECUTION

1 Peter 1:1-9 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

GUIDED BIBLE STUDY

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
Apostle, strangers, scattered, elect, foreknowledge, sanctification, salvation of your souls, blessed, hath begotten us, hope.
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
God's abundant mercy (cause) he "hath begotten us" (effect; 1:3b); proven faith (cause) is then found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation or return of
3. What contrasts do you note in this passage?
Peter says that even though we do not see Him yet, we still love him and believe in Him (1:8a).
4. What comparisons do you note in this passage?
Tested faith to gold that is tested through the fire (1:7a).

→ Jesus Christ (effect; 1:7b).

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Apostle; Strangers; Scattered; Elect Foreknowledge; Sanctification; "The salvation of your souls" (1:9)
2. What related passages need to be considered?
John 16:13; Exodus 24:7-8; Hebrews 11:1.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
For the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; for His great mercy; Believers are sprinkled with the better blood of Jesus; for an indestructible inheritance; for
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
Believers are chosen according to God's foreknowledge.

→ trials that prove the believer's faith genuine; for the unspeakable joy believers can experience in this life.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand that even though believers may suffer for the faith, they can rejoice in the glorious salvation God grants along with His protection.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:1-9

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Get Attention:

Review the Introduction to 1 Peter, especially the aim for the quarter.

Lesson 1: The Joy of Salvation in Face of Persecution

1 Peter 1:1-9 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Peter's Salutation (1:1-2)

A. Human author identified (1:1a)

B. Original recipients identified (1:1b-c)

1. Their physical location (1:1b)
2. Their spiritual status (1:2)

Part Two: The Believer's Salvation (1:3-5)

A. Salvation is a born-again experience (1:3)

B. Salvation comes with an inheritance (1:4)

C. Salvation comes with God's protection (1:5)

Part Three: The Believer's Joy (1:6-9)

A. Joy despite trials (1:6)

B. Joy through proven faith (1:7)

C. Joy because of a guaranteed good outcome (1:8-9)

Apply It

- **Believe the truth**
that believers are chosen according to God's foreknowledge.
- **Praise God**
 - for the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.
 - for His great mercy.
 - that believers are sprinkled with the better blood of Jesus.
 - for an indestructible inheritance.

Active Learning

Have your class discuss ways they can serve others. Is there anyone in your class or church you can serve?

- for trials that prove the believer's faith genuine.
- for the unspeakable joy believers can experience in this life.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leader's Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 1: The Joy of Salvation in the Face of Persecution

1 Peter 1:1-9 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Lesson Aim: The learner will understand that even though believers may suffer for the faith, they can rejoice in the glorious salvation God grants along with His protection.

Introduction

Most people have no problem enjoying life when all seems to be going well. When problems or hard times surface, however, a person's enjoyment often begins to diminish. Thankfully, believers have an advantage when problems prevail in life as they can lean upon God's strength and maintain their joy in Him. The apostle Peter wrote the letter of 1 Peter to believers who experienced suffering and persecution because of their faith. He wrote to encourage them during these difficult times, but also to challenge them to holy living. Believers should never claim exemption from holy living when faced with persecution and hostility. If anything, persecution marks a time for believers to increase their zeal for holiness before God. The letter of 1 Peter is full of great doctrinal truths regarding salvation and practical truths regarding how rightly to live out that salvation, even amid persecution.

Part One: Peter's Salutation (1:1-2)

Peter began his letter with a salutation—a typical introduction for a letter during the first century. A salutation often included the identification of the author and recipients, along with a “salute” or word of well wishes for the recipients.

A. Human author identified (1:1a)

Peter clearly identified himself in the opening part of the letter and claimed a particular title. He called himself “an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1:1a). Jesus called Peter to follow Him during His earthly ministry and he later became an apostle. The **key word** apostle refers to one who is sent on a mission with full authority from the one who sent him. Peter specifically stated that he was an apostle “of Jesus Christ.” Peter belonged to Christ and ministered on behalf of Christ.

B. Original recipients identified (1:1b-c)

1. Their physical location (1:1b)

Peter did not write this letter to a specific church, but rather to a specific group of Christians living in the first century. Peter described them as “the strangers scattered” (1:1b). The **key word** strangers refers to those sojourning in a strange place as temporary residents. The **key word** scattered in this context refers to those forced to leave their homes and regions due to persecution. These descriptive terms remind believers today of their own temporary residence in this present world. Believers can look forward to their eternal (permanent) home in glory!

Peter listed five provinces (regions of the Roman Empire) where these Christians lived: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (1:1c). These five Roman provinces made up what is now modern-day Turkey. As one looks at a first-century map of these provinces, one can detect a circular route (clockwise)



Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand that even though believers may suffer for the faith, they can rejoice in the glorious salvation God grants along with His protection.



Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:1-9

Get Attention:

Review the Introduction to 1 Peter, especially the aim for the quarter.

Leader's Guide. A typical letter or epistle in the first century Greco-Roman world included a greeting, body of letter, and conclusion. New Testament epistles followed a similar format: salutation (i.e., greeting), thanksgiving, main body of letter, and a benediction or final words of closing. Here is the breakdown of 1 Peter for these four areas: Salutation, 1:1-2; Thanksgiving, 1:3-12; Body, 1:13—5:11; Benediction, 5:12-14.

Leader's Guide. The Scripture records Peter's call to follow Jesus in Matthew 4:18-20; Mark 1:16-18; Luke 5:1-11; John 1:40-42. Peter's apostolic authority can be seen in Acts 1—12.

Leader's Guide. The term “apostle” in the New Testament is geared toward specific men who had to meet specific qualifications as outlined in Acts 1:21-22. The main qualification involved seeing the resurrected Jesus. While some claim to be apostles today, no one living now can claim to have seen the resurrected Christ; therefore, cannot claim apostolic authority.

Leader's Guide. Many New Testament letters were written to individual churches while others were written to specific individuals or Christians living in specific regions.

Leader's Guide. The Greek word translated “scattered” is where we get the English word *Diaspora*. Before Christianity, the Diaspora (dee-ah-SPORE-ah) referred to those Jews who did not return to their homeland after being released from Babylonian captivity.

in the order that Peter mentions them. This is likely the order the believers in these regions would have received this letter.

2. Their spiritual status (1:2)

Spiritual status speaks of these believers' relationship with God. Peter described this status in relation to the full Godhead—God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ. **First**, Peter described them as “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1:2a). The **key word** elect refers to one's prerogative in choosing. It specifically speaks of God's call on an individual's life to salvation. Peter further mentioned that believers are “elect” according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. The **key word** foreknowledge means to know something beforehand or ahead of time. With God as the subject, it demonstrates His special affection toward those He means to save. What a joyous thought to contemplate—believers are not an afterthought with God, but a forethought!

Second, the means of the believer's chosen status comes “through sanctification of the Spirit” (1:2b). The **key word** sanctification refers to making one holy and demonstrates a complete belonging to God. According to John 16:13, a **related passage**, the role of the Holy Spirit is to lead the believer into all truth; thus, causing spiritual growth and sanctification. The believer should not discount this sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Third, the purpose for the believer's chosen status relates to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus (1:2c). God has chosen believers that they might be obedient to Him. The **key phrase**, “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,” indicates God's covenant relationship to His people. Exodus 24:7-8, a **related passage**, links God's call for obedience to His original people of Israel to the sprinkling of animal blood by Moses. **Praise God** that believers are sprinkled by the better blood of Jesus Christ!

Peter closes his salutation by expressing his desire for God's grace and peace to be multiplied to his recipients (1:2d). The **key word** multiplied means to the fullest measure. The order in which “grace” and “peace” appear is theologically significant. One cannot experience the peace of God apart from His grace.

Part Two: The Believer's Salvation (1:3-5)

First Peter 1:3 begins Peter's thanksgiving section of his letter, which relates primarily to the believer's salvation. In this section, Peter writes about believers being born again, receiving an inheritance, and enjoying God's protection.

A. Salvation is a born-again experience (1:3)

Peter gives **praise to God** for his abundant mercy (1:3a). The **key word** blessed refers to one who is worthy of praise. It is only used to describe God and Christ in the New Testament. Peter notes God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, demonstrating a distinction between these two persons of the holy Trinity (1:3b). Stated as a **cause and effect**, according to God's abundant mercy (cause) He “hath begotten us” (effect; 1:3b). This **key phrase** refers to God's initiative in bringing about a spiritual re-birth. People are born spiritually dead because of sin and need a re-birth experience. This born-again experience

Leader's Guide: Other passages where God's people are referred to as elected include Isaiah 65:9, 22; Matthew 24:24, 31; Romans 8:33; Colossians 3:12; Titus 1:1; 2 John 1:1, 13.

Leader's Guide: Peter also used the word translated “foreknowledge” in his first sermon recorded in Acts 2:23 referring to Christ's crucifixion.

Leader's Guide: Some see the phrase “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus” and equate that to believer's baptism. However, nowhere else in the New Testament are the two equated. Rather, the blood of Christ links well to the Old Testament imagery of marking the covenant people of God.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word for “blessed” in 1:3 is pronounced *eweh-lah-gay-TAHS*. There is another word translated “blessed” in the New Testament which refers to people being blessed, *mah-KAR-ee-ahs*, used in Matthew 5:3-11.

leads to a living hope. The **key word** hope speaks of a confident expectation as opposed to wishful thinking, and such hope is “lively” or alive and active in the believer’s life. The resurrection of Jesus is the basis through which the believer experiences this hope (1:3c). Because He lives, the believer has hope of a born-again life!

B. Salvation comes with an inheritance (1:4)

An inheritance comes with a person’s born-again experience. Peter describes this inheritance in three ways marked by some **key words** and **phrases** (1:4a). **First**, it is incorruptible, meaning it is imperishable and not subject to decay. **Second**, it is undefiled, meaning that it is pure and no evil can touch it. **Third**, it “fadeth not away,” means that it will endure forever so that time cannot change it. Nothing on this earth provides one with such a guarantee! Peter goes on to speak of this inheritance as reserved in heaven (1:4b). When God makes a reservation, one can have confident hope that such a reservation will never be lost!

C. Salvation comes with God’s protection (1:5)

Furthermore, believers are kept by the power of God (1:5a). The **key word** kept means to protect or keep watch over something. God not only saves people but keeps them saved. The word “kept” is grammatically passive meaning that God does this for the believer. People cannot save themselves, nor keep themselves saved. Believers are ever dependent upon the power of God. Peter notes faith as the means by which this power of God works in the believer’s life. Believers have faith in a “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1:5b). This **key phrase** refers to the full experience of salvation in eternity.

Part Three: The Believer’s Joy (1:6-9)

Peter continues his thanksgiving section by speaking about the joy associated with salvation. Positive circumstances often dictate one’s level of happiness. However, joy goes beyond mere happiness and marks an enduring quality of a born-again life. A believer can experience joy in the Lord no matter the circumstances.

A. Joy despite trials (1:6)

Peter states that believers should rejoice in the great salvation he described in 1:3-5. Believers can rejoice even though they are in “heaviness through manifold temptations” (1:6). The **key word** heaviness refers to distress or grief. The **key word** temptations refers to trials or difficulties in life. Peter states that these trials can be manifold or varied. In the context of 1 Peter, these trials are specifically related to persecution because of the faith. Peter even states that such seasons of difficulty are necessary. Despite life’s difficulties, believers can rejoice in something that does not change—their born-again status before God.

B. Joy through proven faith (1:7)

The **key word** trial means to prove something through testing. Why are such trials necessary in the believer’s life? The believer’s faith needs to be proven genuine. Faith has often been described as a muscle. If a person desires strong

Active Learning

Ask your learner(s) to testify about their own “born-again experience.”

→ **Leader’s Guide:** Many difficulties in life can come upon believers that do not relate to persecution for the faith. Such difficulties include sickness, the loss of a job, appliances breaking, etc. However, it is important to note that in the context of 1 Peter, the believers’ trials are associated with the persecution of Christians.

Leader's Guide: A similar idea concerning tested faith can be seen in James 1:2-4, a **related passage**.

Active Learning

Ask your learner(s) if they find it hard to praise God when persecuted for their faith.

muscles, those muscles must be worked through exercise. If a believer desires strong faith, that faith must be exercised through trials or difficulties.

Peter **compares** such tested faith to gold that is tested through the fire (1:7a). Melting down gold causes the impurities to rise to the top. Those impurities can be skimmed off and the remaining gold is more pure than before. Peter states that proven faith that goes through the fire of difficulties is even more precious than purified gold! Noted as a **cause and effects**, such proven faith (cause) is then found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation or return of Jesus Christ (effects; 1:7b).

We may not enjoy the difficulties of life, but if we pass the test of life's difficulties through strong faith, we can rejoice that we have a faith that has been proven genuine. **Praise God** for the trials that prove our faith genuine.

C. Joy because of a guaranteed good outcome (1:8-9)

Believers should look forward to the return of Jesus Christ when they will get to see Him face to face. The apostle John reminds us in John 1:18, a **related passage**, that no one has seen God at any time. By way of **contrast**, Peter says that even though we do not see Him yet, we still love him and believe in Him (1:8a). It takes faith to believe in what we cannot physically see, as stated aptly in Hebrews 11:1, a **related passage**, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Having such confident faith, the believer can rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1:8b). **Praise God** for such unspeakable joy! No matter how difficult life may become for believers in this life, they can endure it knowing that the outcome results in "the salvation of your souls" (1:9). This **key phrase** likely refers to both the blessings of salvation now and in the future.

Conclusion

There is no better way to begin a letter to persecuted believers than to remind them of God's great salvation. This salvation is the work of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God guarantees this salvation and keeps the believer saved. The trials of life cannot alter this status, but only work to prove the believer's genuine faith. What a great reminder for believers today as well. The world continues to place pressure upon Christians and many are heavily persecuted for their faith. Such persecution is necessary for faith to grow and be proven genuine. May believers continue to encourage one another with God's great salvation through times of testing.

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that believers are chosen according to God's foreknowledge.
- **Praise God . . .**
 - for the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.
 - for His great mercy.
 - that believers are sprinkled with the better blood of Jesus.
 - for an indestructible inheritance.
 - for trials that prove the believer's faith genuine.
 - for the unspeakable joy believers can experience in this life.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

LESSON 2: THE PROPHETS OF OLD SERVING HOLY BELIEVERS

1 Peter 1:10-16 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
signify; testified; revealed; minister; to look into; Revelation of Jesus Christ; holy; "all manner of conversation."
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Quoting Leviticus 1:44-45 in 1:16, "You shall be holy (effect) for I am holy (cause)."
3. What comparison do you note in this passage?
Holy refers to one who is set apart. Believers are commanded to be holy *like* the God who called them (1:15a).
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?
OT prophets did not speak on their own initiative but only what God revealed to them; Prophets did not minister to themselves but to those who would later

Get Attention:

Ask learners to name some of the "prophets of old." The prophets of the Old Testament included men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Hosea, etc. Explain the difference between foretelling (such as telling the future) and forth telling (such as boldly declaring truth).

receive their prophecies (1:12a); Obedience rather than conforming to former lusts.

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Signify; Revealed; Minister; "To look into;" "Revelation of Jesus Christ;" ; "All manner of conversation" (1:15b)
2. What related passages need to be considered?
Deuteronomy 18:15-22; Hebrews 11:39-40; Romans 12:2.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
For the prophets who faithfully served future believers. - for the preachers who do and have faithfully preached the gospel as led by the Holy Spirit.
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
To prepare your mind for action; to fix your hope completely in God's grace; to live a holy life before God.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner should be challenged to live an obedient and holy life before the Lord in light of Old Testament prophecies surrounding the sufferings of Christ.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:10-16

Get Attention:

Ask learners to name some of the “prophets of old.” The prophets of the Old Testament included men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Hosea, etc. Explain the difference between foretelling (such as telling the future) and forth telling (such as boldly declaring truth).

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 2: The Prophets of Old Serving Holy Believers

1 Peter 1:10-16 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Prophets and Salvation (1:10-12)

A. They searched diligently (1:10-11)

B. They received revelation (1:12)

1. Revealed to the prophets (1:12a)
2. Preached by the preachers (1:12b)
3. Looked into by the angels (1:12c)

Part Two: The Actions of Believers (1:13)

A. Believers should prepare their minds for action (1:13a-b)

B. Believers should completely fix their hope on grace (1:13c)

Part Three: The Obedience of Believers (1:14-16)

A. Negatively—Do not be conformed (1:14)

B. Positively—Be holy (1:15-16)

Apply It

- **Praise God**
for the prophets who faithfully served future believers.
- **Praise God**
for the preachers who do and have faithfully preached the gospel as led by the Holy Spirit.
- **Obey the command**
 - ° to prepare your mind for action.
 - ° to fix your hope completely in God's grace.
 - ° to live a holy life before God.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 2: The Prophets of Old Serving Holy Believers

1 Peter 1:10-16 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner should be challenged to live an obedient and holy life before the Lord in light of Old Testament prophecies surrounding the sufferings of Christ.

Introduction

Believers tend to think of their salvation in terms of the moment in time when they believed. This marked their moment of faith in Jesus alone and repentance of sin. The Bible refers to this as the new birth experience (John 3:3, 7). The bigger picture of salvation involves the prophecies of the Old Testament which foretold the securing of salvation through Jesus Christ. While believers experience salvation at a particular point in time, God knew it from long ago. Praise God that He had salvation figured out in eternity past, as noted in 1 Peter 1:20, the **immediate context**.

Believers should not think of their salvation only in terms of the moment of conversion. Obviously, this is the place where it begins for the believer, but it is not where it ends. Salvation changes the rest of the believer's life. That change involves obedience and holiness. The Scripture text in this lesson will focus on the message of salvation from the Old Testament prophets and the response of believers to that salvation.

Part One: The Prophets and Salvation (1:10-12)

Salvation is not just a New Testament concept. It should be thought of as more of a biblical concept. Both the Old and New Testaments are full of thoughts regarding God's salvation. God used the Old Testament prophets to foretell the coming of salvation through Jesus. The prophets of the Old Testament performed two primary tasks. They did "foretelling" where they spoke of events yet to come. They also did "forth telling" (i.e., preaching) where they spoke of God's salvation and confronted the people about their sins.

A. They searched diligently (1:10-11)

In the opening section of 1 Peter 1, the **immediate context**, Peter refers to the recipients as elect (1:1-2), born again (1:3), possessing an inheritance (1:4), and protected by God's power (1:5). He also speaks of the joy of their salvation (1:6-8) and closes with the phrase, "the salvation of your souls" (1:9). He picks up in 1:10a by writing about the prophets who prophesied about this salvation. In their prophesying, the prophets enquired (or inquired) and searched diligently. Both **key words** carry similar meanings. Enquired means to make a diligent investigation or seek with intensity, and searched means to make a thorough investigation. Peter refers to salvation as "the grace that should come unto you" (1:10b). The word "grace" is **repeated** from 1:2 and is used a total of eight times in this epistle as noted in Peter's purpose for the letter (5:12). Grace speaks of God's gift to mankind which leads to salvation.

The prophets searched to know two things: what person the prophecies spoke of and what time the prophesies would take place (1:11). In both, it was the Spirit of Christ who declared this information to them. The **key word** signify means

Lesson Aim:

The learner should be challenged to live an obedient and holy life before the Lord in light of Old Testament prophecies surrounding the sufferings of Christ.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:10-16

Get Attention:

Ask learners to name some of the "prophets of old." The prophets of the Old Testament included men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Hosea, etc. Explain the difference between foretelling (such as telling the future) and forth telling (such as boldly declaring truth).

Leader's Guide: In the Old Testament, prophets performed both aspects of foretelling (such as telling the future) and forth telling (such as boldly declaring truth). There are even elements of foretelling in the New Testament, especially with the book of Revelation. Near the close of the first century, inspired Scripture was complete. Those with the gift of prophecy in the church today engage exclusively in forth telling. The prophets of the Old Testament included men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Hosea, etc.

Leader's Guide: The word "enquired" is an older spelling of the modern word "inquired."

Leader's Guide: The words enquired and searched in the Greek are compound words where prepositions are affixed at the beginning of the main root word. When this happens, it gives the root word a more intense meaning (enquired diligently and searched diligently).

Leader's Guide: The word grace is used in 1:2, 10, 13; 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12.

to declare, show clearly, or make plain. The tense of the verb indicates that the Spirit “kept on signifying” this information to them. The Spirit testified concerning the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. The **key word** testified means to bear witness or predict beforehand. The prophets of the Old Testament prophesied hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth. The main test of a true prophet involved whether or not his prophecy came to pass, according to Deuteronomy 18:15-22, a **related passage**. The Old Testament prophets proved to be true prophets indeed as their prophecies about the sufferings of Christ were fulfilled in the first century.

B. They received revelation (1:12)

1. Revealed to the prophets (1:12a)

The Old Testament prophets did not speak on their own initiative. They spoke only what God revealed to them. One thing God revealed to these prophets was that they did not minister to themselves, but, in **contrast**, they ministered to those who would later receive their prophecies (1:12a). Hebrews 11:39-40, a **related passage**, also speaks about the saints of old serving Christians. The **key word** revealed means to have something made known by divine revelation. As the word is passive in voice, it was God who did the revealing to these prophets. The **key word** minister literally refers to a servant who waits on tables. This imagery emphasizes that the prophecies of the Old Testament benefitted those who would read them later.

2. Preached by the preachers (1:12b)

The Old Testament prophets spoke what God revealed to them. The preachers of the New Testament reported what the prophets revealed. The **key word** reported means to announce or openly declare. Their primary means of announcing included preaching the gospel or good news of Jesus Christ. God used the Holy Spirit to reveal the gospel truth to the preachers. During the time of the apostles’ preaching, the New Testament was in the process of being written. It should be noted that the Bible for the first-century preachers primarily included the Old Testament. Today, preachers have the full Word of God whereby they can make known the whole counsel of God.

3. Looked into by the angels (1:12c)

Peter closes 1:12 with an interesting phrase, “which things the angels desire to look into” (1:12c). The **key phrase**, “to look into,” means to stoop or bend over to make a closer inspection of something. Angels, who do not experience salvation, possess an inquisitive nature about the prophecies of God and their fulfillment. The Old Testament depicts this beautifully with regards to the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16. On this day the high priest would place droplets of blood from a bull and goat upon the mercy seat in the tabernacle/temple. On top of the mercy seat were two Cherubim (angels) made of gold. They had outstretched wings with their faces looking down upon the mercy seat as if longing to look into this atoning work.

Leader’s Guide: When the subject in a sentence does the action of the verb, the voice is considered active. When the subject in the sentence receives the action of the verb, the voice is considered passive.

Leader’s Guide: The Greek word that is translated “to look into” in 1:12c is also used of Peter stooping down and looking into the empty tomb of Jesus in Luke 24:12 and John 20:5.

Leader’s Guide: The mercy seat sat on top of the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place located in the inner part of the tabernacle/temple. The ark of the covenant contained a jar of manna, the Ten Commandments, and Aaron’s rod that budded (Hebrews 9:4).

Part Two: The Actions of Believers (1:13)

The prophets faithfully prophesied what God revealed to them. As in Peter's day and also our day, preachers faithfully preach the message of the gospel led by the Holy Spirit. Peter now speaks of what believers must do in response to this glorious message. He mentions two specific **commands** *believers should obey*.

A. Believers should prepare their minds for action (1:13a-b)

The **first** command states to "gird up the loins of your mind" (1:13a). This is an unusual phrase that literally refers to a man securing his outer garment with a belt when he is engaged in vigorous activity. Peter uses this phrase in a figurative sense with an emphasis on a believer preparing his mind for action. In Romans 12:2, a **related passage**, the apostle Paul commanded believers to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. Believers must have their thinking directed toward spiritual things. What one thinks about truly does matter.

Along with this first command, Peter mentions for believers to "be sober." While on the surface this phrase sounds like a command, it is actually used in conjunction with the first command. Together, the two phrases could be translated as "gird up the loins of your mind *while* being sober." The Christian life should be characterized by one who exhibits such self-control and demonstrates the power of God at work. **In what ways can you keep your thought processes clear and demonstrate self-control in your life?**

B. Believers should completely fix their hope on grace (1:13c)

The **second** command is for believers to "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:13c). The **key word** hope, which is the main part of the command, refers to sure confidence or expectation. In today's modern language, the word hope is often used with a sense of uncertainty. We hope for something that may or may not come to pass. In contrast, Peter commands the believer to hope "to the end" or completely for grace. God's grace is not an uncertain concept, but something sure in the believer's life.

The ultimate experience of God's grace will be brought to believers at the "revelation of Jesus Christ." This **key phrase** speaks of the time of Christ's return, which is the believer's ultimate hope! Do not forget that Peter wrote to Christians experiencing persecution. Placing a focus on the believer's ultimate hope serves as great encouragement for those experiencing hard times on this earth. Believers today should possess this same hope!

Part Three: The Obedience of Believers (1:14-16)

A. Negatively—Do not be conformed (1:14)

Apart from the specific commands that Peter gave his readers in 1:13, they are also to live a life of obedience. Their obedience is marked first by what they should not do, "not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts" (1:14a). The **key word** fashioning or conforming refers to pressing something into a mold. Believers should not be conformed to their former lusts which they did in ignorance (1:14b). The idea behind the word "ignorance" speaks of what they did

Leader's Guide: The **key phrase** "be sober" literally refers to abstaining from wine or avoiding intoxication, but it is not limited to this idea. It is more likely, according to the context, that Peter has the figurative meaning in mind referring to self-control or being clear headed which helps believers to prepare their minds for action.

Active Learning

Ask your learners if they have trouble with self control. Suggest that having accountability to someone assists in one's self-control.

in their spiritually lost condition. The apostle Paul also commands believers not to be conformed to this world in Romans 12:2, a **related passage**.

B. Positively—Be holy (1:15-16)

Secondly, this obedience is marked positively with the command to be holy in **contrast** to conforming to former lusts. The **key word** holy refers to one who is set apart. Noted as a **comparison**, believers are commanded to be holy like the God who called them (1:15a). The **key word** called in this context means to invite or summon one to salvation. This demonstrates the initiative God takes in our salvation, which is similar to how He causes believers to be born again as mentioned in 1:3, the **immediate context**. God desires His children to be like Him in holiness. Peter goes on to say that believers should be holy in “all manner of conversation” (1:15b). This **key phrase** refers to more than a conversation, but one’s overall conduct or behavior. Holiness should impact every area of our lives. Therefore, holiness is more than the mere absence of sin but relates to upright behavior before God.

Peter quotes Leviticus 11:44-45 in 1:16 to demonstrate the reason why believers should be holy. Note the **cause and effect** within the quote, “You shall be holy (effect) for I am holy (cause).” Truly, the believer needs no other reason to strive for holiness than the fact that the holy God who called them has commanded their holiness. **How does your life demonstrate holiness?**

Conclusion

The Old Testament prophets got it right! They prophesied about the sufferings of Christ, and, at the appropriate time in history, Jesus came to earth and fulfilled what they prophesied. The prophets served future believers well with their prophecies and the preachers of Peter’s day proclaimed them accurately. Because of the faithfulness of the prophets and the preachers, people believed, and their belief resulted in actions of obedience and striving for holiness. **Praise God** for the prophets and preachers who impacted our lives from long ago!

Apply It

- **Praise God** for the prophets who faithfully served future believers.
- **Praise God** for the preachers who do and have faithfully preached the gospel as led by the Holy Spirit.
- **Obey the command . . .**
 - to prepare your mind for action.
 - to fix your hope completely in God’s grace.
 - to live a holy life before God

Leader’s Guide: The quote from Leviticus 11:44-45 is also stated in Leviticus 19:2.

Active Learning

Ask learners to respond to this question. **“How does your life demonstrate holiness?”**

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson Aim:

The learner will come to know the truth that God redeems believers through the precious blood of the perfect Christ.

LESSON 3: THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF THE PERFECT LAMB

1 Peter 1:17-21 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:17-21

Guided Bible Study

This lesson option provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson commentary.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
call, pass the time, fear, redeemed, foreordained, conversation, without blemish
2. What are the cause/effect relationships in the passage?
Since believers can call upon God as "Father" who judges all impartially, they should "pass the time" of their sojourning or course of life in fear (effect; 1:17c).
3. What comparison do you note in this passage?
Jesus to a lamb "without blemish" and "without spot."
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?
Price of redemption could not be paid through corruptible things, but, Christ secured the true price of redemption through His own blood! (1:19a).

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
Peter reminded believers in 1:3, that they are spiritually begotten of God. In 1:15-16, the Scripture commands believers to be holy as God is holy.
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Call (1:17a); "Pass the time" (1:17c). Fear; Redeemed; Foreordained
3. What related passages need to be considered?
Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; Hebrews 11:9-10, 13.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
To behave yourself in reverence as you sojourn on this earth.
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
God redeems believers through the precious blood of Christ; Christ is the unblemished and spotless Lamb of God; Christ was foreknown before the
3. Is there a command to obey in this passage?
Believers can appeal to the One who is the greatest of all; He is impartial when He judges; Our faith and hope are in God.

Get Attention:

Ask learners to define "redeem." Read Leviticus 25:47-49 and discuss how a slave could be redeemed and set free. This lesson describes the believer's spiritual redemption, which Christ himself paid.

God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory (causes), so that our faith and hope might be in God (effects; 1:21b).

foundation of the world; Christ is the basis for a person's personal belief in God for salvation; God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will come to know the truth that God redeems believers through the precious blood of the perfect Christ.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:17-21

Get Attention:

Ask learners to define “redeem.” Read Leviticus 25:47-49 and discuss how a slave could be redeemed and set free. This lesson describes the believer’s spiritual redemption, which Christ himself paid.

Lesson 3: The Precious Blood of the Perfect Lamb

1 Peter 1:17-21 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: God the Father (1:17)

A. How believers address God (1:17a)

B. How God judges (1:17b)

C. How believers live before God (1:17c)

Part Two: The Blood of Christ (1:18-19)

A. How believers are NOT redeemed (1:18)

B. How believers ARE redeemed (1:19)

1. Christ’s blood is precious (1:19a)
2. Christ, the giver of the blood, is perfect (1:19b)

Part Three: The Person of Christ (1:20-21)

A. He was foreordained (1:20a)

B. He was manifested (1:20b)

C. He is the basis of a person’s belief (1:21)

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that
 - God redeems believers through the precious blood of Christ.
- **Obey the command** to behave yourself in reverence as you sojourn on this earth.
- **Praise God** that
 - believers can appeal to the One who is the greatest of all.
 - He is impartial when He judges.
 - Our faith and hope are in God.

- Christ is the unblemished and spotless Lamb of God.
- Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world.
- Christ is the basis for a person’s personal belief in God for salvation.
- God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 3: The Precious Blood of the Perfect Lamb

1 Peter 1:17-21 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will come to know the truth that God redeems believers through the precious blood of the perfect Christ.

Introduction

Many people are tempted to believe that money is the “cure-all” to their problems. People think sometimes, “All difficulties in life would cease if I just had more money.” Certainly, people need money to pay bills and secure their necessary needs; but, money cannot solve everything. Sometimes the presence of more money can bring more difficulties. Money most definitely cannot fix a person’s sin problem nor secure one’s salvation. God provided something far greater to secure what people could not secure for themselves. Jesus Christ became God’s great provision for mankind. This lesson emphasizes this all-important truth.

Part One: God the Father (1:17)

Before discussing the precious blood from the perfect Christ, it is important to understand the One who sent Christ to this earth. Through Christ, believers can address God a certain way, know that God judges without partiality, and live a righteous life before God.

A. How believers address God (1:17a)

The writer of this lesson can address Lance Hellwig as “Dad,” because he was physically born from him. Peter reminded believers in 1:3, the **immediate context**, that they are spiritually begotten of God. This spiritual birth experience affords believers the right to call God “Father.” Peter stated at the beginning of 1:17, “And if ye call on the Father” (1:17a). The word “if” in that quote makes it sound like Peter’s readers possibly might or might not call God “Father.” However, Peter actually stated a fact instead of a probable condition. The grammar of the original language of the New Testament (Greek) affirms Peter’s confident statement. The word “since” translates the original language more precisely than “if.” The believers in Peter’s day could most definitely call God “Father” as can believers today.

Do not miss the **key word** call in 1:17a. This word means to address someone who is greater. This word was used when appealing to a higher court. Peter used the same root word in 1:15, the **immediate context**, when referring to God who has called believers. The particular form of the word in 1:17a carries the sense of an intense calling by the one who calls, thus refers to believers making a strong appeal to God as Father. **Praise God** that believers can appeal to the One who is the greatest of all!

B. How God judges (1:17b)

The One believers call “Father” judges all men “without respect of persons” (1:17b). This **key phrase** means that God is impartial and does not take a person’s position or status into account when rendering judgment. Not only is God impartial in His character, but believers have equal status before God. No one’s social or economic status allows him or her to have a better relationship with God compared to others. All believers can call God “Father” and know that He will judge their works

Lesson Aim:

The learner will come to know the truth that God redeems believers through the precious blood of the perfect Christ.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:17-21

Get Attention:

Ask learners to define “redeem.” Read Leviticus 25:47-49 and discuss how a slave could be redeemed and set free. This lesson describes the believer’s spiritual redemption, which Christ himself paid.

Leader’s Guide: Some translations of Scripture do capture the nuance of the Greek here by translating the beginning of 1:17 with “since,” but most translate with the word as “if.”

Leader’s Guide: The Greek New Testament contains three different types of conditional statements. The one used in 1:17a is called a first class condition. This means that the writer is stating a true condition, or a statement of fact. Therefore, the helping word “since” makes more sense here, instead of “if.”

Leader's Guide: It is important to note here that good works are not needed for salvation, nor are we talking about a moralistic approach to salvation (i.e., doing good works to earn God's salvation). However, true salvation should result in good works for the glory of God. So, our lives lived before God as believers will be reviewed at the judgment (1 Corinthians 3:13-15).

impartially.

Notice the Scripture states that God judges "according to every man's work." The word "work," in context, relates to the believer's work beyond salvation. All believers will stand before God one day and give an account of the work or good deeds they have done, as Paul reminds us in Romans 14:10 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, **related passages**.

C. How believers live before God (1:17c)

Here is where the word "since" makes more sense in 1:17. Stated as a **cause and effect**, because or since believers can call upon God as "Father" who judges all impartially, they should "pass the time" of their sojourning or course of life in fear (effect; 1:17c). This **key phrase** refers to one's moral conduct or behavior. This links well to 1:15-16, the **immediate context**, where the Scripture commands believers to be holy as God is holy.

While living at home with his dad, this writer knew that certain behaviors were expected. God the Father expects believers to behave a certain way. Believers should specifically pass the time "in fear." The **key word** fear refers to a holy reverence for God. Knowing that God will judge their deeds, believers should live their lives seriously before Him in fear or respect for Him.

The idea of sojourning should remind believers of the temporary nature of this life. Abraham and the patriarchs of the Old Testament also viewed themselves as sojourners as noted in Hebrews 11:9-10, 13, a **related passage**. **How has your behavior been before God lately?**

Part Two: The Blood of Christ (1:18-19)

Christ's blood is key to the forgiveness of sins as aptly stated in Hebrews 9:11-14, 22, a **related passage**. Peter reminded his readers of the importance of Christ's blood in the verses that follow.

A. How believers are NOT redeemed (1:18)

Peter answered the all-important question of how God redeems people in 1:18-19. He did so first by stating how a person is NOT redeemed. Peter wrote, "Forasmuch as you know," which literally means *you know and continue to know*. Believers know that they are NOT redeemed through corruptible or perishable things like gold and silver. The **key word** redeemed means to deliver or set free by way of a payment. In the Old Testament, a slave could be set free through the payment of a redemption price (see Leviticus 25:47-49), but no money paid can purchase one's spiritual redemption or salvation. The believer's spiritual redemption includes the payment of sin's penalty, which Christ himself paid.

Peter also reminded these readers what they inherited, "your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers" (1:18b). The **key word** conversation comes from the same Greek root word translated as "pass the time" in 1:17 and refers once again to one's behavior. Peter reminded them of a time when they lived in ignorance in 1:14, the **immediate context**. People inherit the same old sinful ways from their predecessors that can never pay the price of their redemption, according to Romans 5:12, a **related passage**. The world needed something greater, and God provided just that.

B. How believers ARE redeemed (1:19)

1. Christ's blood is precious (1:19a)

The price of redemption could not be paid through corruptible things, but, in **contrast**, Christ secured the true price of redemption through His own blood! (1:19a). Ephesians 1:7, a **related passage**, also clearly notes the redemption through Christ's blood. Remember, the word "redeemed" refers to a payment that is made. The payment of sin through Christ's blood was the only payment that would secure salvation for mankind. Peter described Christ's blood as precious, which refers to what is costly or of great worth.

2. Christ, the giver of the blood, is perfect (1:19b)

Not only is the blood described, but Peter **compared** Jesus to a lamb "without blemish" and "without spot," great **truths to believe**. The first **key phrase** means to show no fault or something absent of any defect. The sacrificial animals of the Old Testament had to be without blemish and defect as noted in Leviticus 22:19-21, a **related passage**. The second **key phrase** refers to that which is pure and clean. Jesus as the Lamb of God possessed no defects and was pure having no sin in His life. These two phrases together provide an image of Jesus as perfect, which He is!

Part Three: The Person of Christ (1:20-21)

Peter moved from the discussion of Jesus' blood and His perfection as a sacrifice, to mentioning specific things about His person.

A. He was foreordained (1:20a)

Peter noted first about the person of Christ that He was "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1:20a). The **key word** foreordained means to know something beforehand. In this case, God knew it and set it in place. This is also a **repeated word** from 1:2, where Peter referred to believers as elect or chosen "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." The prophets of the Old Testament prophesied about Jesus coming to earth as noted in 1:10-11, the **immediate context**. While this is true, 1:20b clearly states that Christ's existence predated His coming to earth as He existed in eternity past long "before the foundation of the world," a **truth to believe**.

The above **key phrase**, which means before Creation or time, is noted as quite important in several **related passages** in the New Testament. Some of these passages refer to Jesus, while others refer to believers. Jesus stated that the Father loved Him before the foundation of the world in John 17:24. John further noted Jesus as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world in Revelation 13:8. Paul referred to believers as chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world in Ephesians 1:4. John referred to believers as having their names written in the book of life before the foundation of the world in Revelation 13:8. All of these Scripture references remind the believer that before time began, the Father knew of Christ's coming and the existence of believers.

B. He was manifested (1:20b)

The second thing Peter conveyed about Jesus is that He was manifested. Even though Jesus was foreknown before the foundation of the world, Peter noted in **contrast** that He "was manifest in these last times for you" (1:20b). The **key word** manifest means to reveal or make something known. The prophets of the Old

Leader's Guide: Peter mentions the word "redeemed" is only used once in his letter. The words "redeem," "redeemed," and "redemption" are used a total of 18 times in the New Testament.

Active Learning

Ask learners to respond to this question. Do not embarrass anyone by putting them on the spot. Ask if anyone would like to share the last time they witnessed to someone. Take a moment to pray for a lost friend or loved one.

Testament prophesied about Him and the preachers of Peter's day preached about Him (1:12). Through the prophets and the preachers, God revealed His Son to the world. May we continue to make Jesus manifest today so that many more can come to the knowledge of the truth. **When was the last time you witnessed to someone about Jesus?**

C. He is the basis of a person's belief (1:21)

The third item Peter noted about Jesus is that through Jesus, people become believers in God (1:21a). Jesus is the basis of the believer's faith. Peter further marked two important **truths to believe** regarding this basis of our faith: God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory (1:21b). Scripture notes belief in Christ's resurrection as a requirement for salvation. Paul clearly agreed as stated in Romans 10:9, a **related passage**, that one must confess Jesus as Lord and believe in his heart that God raised Him from the dead. When Jesus completed His work on the cross and rose from the dead, Scripture states that God highly exalted Him in Philippians 2:9-11, another **related passage**. This relates to God giving Jesus glory. Noted as a **cause and effect**, God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory (causes), so that our faith and hope might be in God (effects; 1:21b). **Praise God** for these wonderful effects!

Conclusion

God possesses only one plan of redemption regardless of what other religions or some mistaken Christians might say. To state it as clearly as possible, any other way than the way God prescribes in His Word is the wrong way. Such a statement does not reek of arrogance but is simply the most profound truth in the world. Christ, the perfect Lamb of God came to this earth to shed His precious blood so that we might become believers in God. The Heavenly Father required the blood and life of His Son to redeem mankind. May God impress this truth upon your heart!

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that . . .
 - God redeems believers through the precious blood of Christ.
 - Christ is the unblemished and spotless Lamb of God.
 - Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world.
 - Christ is the basis for one's personal belief in God for salvation.
 - God raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory.
- **Obey the command** to behave yourself in reverence as you sojourn on this earth.
- **Praise God** that . . .
 - believers can appeal to the One who is the greatest of all.
 - He is impartial when He judges.
 - Our faith and hope are in God

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

LESSON 4: BORN AGAIN TO LOVE AND GROW

1 Peter 1:22—2:3 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
"Purified your souls," Unfeigned, Abideth, preached, "Laying aside," Pure
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Desire the spiritual pure milk (cause) so that you will grow (effect; 2:2b).
3. What comparisons do you note in this passage? '
All "flesh" and the "glory of man" to the grass that withers and the flower that falls off (1:24). Just like a baby who longs for his or her mother's milk, so the believer should
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?
Believers are born again not from corruptible seed, but incorruptible seed (1:23a);
Temporary nature of man comes the permanent nature of the Word of God.

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
God redeems believers through the precious blood of Christ (1:19).
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
"Purified your souls;" Unfeigned; Abideth; Preached; "Laying aside;" Pure
3. What related passages need to be considered?
2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 119:89

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
That He is gracious!
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
°believers are born again by the incorruptible Word of God.
°the Word of God lives and abides forever.
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
Of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and evil speakings.
4. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
°love one another with a pure heart fervently.
°desire the sincere milk of the Word.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will come to know the truth that believers are born again by the Word of God, and that born-again experience should result in true love and growth as a Christian.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:22—2:3

Get Attention:

Ask learners to respond to the question; How important is the Word of God? As explained in the conclusion of the lesson, without it, a person cannot be born again. God uses His incorruptible Word as a means by which He causes one to be born again. Once a person is truly born again, he or she must live such a life before God and the world which exemplifies their born-again status. Then, to maintain continual growth, the believer must desire the spiritual pure milk of God's Word.

→ desire God's Word.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will come to know the truth that believers are born again by the Word of God, and that born-again experience should result in true love and growth as a Christian.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:22—2:3

Get Attention:

Ask learners to respond to the question; How important is the Word of God? As explained in the conclusion of the lesson, without it, a person cannot be born again. God uses His incorruptible Word as a means by which He causes one to be born again. Once a person is truly born again, he or she must live such a life before God and the world which exemplifies their born-again status. Then, to maintain continual growth, the believer must desire the spiritual pure milk of God's Word.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 4: Born Again to Love and Grow

1 Peter 1:22—2:3 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Proof of A Purified Soul (1:22)

A. Obedience to the truth (1:22a)

B. Love for believers (1:22b-c)

Part Two: How the Believer is Born Again (1:23-25)

A. The incorruptible Word of God (1:23)

1. The Word of God lives forever (1:23a)
2. The Word of God abides forever (1:23b)

B. The temporary vs. the permanent (1:24-25a)

Part Three: The Results of a Born Again Life (2:1-3)

A. Believers should lay aside certain behaviors (2:1)

1. Malice (2:1a)
2. Guile (2:1b)
3. Hypocrisies (2:1c)
4. Envy (2:1d)
5. Evil speaking (2:1e)

B. Believers should desire the Word of God (2:2-3)

1. The command to desire the Word (2:2a)
2. The purpose for the command (2:2b)
3. The motivation for the command (2:3)

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that . . .
 - ° believers are born again by the incorruptible Word of God.
- **Avoid the errors**
 - ° of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envy, and evil speakings.
- **Obey the commands**
 - ° love one another with a pure heart fervently.
- **Praise God**
 - ° that He is gracious!

° the Word of God lives and abides forever.

° desire the sincere milk of the Word.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 4: Born Again to Love and Grow

1 Peter 1:22—2:3 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will come to know the truth that believers are born again by the Word of God, and that born-again experience should result in true love and growth as a Christian.

Introduction

People can make a variety of claims about themselves, but can they back those claims up with action? For instance, I could claim to be the world's greatest brain surgeon. That is quite a claim! But place a scalpel in my hand and direct me to operate on a person's brain, and you would soon find out that I cannot back up such a claim. Similarly, being a genuine, born-again believer is accompanied by action on one's part. It is evidenced by more than a claim; it must be observable through real spiritual fruit.

Part One: The Proof of A Purified Soul (1:22)

God alone possesses the power to save a person from his or her sins. The **key phrase**, "purified your souls" appears to be synonymous with salvation in this verse (1:22a). The grammar of the word purified speaks of a completed action with continuing results, "having purified and continuing to be purified." One would expect the action of the verb to be directed toward God as the One doing the purifying. But instead, the voice is active, which indicates that the recipients of the letter are accomplishing the action. What Peter indicated by this construction concerns the proof of a purified soul. The believer demonstrates proof of a purified soul through certain actions.

A. Obedience to the truth (1:22a)

The first proof involves obedience to the truth. The believer's desire to adhere to and follow God's truth marks a sure way to spot a true believer, demonstrating that such a person does indeed possess a purified soul. The believer accomplishes this obedience "through the Spirit." The likely reference here is to the Holy Spirit. Believers need the Spirit's presence and power to remain obedient to God's truth.

B. Love for believers (1:22b-c)

Love for other believers marks a second proof of a purified soul. The text specifically states, "unto unfeigned love of the brethren" (1:22b). The **key word** unfeigned means sincere or genuine. Our love for one another does not need to be fake, but genuine. The word for "love" here specifically refers to brotherly love. Peter had in mind for believers to love each other. According to 1:6-7, the recipients of this letter faced persecution. Believers need each other's love during difficult times. Peter commanded the believers to love each other "fervently," which means eagerly or earnestly. May we always seek to **obey the command** to love our brothers and sisters in Christ with an eager and earnest spirit.

Part Two: How the Believer is Born Again (1:23-25)

According to 1:19, the **immediate context**, God redeems believers through

Lesson Aim:

The learner will come to know the truth that believers are born again by the Word of God, and that born-again experience should result in true love and growth as a Christian.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 1:22—2:3

Get Attention:

Ask learners to respond to the question; How important is the Word of God? As explained in the conclusion of the lesson, without it, a person cannot be born again. God uses His incorruptible Word as a means by which He causes one to be born again. Once a person is truly born again, he or she must live such a life before God and the world which exemplifies their born-again status. Then, to maintain continual growth, the believer must desire the spiritual pure milk of God's Word.

Leader's Guide: In grammar, voice refers to the relationship between the subject and the verb. When the voice is active, the subject is doing the action of the verb. In 1:22, the subject is the recipients of the letter, and so they are purifying their souls (i.e., giving proof of their purified souls) through certain actions.

Leader's Guide: Not all versions contain the phrase "through the Spirit." Some Greek manuscripts do not contain this phrase.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word for "love" in 1:22b is *phileos* (fil-a-ahs). From this word we get the city name Philadelphia, which is known as the "City of Brotherly Love."

Active Learning

Define for your learners what it means to be born again. This phrase refers to one's spiritual birth or salvation.

Leader's Guide: In Greek grammar, the tense of the verb translated, "being born again" is the Perfect tense. This tense indicates completed action in past time with ongoing results. In this case, the believer is born again and will forever have a born-again status. Being born again is more than just turning over a new leaf or striving to do better in life. Being born again refers to an inward change or spiritual rebirth that only God can do.

Leader's Guide: Remind your learners that the Word of God is sufficient not only to bring about a person's salvation, but to assist that person in a lifetime of spiritual growth and maturity.

Leader's Guide: Some manuscripts do not read "glory of man," but rather "it's glory" referring to the glory of the grass, which would be its flower. The point, however, remains. Human flesh in all of its God-given glory does not last forever.

Leader's Guide: James 4:14, a **related passage**, describes man's time on this earth as a vapor, which appears for a while and then vanishes.

the precious blood of Christ. In 1:23-25, Peter wrote about what God uses to bring about their born-again status.

A. The incorruptible Word of God (1:23)

1. The Word of God lives forever (1:23a)

After writing about how believers demonstrate proof of their purified souls in 1:22, Peter mentioned that the believers are born again not from corruptible seed, but in **contrast**, incorruptible seed (1:23a). The phrase "being born again" speaks of God's action on behalf of the believer. The believer does not birth himself spiritually, but God Himself performs this work. Also, from a grammatical standpoint, the believer is born again at a certain point in time and continues to have that status without end! **Believe the truth** that believers are born again by the incorruptible Word of God.

The incorruptible seed refers to the Word. God plants the seed of His Word in the believer's heart which results in a born-again experience. God's Word is incorruptible meaning that it is unable to perish. Since it cannot perish, Peter described it further as living forever. The Word of God is unlike any other writing in that it literally lives. God breathed life into it through inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16) and therefore it is alive as emphasized by Hebrews 4:12, a **related passage**.

2. The Word of God abides forever (1:23b)

Not only does the Word live forever, but it abides forever (1:23b). The **key word** abideth means that the Word remains. Many have attacked the Word of God through the centuries. The attackers have come and gone, but God's Word remains. The Psalmist stated in the **related passage** of Psalm 119:89, "Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." **Believe the truth** that God's Word lives and abides forever.

B. The temporary vs. the permanent (1:24-25a)

Peter **compared** all "flesh" and the "glory of man" to the grass that withers and the flower that falls off (1:24). The "glory of man" is a reference to one whom God creates in His own image. Mankind does not live forever on this earth but eventually dies. In **contrast** to the temporary nature of man is the permanent nature of the Word of God, "But the word of the Lord endureth forever" (1:25a). The word "endureth" comes from the same Greek word translated as "abideth" in 1:23. 1 Peter 1:24-25a is a quote from Isaiah 40:6-8. Isaiah emphasized in this chapter that the Lord has spoken. What God speaks will come to pass; therefore, His Word endures forever.

C. The importance of preaching the gospel (1:25b)

The living and abiding Word of God must be preached. Peter reminded his recipients that this was the very Word that was preached to them. The **key word** preached refers to proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Earlier he referred to the gospel preached to them by others through the Holy Spirit (1:12). That same Word must be preached today. There can be no substitute for the preaching of God's Word, for this is what people need to hear.

Part Three: The Results of a Born-Again Life (2:1-3)

God uses His incorruptible Word to bring about a person's spiritual birth.

The moment of being born again marks a starting point in the believer's walk with the Lord. That experience should result in proper behaviors and a proper desire.

A. Believers should lay aside certain behaviors (2:1)

The **key phrase** "laying aside" literally refers to the removal of clothing (2:1). Peter employed this key phrase (which is one word in Greek) in a figurative sense of getting rid of something in one's life. He mentions five specific things that must be laid aside, all of which can be identified as **key words** and clear **errors to avoid**. Also, notice that the word "all" is associated with the words listed.

1. Malice (2:1a)

The first behavior a believer must lay aside is "malice." This word refers to evil or wickedness. God clearly calls the believer to holiness as noted in 1:16-17, the **immediate context**. There is absolutely no room for wickedness in a believer who is called to be holy.

2. Guile (2:1b)

The second behavior a believer must lay aside is "guile." This word refers to deceit. Peter already mentioned that believers must exhibit obedience to the truth. Deceit results in the opposite of truth. May believers always strive to deal with one another truthfully and never exhibit a spirit of guile toward anyone.

3. Hypocrisies (2:1c)

The third behavior a believer must lay aside is "hypocrisies." This word speaks of one who pretends to be something he is not. Earlier, Peter stressed the need to love one another with sincerity (1:22). We do not sincerely love one another if we are only putting on a show.

4. Envies (2:1d)

Fourthly, believers should lay aside "envies." This word refers to jealousy. Believers who truly love each other do not become jealous of one another. Rather, a believer who demonstrates genuine love for a fellow believer rejoices when good happens to him. This relates to covetousness, which the Word of God forbids in the tenth commandment (see Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21).

5. Evil speaking (2:1e)

The last or fifth behavior to lay aside is "evil speaking." This word refers to slander or tearing down someone else with words. Again, this particular behavior violates Peter's previous command to love the brothers. Believers should be in the business of building each other up with their words, not tearing down. Believers should never exhibit this kind of behavior.

B. Believers should desire the Word of God (2:2-3)

A precise translation of the first part of 2:1 would be, "after laying aside." Once the believer lays aside the sinful behaviors mentioned in 2:1, it is time to replace them with something better.

1. The command to desire the Word (2:2a)

Peter begins 2:2 with an interesting **comparison**. Just like a baby who longs

Leader's Guide: Laying aside certain behaviors can also be detected in Romans 13:12; Ephesians 4:22, 25; Colossians 3:8; Hebrews 12:1; James 1:21.

Leader's Guide: Remind your learners that the recipients of this letter suffered persecution at the hands of others who acted maliciously and wicked toward them. Believers are not to respond in kind.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word translated, "hypocrisies," was originally used of actors on a stage. An actor plays the part of someone else, thus a hypocrite pretends to be something he is not.

Leader's Guide: Those persecuting Peter's recipients experienced such slander from them.

for his or her mother's milk, so the believer should desire God's Word. The word for milk in 2:2a likely refers to the Word of God. Peter described the Word as both spiritual and sincere or pure. The **key word** sincere refers to what is not watered down. Believers should desire the pure Word of God, and never settle for some watered-down version. Watered-down milk cannot be detected with the naked eye, only when one drinks it. May we as believers **obey the command** to desire the sincere milk of the Word.

2. The purpose for the command (2:2b)

Stated as a **cause and effect**, Peter clearly states the purpose of why he commanded his recipients to desire God's Word. Desire the spiritual, pure milk (cause) so that you will grow (effect; 2:2b). Just as babies need milk to grow, so believers need God's Word to grow. If a baby never shows any signs of growth, the parents become worried and take their baby to the doctor to determine what is wrong. We should be even more concerned when a believer does not grow. And no growth will occur apart from the Word of God.

3. The motivation for the command (2:3)

Peter is just as clear as to the motivation behind desiring God's Word, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (2:3). The word "if" could be translated using the word "since." Peter is not questioning whether the Lord is gracious or not, he is rather stating a fact concerning the gracious nature of the Lord. Just like a mother's milk tastes good to a baby, so the Word of God demonstrates the gracious nature of the Lord, a sweet taste indeed to the believer! **Praise God** that He is gracious!

Conclusion

How important is the Word of God? Without it, a person cannot be born again. God uses His incorruptible Word as a means by which He causes one to be born again. Once a person is truly born again, he or she must live such a life before God and the world which exemplifies their born-again status. Then, to maintain continual growth, the believer must desire the spiritual, pure milk of God's Word. Every believer, no matter the stage of their spiritual growth, must keep the process of growth moving forward. A lack of growth in a believer shows spiritual deficiency that must be corrected. May we keep showing our purified souls through obedience to the truth and sincere love for fellow believers.

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that . . .
 - believers are born again by the incorruptible Word of God.
 - the Word of God lives and abides forever.
- **Avoid the errors** of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and evil speakings.
- **Obey the commands** to . . .
 - love one another with a pure heart fervently.
 - desire the sincere milk of the Word.
- **Praise God** that He is gracious!

Leader's Guide: While 2:3 is not an exact quote, Peter seems to be alluding to Psalm 34:8a

Active Learning

Discuss ways believers can receive the "milk of the Word." The discipline of Bible intake can include: listening to God's Word, reading God's Word, memorizing God's Word, and studying God's Word.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

LESSON 5: JESUS: THE CHIEF CORNER STONE

1 Peter 2:4-12 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson options provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson commentary.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
living stone, shew forth, disallowed, precious, Chief corner stone, offense, peculiar, conversation, day of visitation.
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Because believers have the four-fold status mentioned above, they should "shew forth" praises unto God (effect; 2:9e).
3. What comparisons do you note in this passage?
Jesus to a living stone. While Scripture describes Jesus as a living stone (singular), believers share this **comparison** as living stones (plural).
4. What contrasts do you note in this passage?
Men may reject Jesus as the living stone, but, God perceives Him as chosen and precious (2:4b); Disobedient people who do not place their trust in Jesus (2:7b).

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
Peter encouraged his readers in 2:1-3 to crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Disallowed; Precious; "Chief corner stone; Offence; Peculiar; Conversation; Day of visitation.
3. What related passages need to be considered?
1 Corinthians 3:12-15; Ephesians 2:20; Revelation 1:6: great faith (Hebrews 11:8, 9, 17, 20).

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
° that those who place their trust in Jesus will never be disappointed.
° that as believer we belong to Him and are called to be His special people!
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
Jesus is the Chief Corner Stone.
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
Of stumbling over Jesus and taking offense at Him.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand that just as Jesus is chosen by God as elect and precious, so God chooses believers to be His special people that they might praise Him and serve Him faithfully.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:4-12

Get Attention:

Ask learners if they understand the phrase: "Priesthood of the Believer." Explain that 1 Peter 2:5 is commonly used to refer to the doctrinal teaching known as the "Priesthood of the Believer." While there are specific offices in the church such as pastor and deacon, God gifts every believer to be of service to the body of Christ.

But ye," in **contrast** to those who are disobedient and stumble (2:9). Former time when the Gentiles were not considered God's people, **but** now they are.

° that He took pity on the lost Gentiles to bring them into His fold!

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand that just as Jesus is chosen by God as elect and precious, so God chooses believers to be His special people that they might praise Him and serve Him faithfully.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:4-12

Get Attention:

Ask learners if they understand the phrase: "Priesthood of the Believer." Explain that 1 Peter 2:5 is commonly used to refer to the doctrinal teaching known as the "Priesthood of the Believer." While there are specific offices in the church such as pastor and deacon, God gifts every believer to be of service to the body of Christ.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 5: Jesus: The Chief Corner Stone

1 Peter 2:4-12 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Living Stone and Stones (2:4-5)

A. Jesus as the Living Stone (2:4)

1. How He is perceived by men (2:4a)
2. How He is perceived by God (2:4b)

B. Believers as Living Stones (2:5)

Part Two: Belief vs. Unbelief (2:6-8)

A. The blessing of belief (2:6-7a)

B. The danger of unbelief (2:7b-8)

Part Three: The Description and Function of God's People (2:9-10)

A. The description of God's people (2:9a-d)

1. A chosen generation (2:9a)
2. A royal priesthood (2:9b)
3. A holy nation (2:9c)
4. A peculiar people (2:9d)

B. The purpose of God's people (2:9e)

C. The joy of being called God's people (2:10)

Part Four: Good Behavior and its Results (2:11-12)

A. What believers are to do (2:11-12a)

1. Abstain from fleshly lusts (2:11)
2. Exhibit excellent behavior (2:12a)

B. How believers can impact the lost (2:12b)

Apply It

- Believe the truth
that Jesus is the Chief Corner Stone
- Avoid the error
of stumbling over Jesus and taking offense at Him.
- Praise God
 - *that those who place their trust in Jesus will never be disappointed.*
 - *that as believer we belong to Him and are called to be His special people!*
 - *that He took pity on the lost Gentiles to bring them into His fold!*

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 5: Jesus: The Chief Corner Stone

1 Peter 2:4-12 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand that just as Jesus was chosen by God as elect and precious, so God chooses believers to be His special people so that they might praise Him and serve Him faithfully.

Introduction

Peter encouraged his readers in 2:1-3, the **immediate context**, to crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word. That same Word caused their spiritual rebirth (1:23). God also used the Word to facilitate the believer's spiritual growth. Every believer should want to crave His Word since they have "tasted that the Lord is gracious." The epistle now turns its attention toward describing the Lord and believers in more detail.

Part One: The Living Stone and Stones (2:4-5)

A. Jesus as the Living Stone (2:4)

Peter **compared** Jesus to a living stone. The **key phrase** "living stone" seems like an unusual phrase. After all, a stone does not possess any qualities of life. A stone or rock is best described simply as matter. However, the comparison to Jesus as a rock speaks volumes regarding His dependability.

1. How He is perceived by men (2:4a)

We will notice different responses to Jesus as the stone throughout this passage. The text begins with how men or people, in general, perceive Him. Peter stated that this living stone has been "disallowed indeed of men" (2:4a). The **key word** disallowed means to throw something out after testing it, thus, to reject it. Jesus is certainly no stranger to rejection as He experienced rejection by His own people, as noted in John 1:11, a **related passage**. They tested Jesus according to their perception of what the Messiah would be. They looked for a military leader or one with earthly authority. Jesus did not pass "their" test, and so they rejected Him. Sadly, people today continue to reject Jesus.

2. How He is perceived by God (2:4b)

Man's perception is one thing; God's perception is another. Men may reject Jesus as the living stone, but, in **contrast**, God perceives Him as chosen and precious (2:4b). Peter already referred to believers by using the word "chosen" (elect) in 1:2. He now refers to the living stone as chosen of God. The Heavenly Father noted the approval of His Son when Jesus was baptized, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The **key word** precious means to honor, respect, or esteem someone highly. No one deserves greater honor than Jesus! Men may reject Jesus, but the Father has respected Him.

B. Believers as Living Stones (2:5)

While Scripture describes Jesus as a living stone (singular), believers share this comparison as living stones (plural). Peter further **compared** believers to being "built up a spiritual house" and as a "holy priesthood." Just as a house can be built by fitting stones together, so God builds His spiritual household with believers who

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand that just as Jesus is chosen by God as elect and precious, so God chooses believers to be His special people that they might praise Him and serve Him faithfully.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:4-12

Get Attention:

Ask learners if they understand the phrase: "Priesthood of the Believer." Explain that 1 Peter 2:5 is commonly used to refer to the doctrinal teaching known as the "Priesthood of the Believer." While there are specific offices in the church such as pastor and deacon, God gifts every believer to be of service to the body of Christ.

Leader's Guide: God spoke again concerning His Son at the Transfiguration noted in Matthew 17:5.

Leader's Guide: In Romans 12:1, the apostle Paul also talks about how believers are to present their bodies as a living and holy sacrifice. Doing this is acceptable before God and becomes our spiritual service of worship.

Leader's Guide: 1 Peter 2:5 is commonly used to refer to the doctrinal teaching known as the "Priesthood of the Believer." While there are specific offices in the church such as pastor and deacon, God gifts every believer to be of service to the body of Christ. Lists of spiritual gifts can be found in Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, and Ephesians 4:11-12. Another focus of the Priesthood of the Believer is that every believer has direct access to God, Jesus Christ being the only mediator needed to approach the Heavenly Father.

Leader's Guide: The meaning of chief corner stone can also refer to a capstone in a building or arch-like structure, which helps to keep the other stones secure. The better meaning for 1 Peter 2:6 is a foundation stone since this best fits the context of Isaiah 28:16.

Leader's Guide: Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16 in 1 Peter 2:6. The verse in Isaiah reads, "he that believeth shall not make haste." It is important here to note that Peter is quoting from the Septuagint (LXX) version of the Old Testament, which matches the quote as Peter uses it in the New Testament. The LXX is a Greek translation of the Old Testament that was well accepted in the first century. Even Jesus quoted from the LXX (example: Luke 4:18-19, where Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2).

work together as a holy priesthood. Note the description of this priesthood as "holy." Peter already reminded his recipients of the need to be holy in 1:15-16, a quote from Leviticus 11:44-45. In mentioning the priesthood, we see Peter's use of the Old Testament, particularly Leviticus, which describes regulations for priests.

The priests of the Old Testament served God faithfully in and around the temple. They offered animal sacrifices to God according to God's laws. These sacrifices performed in the right way became pleasing and acceptable before God. Believers likewise offer up acceptable "spiritual" sacrifices unto God as they live in obedience to His Word. These spiritual sacrifices are performed "through" Jesus as the agent through whom this work is accomplished.

God no longer requires animal sacrifices since Jesus' fulfillment as the ultimate sacrifice upon the cross. Such sacrifices God requires of believers today include the good works believers do in their service to God. Paul reminds believers in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, a **related passage**, that good works done in the right way, when passing through the fire of God's judgment, will come forth like precious gold or silver. But, works done in the wrong way will be burned up like wood, hay, and stubble.

Part Two: Belief vs. Unbelief (2:6-8)

A. The blessing of belief (2:6-7a)

Peter quoted Isaiah 28:16 in 2:6. The quote entails God laying down a chief corner stone in Zion (or Jerusalem), a reference to Jerusalem. With this quote, Peter continues the stone imagery, which again relates to Jesus. The **key phrase**, "chief corner stone," likely refers here to a foundation stone in a building that ensures the walls on either side of it remain sure, which helps the soundness of the entire structure. Isaiah 28:16 mentions that this chief corner stone is laid "for a foundation" and is a "sure foundation." The text further states that this stone is elect (chosen) and precious, two ideas **repeated** from 2:4. Paul also refers to Jesus as the chief corner stone, a definite **truth to believe**, in Ephesians 2:20, a **related passage**.

The best response to such a stone is to believe or trust in it. One must believe that this special stone will ensure the integrity of what is built. People can definitely place their trust in the soundness of Jesus. Peter stated that "he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (2:6b). The **key word** confounded means to be disappointed or put to shame. **Praise God** that those who place their trust in Jesus will never be disappointed! And just as God perceives His Son as precious, so believers see Him as precious (2:7a).

B. The danger of unbelief (2:7b-8)

In **contrast**, Peter noted those disobedient people who do not place their trust in Jesus (2:7b). Peter quoted another Old Testament verse from Psalm 118:22. This quote describes a stone rejected by builders. Their major mistake—this rejected stone was intended to be the chief corner stone. Without the chief corner stone, the building will never be true.

For those who do not believe, Jesus becomes "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence," an Old Testament quotation from Isaiah 8:14. These are the same disobedient ones who stumble at the Word. The **key word** offence literally refers to the trigger of a trap for catching prey. The figurative usage speaks of an obstacle that causes one to stumble. People typically stumble over something because they do not see it or were not expecting it. The Jews certainly did not "see" or expect Jesus

to be the Messiah. From God's perspective, these disobedient rejecters of Jesus have been appointed as those who would stumble. This hard statement by Peter demonstrates that God ultimately knows those who will or will not believe. **Avoid the error** of stumbling over Jesus and taking offense at Him.

Part Three: The Description and Function of God's People (2:9-10)

A. The description of God's people (2:9a-d)

The tenor of the passage now moves back to those who believe. The beginning of 2:9 states, "But ye," in **contrast** to those who are disobedient and stumble. Peter begins to describe the believers more fully in a series of four statements, which are derived from the Old Testament (Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 43:20-21; 61:6).

1. A chosen generation (2:9a)

Just as Jesus is chosen by God as the living stone, so also He views believers as a chosen generation (2:9a), that is, a people of God's own choosing. God noted Israel of the Old Testament as His chosen people. Now, believers in Christ (i.e., the church), both Jews and Gentiles, are noted as His chosen people.

2. A royal priesthood (2:9b)

Earlier, Peter referred to believers as a holy priesthood, now they are described as royal. The apostle John mentions how God has made believers both kings and priests in Revelation 1:6, a **related passage**. As children of the King of kings, believers are spiritual royalty in God's Kingdom.

3. A holy nation (2:9c)

Believers are once again identified as holy, a "holy nation" (2:9c). The word "nation" is not equated to an earthly nation, but rather a reference to God's people. God referred to His original people, the Israelites, as a holy nation in Exodus 19:6. Believers are obligated to be holy because God Himself is holy (1:15-16).

4. A peculiar people (2:9d)

God's people are noted as "a peculiar people" (2:9d). The **key word** peculiar refers to people who are God's possession. **Praise God** that as believers we belong to Him!

B. The purpose of God's people (2:9e)

Notice the **cause and effect** in 2:9. Because believers have the four-fold status mentioned above, they should "shew forth" praises unto God (effect; 2:9e). This **key phrase** means to proclaim or report something everywhere. God expects His people to proclaim His praises to a lost world. The God who deserves our praise is the One who has called us "out of darkness into his marvelous light," a stark **contrast** indeed! God is the One who calls His people to Himself that they might come into the light of His Blessed Kingdom.

C. The joy of being called God's people (2:10)

In 2:10, Peter quoted from Hosea 1:10. Peter **contrasted** between a former time when the Gentiles were not considered God's people, but now they are. In parallel fashion, he also described them as those who had not obtained mercy

Leader's Guide: The term "Gentile" in the New Testament refers to any non-Jewish ethnicity.

Leader's Guide: The English word "peculiar" originally meant one's own personal possession. When used in modern English, the word conveys the sense of that which is strange or weird. So, Peter is not stating that God's people are weird, but rather a people of God's own possession.

Active Learning

Ask your learners to contemplate the following question allowing for a brief time of discussion: **What kingdom work has God given you to do?**

but have now obtained God's mercy. The **key word** mercy means to have pity on someone. **Praise God** that He took pity on the lost Gentiles to bring them into His fold!

Part Four: Good Behavior and its Results (2:11-12)

Peter addressed his recipients as "Dearly beloved" at the beginning of 2:11. This sort of address demonstrated Peter's care for these believers. He also urged them in a call to action, "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims." Peter already acknowledged them as "strangers" in 1:1.

A. What believers are to do (2:11-12a)

1. Abstain from fleshly lusts (2:11)

Peter urged them first of all to abstain from fleshly lusts. The **key word** abstain means to keep one's distance from something. Believers should keep away from allowing the flesh to rule their lives. Peter described the struggle as a war against one's soul, very reminiscent of Paul's own personal struggle he described in Romans 7:14-19, a **related passage**.

2. Exhibit excellent behavior (2:12a)

Peter urged them also to have their "conversation honest among the Gentiles" (2:12a). The **key word** conversation refers to one's behavior. Believers should let the world see their good behavior even while experiencing persecution.

B. How believers can impact the lost (2:12b)

A distinct purpose exists as to why the believer's good behavior remains important. Lost people may speak evil concerning Christians, but the believer's good works, which the lost will behold, should cause them to glorify God in the "day of visitation." This **key phrase** likely refers to God visiting the lost to show them mercy and causing them to become converted. Never minimize the impact of your good behavior before spiritually lost individuals. You never know how God might use your life to impact the life of someone else.

Conclusion

Jesus is the living and chief corner stone. As such, He supports believers whom Scripture describes as living stones. The lost may stumble over who Jesus is, but believers, like the Father, view Him as precious and acknowledge His role as the chief corner stone. God considers believers His special chosen people, enjoys their praises, and encourages their good behavior so that others might be impacted by their spiritual service and become God's people as well. May we never forget who Jesus is nor our own status before God!

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that Jesus is the Chief Corner Stone.
- **Avoid the error** of stumbling over Jesus and taking offense at Him.
- **Praise God**
 - that those who place their trust in Jesus will never be disappointed.
 - that as believers we belong to Him and are called to be His special people!
 - that He took pity on the lost Gentiles to bring them into His fold!

Leader's Guide: The word "conversation" when used in modern English means to speak to someone. The use of the word in older English versions referred to one's actions or behavior.

Leader's Guide: Some scholars view the phrase "day of visitation" in reference to God's final judgment, such as what Peter refers to in 2 Peter 3:7, 10-12. However, the idea of God's visitation as used in Luke 1:68 and 7:16 seem to refer to God visiting people with the focus on salvation. Furthermore, regardless of which view may be correct, the good works of God's people are meant to be seen so that people may glorify God as noted in Matthew 5:16.

Active Learning

As the leader, encourage your learner(s) to consider God's "visitation" in their lives. Has He visited them or called them unto salvation? Or, are they still in danger of God's final judgment to come?

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

LESSON 6: SUBMISSION AND SUFFERING

1 Peter 2:13-25 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
Submit, every ordinance of man, Cloke (cover) of maliciousness, honour, Thankworthy, Guile, Bishop
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
The king sends the governor (cause) to punish those who do wrong and praise those who do right (effects; 2:14b). It is God's will that the believer who does
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?
Believers should never trade evil for evil and call it good, but should use this freedom as servants of God. If a person does something wrong, he should

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
Nero was the Roman emperor at the time Peter wrote this letter (AD 64). In the latter part of his reign, Nero heavily persecuted Christians.
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
In 2:4-10, God refers to believers as living stones, a spiritual house, a holy and royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a holy nation, and a people of God's own
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Submit; "every ordinance of man;" Cloke (cover) of maliciousness; Thankworthy; Guile; Bishop
4. What related passages need to be considered?
1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 6:7; Isaiah 53:5

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
submit to human institutions; honor all men; love fellow believers; fear God; honor governmental leaders; obey those we work for with all fear.
2. Is there an example to follow in this passage?
Christ in how He handled suffering.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will submit properly to authorities, honor all people, and follow the example of Christ who suffered righteously on behalf of mankind.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:13-25

Get Attention:

Read the following related passages of Romans 13:1 and Titus 3:1 where Paul also called for submission to governmental authorities. Compare Acts 4:18-20 where Peter, the author of this epistle, defied religious authorities in Acts 4:18-20. Ask learners to discuss the difference. Explain that in this lesson we will see a principle here that believers are to obey authorities unless those authorities call upon believers to disobey God.

well (cause) will "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (effect; 2:15b). Jesus bore our sins (cause) so that those being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness (effect; 2:24b).

expect punishment. But God accepts patient suffering (2:20b). Peter compared Jesus to a shepherd. Jesus referred to Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10:11, 14.

possession.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will submit properly to authorities, honor all people, and follow the example of Christ who suffered righteously on behalf of mankind.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:13-25

Get Attention:

Read the following related passages of Romans 13:1 and Titus 3:1 where Paul also called for submission to governmental authorities. Compare Acts 4:18-20 where Peter, the author of this epistle, defied religious authorities in Acts 4:18-20. Ask learners to discuss the difference. Explain that in this lesson we will see a principle here that believers are to obey authorities unless those authorities call upon believers to disobey God.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 6: Submission and Suffering

1 Peter 2:13-25 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Submission to Government Rulers and All People (2:13-17)

A. Submit for the Lord's Sake (2:13-14)

B. Silence foolish men (2:15-16)

C. Showing submission to all (2:17)

Part Two: Servants Submitting to Their Masters (2:18-20)

A. Submission to the good and the bad (2:18)

B. Submission that is acceptable before God (2:19-20)

Part Three: Christ's Example of Suffering (2:21-25)

A. He left this example for believers (2:21)

B. He suffered perfectly (2:22-23)

C. He suffered for our sins (2:24)

D. He suffered for those who went astray (2:25)

Apply It

- **Follow the example**
of Christ in how He handled suffering.
- **Obey the commands**
Submit to human institutions; honor all men; love fellow believers; fear God; honor governmental leaders; obey those we work for with all fear.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 6: Submission and Suffering

1 Peter 2:13-25 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will submit properly to authorities, honor all people, and follow the example of Christ who suffered righteously on behalf of mankind.

Introduction

People are generally prideful in their attitudes. We enjoy our freedoms and often celebrate our individualism. Most people do not like being told what to do. A person left to himself will allow pride to dominate his life. However, a believer who is controlled by the Holy Spirit and committed to living under the authority of God's Word will not allow pride to interfere with proper behavior.

A believer could get filled with pride after reading how the Bible describes believers in 2:4-10, the **immediate context**. God refers to believers as living stones, a spiritual house, a holy and royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a holy nation, and a people of God's own possession. Believers might want to hold their head high and say, "Yeah, that's right!" However, the Chief Corner Stone never boasted about who He was, but suffered willingly at the hands of evil men. The same **immediate context** in 2:12 informs believers that they are responsible to keep their behavior honest among the Gentiles. Such behavior involves submission and suffering.

Part One: Submission to Government Rulers and All People (2:13-17)

The idea of submission is almost seen as an offensive word in modern society. People even might say, "Who are you to tell me to submit!" But, the Bible describes submission as something beautiful when done in the right way and for the right reason.

A. Submit for the Lord's Sake (2:13-14)

After telling his readers that they need to demonstrate good behavior among the Gentiles in 2:12, Peter immediately **commands** them to submit "to every ordinance of man" (2:13a). The **key word** submit literally means to place oneself under the authority or rule of another. The key idea here is that of obedience. Believers should obey "every ordinance of man." This **key phrase** refers to human institutions created by God such as governmental authorities. A believer should submit to governmental authorities (effect) for the Lord's sake (cause; 2:13b). In Romans 13:1 and Titus 3:1, **related passages**, Paul also called for submission to governmental authorities. It is important to note that Peter, the author of this epistle, defied religious authorities in Acts 4:18-20 when he, along with John, was commanded not to preach in the name of Jesus anymore. We see a principle here that believers are to obey authorities unless those authorities call upon believers to disobey God.

One should submit both to high-ranking officials and lower-ranking officials. The king is viewed as supreme (2:13c). This **key word** refers to one who has the greater authority. The lower-ranking official refers to the governor (2:14a). As a **cause and effect**, the king sends the governor (cause) to punish those who do wrong and praise those who do right (effects; 2:14b). According to **historical**

Lesson Aim:

The learner will submit properly to authorities, honor all people, and follow the example of Christ who suffered righteously on behalf of mankind.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:13-25

Get Attention:

Read the following related passages of Romans 13:1 and Titus 3:1 where Paul also called for submission to governmental authorities. Compare Acts 4:18-20 where Peter, the author of this epistle, defied religious authorities in Acts 4:18-20. Ask learners to discuss the difference. Explain that in this lesson we will see a principle here that believers are to obey authorities unless those authorities call upon believers to disobey God.

Leader's Guide: While enjoying one's individual freedom is true in America, this may not be true in every culture. Be aware of your own cultural differences as you apply this opening introduction

Leader's Guide: The word "submit" is a compound word in the Greek language. The first part of the Greek word means "under." The second part of the word means "to arrange in an orderly manner." Thus, people arrange their life in an orderly manner by submitting to the proper authorities.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word for ordinance is the same word that is used for God's creation. In the context of 1 Peter 2:13, it refers to a human institution created by God.

Leader's Guide: The word supreme in 2:13c is a compound word that literally means "to have over," referring to a person having authority over another.

Leader's Guide: Nero began his reign as Roman emperor in AD 54 and would rule until his death in AD 68.

Leader's Guide: Some Christians might argue today that they do not have to submit to ungodly leaders, but Peter makes no such distinction in his command to submit to government rulers. Nero, the Roman emperor when Peter wrote this letter, became quite cruel to Christians, but still commanded submission to the king.

Leader's Guide: The more modern way to spell "honour" is "honor."

Active Learning

Ask your learner(s) if they have ever acted in an ungodly way toward someone who mistreated them.

Leader's Guide: A bookend (or sometimes called an *inclusio*) in literature is when a writer includes the same word or idea at the beginning and end of a section. Peter seems to do this with the word "king" in 2:13 and 2:17.

Leader's Guide: It has been estimated that 1 out of 5 people were slaves in Rome during the first century. Many became slaves as the only means to survive.

Leader's Guide: The Bible nowhere condones slavery, especially the kind of slavery that occurred in 18th-19th century America.

background, Nero was the Roman emperor at the time Peter wrote this letter (AD 64). In the latter part of his reign, Nero heavily persecuted Christians. Even under the rule of an unfair or cruel government, Scripture still calls for submission.

B. Silence foolish men (2:15-16)

In almost parallel fashion to the phrase, "for the Lord's sake," Scripture refers to the importance of fulfilling God's will (2:15a). The believer's main goal through life should be to do the Lord's will. Jesus even taught in His Sermon on the Mount to pray to the Father, "thy will be done" (Matthew 6:10). There can be no greater joy for the Christian than to know that he or she lives according to God's will.

Noted as a **cause and effect**, it is God's will that the believer who does well (cause) will "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (effect; 2:15b). The **key phrase**, "put to silence" literally refers to muzzling an animal. When believers live well in society and respond well even to cruel treatment, the result often silences those who might accuse or look down upon them.

Through the redemption Christ paid on the cross, believers are free to serve the Lord. Such freedom and liberty should never be used as a "cloke (cover) of maliciousness." This **key phrase** refers to placing a cover over one's evil behavior. Believers should never trade evil for evil and call it good, but in **contrast**, should use this freedom as servants of God. Paul warned about using our freedom as an opportunity for the flesh in Galatians 5:13, a **related passage**.

C. Showing submission to all (2:17)

Beyond submission to governmental authorities, Peter, in a series of **commands to obey**, called for the proper attitudes toward all. **First**, believers should "honour all men" (2:17a). The **key word** honour, **repeated** from 2:4, 7 (translated "precious"), means to place a high value on another. All people are created in God's image (Genesis 1:26, 27); therefore, believers should honor all people.

Second, believers should "love the brotherhood" (2:17b). Believers need one another in a hostile world, so they should love each other. This command matches Christ's own command to His disciples when He told them to love one another in John 13:34, a **related passage**.

Third, believers should "fear God" or reverence Him (2:17c). The believer's holy behavior before God demonstrates the reverence he or she should have for God.

Fourth, believers should "honour the king" (2:17d). With this command, Peter reminded his readers of the need to live orderly under government rule. Notice the emphasis on submitting to and honoring the king as "bookends" in 2:13b and 2:17d.

Part Two: Servants Submitting to Their Masters (2:18-20)

The text continues at this point with a further focus on submission. Servants are called upon to submit to their masters. Slavery was quite prominent in first century Rome. Master/slave relationships may not be as prominent in modern times, but one could easily apply employer/employee relationships to 2:18-20.

A. Submission to the good and the bad (2:18)

Peter commanded, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear" (2:18a). The word "subject" comes from the same Greek word as the word "submit"

in 2:13, thus making it a **repeated word**, along with the word “fear” (repeated from 2:17). Just as there were “good and gentle” masters in the first century, so there are good and gentle employers today. It is not hard to submit to a good and gentle boss, but what about a master or boss characterized as “froward” (crooked or dishonest)? So, Peter commanded not only to submit to the good and gentle, but, in **contrast**, to the crooked as well.

→ Leader's Guide: We get the English word “scoliosis” from the Greek word that is translated as “froward” in 2:18. Scoliosis is an abnormal curvature of the spine

B. Submission that is acceptable before God (2:19-20)

It, therefore, becomes thankworthy to subject oneself to a corrupt master or boss. This **key word** literally refers to grace. Such an attitude of submission demonstrates grace in one's life to endure grief while suffering wrongfully at the hand of an unruly master/boss. The key to enduring such treatment with grace can be found in the phrase “for conscience toward God” (2:19). This matches well with submitting oneself to government “for the Lord's sake” (2:13). Everything we do should be unto the Lord, as referenced in 1 Corinthians 10:31, a **related passage**.

Peter paused in 2:20 to make a valid point about suffering patiently in a not-so-ideal situation. He posed a rhetorical question in 2:20a that demands an obvious answer. He basically asked, “What credit is there in enduring harsh treatment patiently if you do something wrong?” The obvious answer is, none. If a person does something wrong, he should expect punishment. But, in **contrast**, God accepts patient suffering (2:20b). Let us examine Jesus' example of suffering to gain a clearer picture of how to endure suffering when one is in the right.

Part Three: Christ's Example of Suffering (2:21-25)

In 1 Peter 2:21-25, Peter drew from Isaiah 53, where Isaiah prophesied of the suffering servant to come. Jesus is that Suffering Servant.

A. He left this example for believers (2:21)

These believers were called to suffering (effect) because Christ also suffered leaving them an example (2:21a). Jesus told His disciples in John 15:20, a **related passage**, that just as He was persecuted, they would experience persecution. No greater example exists than Jesus on how to suffer. His is truly an **example to follow**. May believers ever strive to follow Christ's steps (2:21b).

B. He suffered perfectly (2:22-23)

One of the greatest **truths to believe** about Jesus is that He never sinned. He was the only human to walk this earth perfectly. Peter not only stated Christ's sinless character but emphasized that no guile was found in his mouth (2:22), an allusion to Isaiah 53:9. The **key word** guile refers to deceit or trickery. James 3:2, a **related passage**, indicates that a perfect man does not sin with his words. Jesus alone remained perfect even in how he spoke.

By way of **cause and effects**, when Jesus was reviled (cause), He did not revile in turn nor did He threaten anyone (effects; 2:23a). Here, Peter alluded to Isaiah 53:7. The **key word** reviled means to hurl verbal insults at someone. Jesus did not open His mouth to insult. What did He do? In way of **contrast**, Peter noted that Jesus “committed himself to him that judgeth righteously” (2:23b). Jesus knew that His Father would exalt Him in due time. Believers need not worry about those

Active Learning

Peter does not quote directly from Isaiah 53 in 2:21-25, but writes enough that it becomes clear to his allusions or references to verses from this Old Testament text. Have your learner(s) open their Bibles to see the references to Isaiah 53 when the specific verses are noted in the lesson.

→ Leader's Guide: Peter referred to his recipients as called by God back in 1:15. This refers to God's initiating the believer's salvation.

Active Learning

Ask your learner(s): "Is there something someone has said to you where you have hung on to a revengeful spirit instead of committing it to God?"

Leader's Guide: Jesus dying for our sins speaks of Christ's substitutionary atonement. We deserved the punishment Christ suffered, but thankfully He became our substitute experiencing God's wrath against sin.

who revile them, because God will judge all things righteously one day. Believers just need to commit themselves to God and let God bring the judgment.

C. He suffered for our sins (2:24)

Jesus' suffering led to the greatest event in all of history. The One who knew no sin bore our sins on His body while on the cross (2:24a; Isaiah 53:4). History's greatest **cause and effect** comes to light here. Jesus bore our sins (cause) so that those being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness (effect; 2:24b). Christ's death brought about life! Note that while Jesus died for our sins, believers are to die to sin. Paul told believers in Romans 6:7, a **related passage**, to consider themselves dead to sin. Peter alluded to Isaiah 53:5 when he wrote, "by whose stripes ye were healed" (2:24c).

D. He suffered for those who went astray (2:25)

Peter **compared** believers to "sheep going astray" (2:25a; Isaiah 53:6). We were not deserving of Christ's sacrifice. We were the sinners who deserve punishment. But Jesus took our place on the cross, becoming a substitute for His wayward sheep. Peter **contrasted** what believers were as wayward sheep, to what they are as having returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls (2:25b). Peter **compared** Jesus to a shepherd. Jesus referred to Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10:11, 14. The **key word** Bishop means overseer or guardian. Who better to shepherd and oversee us but Jesus Himself!

Conclusion

The Scripture clearly commands believers to submit to authorities, honor all people, love believers, and endure suffering patiently. Submission is often hard because it requires swallowing one's pride. Of course, no one enjoys suffering. But what an example believers have in Christ who submitted Himself to suffer ill-treatment and did so with a proper attitude. Jesus did not revile or threaten those who persecuted Him, but He endured it all to pay the penalty for our sins. What an example Christ has left us to follow in His steps!

Apply It

- **Follow the example** of Christ in how He handled suffering.
- **Obey the commands** to
 - submit to human institutions.
 - honor all men.
 - love fellow believers.
 - fear God.
 - honor governmental leaders.
 - obey those we work for with all fear.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson Aim:

The learner will follow the instructions given to wives and husbands, and those given to all believers on how to treat all people.

LESSON 7: FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS

1 Peter 3:1-12 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
subjected, "The hidden man of the heart, Obeyed, "Not afraid with any amazement," Honour, compassion, "Be pitiful," Railing,
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Husbands who do not obey "the" Word (cause) can be won by the conversation (behavior) of their wives without them speaking "a" word (effect; 3:1c). Husbands
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?
A woman's priority should be how she looks on the inside rather than the outside (3:4a); The Lord is against those who do evil; As a slave submits to his master,

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
A wife calling her husband "lord" was a cultural way of showing respect to her husband in the Old Testament.
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
Peter previously called for submission to government rulers (2:13) and for servants to submit to their masters (whether those masters were good or cruel; 2:18).
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Subjected; "The hidden man of the heart," Obeyed; Not afraid with any amazement; Honour; "Be pitiful," Railing
4. What related passages need to be considered?
Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; Proverbs 31:28-29; Galatians 3:28.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
That His eyes are upon the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers.
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
◦ inward character is of great price in God's sight.
◦ men and women are equally spiritual heirs.
3. Is there an example to follow in this passage?
The holy women of old and Sarah who subjected themselves to their husbands.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:1-12

Get Attention:

If possible, bring an instruction manual (any kind) and discuss with learners the value of reading the manual before using the appliance.

should honor their wives (cause), so that their "prayers be not hindered" (3:7c). Those that love life and desire to see good days (effects; 3:10), should **obey the** following five **commands** (causes; 3:11)

so, likewise, must the wife submit to her husband. The husband should not view his wife as a slave, but as a fellow partner in the marriage.

◦ the Lord is against those who do evil.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will follow the instructions given to wives and husbands, and those given to all believers on how to treat all people.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:1-12

Get Attention:

If possible, bring an instruction manual (any kind) and discuss with learners the value of reading the manual before using the appliance.

Lesson 7: Follow the Instructions

1 Peter 3:1-12 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Instructions to Wives (3:1-6)

A. Subjection as it relates to behavior (3:1-2)

B. Subjection as it relates to inward character (3:3-4)

C. Examples of subjection (3:5-6)

1. Holy women of old (3:5)
2. Sarah (3:6)

Part Two: Instructions to Husbands (3:7)

A. Live with your wife in an understanding way (3:7a)

B. Honor your wife (3:7b)

C. An unhindered prayer life (3:7c)

Part Three: Instructions to All Believers (3:8-12)

A. Treat fellow believers well (3:8)

B. Bless the lost (3:9)

C. Experience good days (3:10-11)

D. Receive the comfort from the Lord (3:12)

Apply It

• **Believe the truths**

- inward character is of great price in God's sight.
- men and women are equally spiritual heirs.

• **Praise God**

that His eyes are upon the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers.

• **Follow the examples**

Wives should follow the examples of the holy women of old and Sarah who subjected themselves to their husbands.

◦ the Lord is against those who do evil.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leader Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 7: Follow the Instructions

1 Peter 3:1-12 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will follow the instructions given to wives and husbands and those given to all believers on how to treat all people.

Introduction

Most products come with instructions regarding proper assembly, operation, and care. Failure to adhere to these instructions could result in harm to one's person or damage to the product. Peter provided instructions to wives, husbands, and all believers regarding the proper treatment they should exhibit toward one another. Failure to adhere to these biblical instructions can certainly result in harm to one's relationships. These biblical instructions are more than mere suggestions but should be carefully followed to ensure success in one's various relationships.

Part One: Instructions to Wives (3:1-6)

In the **immediate context**, Peter previously called for submission to government rulers (2:13) and for servants to submit to their masters (whether those masters were good or cruel; 2:18). He then cited Christ as the ultimate example of One who suffered unjustly by ungodly men (2:21). The text now turns its attention to wives submitting to their husbands beginning in 3:1.

A. Subjection as it relates to behavior (3:1-2)

Peter wrote, "Likewise ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands," a **command** for wives to **obey** (3:1a). The word "likewise" demonstrates a **comparison**, but the comparison must be interpreted carefully. The Bible here does not compare wives to slaves, but as the slave submits to his master, so, likewise, must the wife submit to her husband. The husband should not view his wife as a slave, but as a fellow partner in the marriage.

The **key word** subjection is a **repeated word** from 2:13 ("submit"), 18 ("subject"), and means to place oneself under the authority or rule of another. Subjection here in no way equates to inferiority, but rather the wife fulfilling her God-designed role in the family to promote the orderly operation of the home. In other **related passages**, the apostle Paul also called for wives to submit to their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5). Wives can demonstrate submission to their "own" husbands through their behavior, especially toward unbelieving husbands who "obey not the word" (3:1b). This **key phrase** specifically refers to disobedience to God's Word or the gospel. Note the beautiful **cause and effect**. Husbands who do not obey "the" Word (cause) can be won by the conversation (behavior) of their wives without them speaking "a" word (effect; 3:1c). Such men will behold the chaste or holy behavior of their wives with fear (3:2). Good behavior by a believing wife can cause her husband to think deeply about his own behavior and eternity.

B. Subjection as it relates to inward character (3:3-4)

Outward behavior matters, but so does inward character. Again, careful interpretation must be done. Peter does not strictly prohibit a woman from adorning herself with nice kept hair, jewelry, or nice clothes in 3:3. The text emphasizes

Lesson Aim:

The learner will follow the instructions given to wives and husbands, and those given to all believers on how to treat all people.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:13-25

Get Attention:

If possible, bring an instruction manual (any kind) and discuss with learners the value of reading the manual before using the appliance.

Leader's Guide: The word "subjection" in the original language is not the usual grammatical construction for a command. The word is actually a participle, which is built off of a main verb. However, many scholars believe the use of the participle form in 3:1, carries the sense of an imperative or a command.

Leader's Guide: Note for your learner(s) that the text specifically calls for wives to submit to their "own" husbands. A woman is not required to submit to another man who is not her husband.

Leader's Guide: In the original language, the definite article is before "word" the first time it appears in 3:1, referring to "the" Word of God. The second time it appears without the definite article, referring to "a" word from the wife, that is, her speech. Leader's Guide: Remind your learner(s) that the word conversation (repeated from 1:15, 18; 2:12), as used in old English, referred to one's behavior.

Leader's Guide: The word "adorning" comes from the Greek word (cosmos) that is often translated as "world." The use of the word in 3:3 speaks of adornment. The English word "cosmetics" comes from this word.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word for "man" is a part of the phrase, "hidden *man* of the heart." In some contexts, such as this one, the Greek word for "man" can refer to a person in general.

Leader's Guide: The word "corruptible" is **repeated** from 1:4, which describes the believer's heavenly inheritance as incorruptible or imperishable.

Leader's Guide: Sarah referred to Abraham as "lord" in Genesis 18:12.

Active Learning

Ask the wives in your class or Bible study, "In what ways have you shown godly submission to your husband?" Ask the husbands, "In what ways have you noticed your wife's godly submission?"

Leader's Guide: Like the participle usage in 3:1, the participles translated "dwell" and "giving" can be perceived as imperatives. This means they can be interpreted as commands.

that the woman's first priority should not be how she looks on the *outside*, but, in **contrast**, how she looks on the *inside*, "the hidden man of the heart" (3:4a). This **key phrase** refers to a person's inward character. Such character is further described as the incorruptible (imperishable) character of a "meek (gentle) and quiet spirit." The good outward behavior of a wife (or anyone) comes from the inward character of a born-again believer as noted in 1:23. As a **truth to believe**, such inward character is precious or very valuable in God's sight, as opposed to the costly jewelry and clothes that one might wear.

C. Examples of subjection (3:5-6)

After describing how a wife can demonstrate submissiveness through her outward behavior and inward character, Peter gave **examples** for women **to follow** from women who exhibited such traits.

1. Holy women of old (3:5)

The first example is more general in nature – "holy women" living in the "old time" (3:5a). This likely refers to the women of the Old Testament period. They demonstrated their inward character through their trust in God (3:5b). A woman who trusts in God will be obedient to God's desire for her life. These holy women of old subjected themselves to their own husbands (3:5c), showing God's consistent design for marriage.

2. Sarah (3:6)

Peter then moved to a more specific example in Sarah. The Bible says that she obeyed Abraham, calling him "lord" (3:6a). The **key word obeyed** means to listen to someone with the intent of being submissive or obedient. The fact that she called him "lord" does not mean women today should view or call their husbands "lord." **Historical background** indicates that this was a cultural way for a woman to show respect to her husband in the Old Testament.

Peter further stated to his female recipients that they are daughters of Sarah (effect) "as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement" (causes; 3:6b). The **key phrase**, "not afraid with any amazement," refers to fearing human intimidation or giving way to fear. A woman who truly fears the Lord will find the Lord's protection even while living with an unbelieving spouse.

Part Two: Instructions to Husbands (3:7)

Wives are not the only ones who need instruction on how to live with their significant other. First Peter 3:7 begins the same way that 3:1 does, "likewise." Just like the wives need instruction, so do the husbands.

A. Live with your wife in an understanding way (3:7a)

Peter commanded husbands to "dwell with them according to knowledge" (3:7a). This unique phrase has been interpreted in different ways. Some scholars see this as referring to Christian knowledge. In other words, husbands should dwell or live with their wives according to biblical truth. While this is true, maybe a better interpretation in context is for husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way. Peter then describes that understanding way in the remaining part of 3:7.

B. Honor your wife (3:7b)

Husbands are further commanded to give honour to their wives (3:7b). This

key word is **repeated** from 2:4, where God views His Son as “precious”; and 2:17, where believers should honor all people and the king. This word means to place a high value upon another. In Proverbs 31:28-29, a **related passage**, the children and husband of the virtuous woman give praise to her. A husband who has a submissive wife with beautiful inward character should honor such a woman!

The text provides two reasons why a husband should honor his wife.

First, she is the weaker vessel, being a woman. This likely refers to her weakness in physical strength when compared to the man. Typically, men are stronger than women. The husband should be protective of his wife and make sure no harm comes to her. **Second**, the husband and wife are heirs together of the grace of life, a **truth to believe**. Women are not inferior to men just because men are physically stronger. Women are on an equal plane with men regarding their spiritual inheritance as noted in Galatians 3:28, a **related passage**.

C. An unhindered prayer life (3:7c)

Noted as a **cause and effect**, the reason why husbands should honor their wives (cause), is so that their “prayers be not hindered” (effect; 3:7c). This should serve as a warning to husbands to honor their wives. If they fail to heed these instructions, God will withhold answering their prayers. Husbands, may we **obey the commands** to live with our wives in an understanding way and honor them!

Part Three: Instructions to All Believers (3:8-12)

Peter addressed specific instructions to wives and husbands in 3:1-7. The remainder of the study passage turns its attention to all believers.

A. Treat fellow believers well (3:8)

Believers should be of one mind, which speaks of unity (3:8a). A united group of believers can accomplish much. A divided group will experience very little success. A united group of believers will have compassion for one another (3:8b). This **key word** means to show genuine sympathy.

True compassion demonstrates itself in different ways. Peter offered three **commands to obey** that unified and compassionate people should live out. **First**, “love as brethren” (3:8c). Such love is a repeated theme from 2:17, the **immediate context**. **Second**, “be pitiful” (3:8d). This word means to show deep-seated concern for another. The Greek word literally refers to one’s intestines. The ancients believed one’s true emotions came from the bowels. **Third**, “be courteous” or friendly-minded toward others (3:8e).

B. Bless the lost (3:9)

Lost people may treat the believer poorly, even persecute him; but the believer should not render “evil for evil” or “railing for railing” (3:9a). The **key word** railing refers to abuse or insult. While it may be tempting to return unkind behavior with our own, in **contrast**, the believer should respond with blessing as he has been called (cause) to inherit a blessing (effect; 3:9b). How can Christians who are set to inherit a blessing not offer blessings to others? After all, we were enemies of God in our lost condition, yet God blessed us with an eternal inheritance through Jesus Christ.

Leader’s Guide: Some believe that the reference to the woman as the weaker vessel has to do with her inferiority in the eyes of a first century Greco-Roman society. However, Peter goes on to talk about the equality of men and women as spiritual heirs.

Active Learning

Ask the husbands in your class or Bible study, “In what specific ways have you honored your wife?” Ask the wives, “What specific things has your husband done to honor you?”

Active Learning

Ask your learner(s), “In what ways have you shown deep-seated compassion toward a fellow believer?”

Leader’s Guide: Remind your learner(s) concerning the emphasis on God’s calling as noted in 1:15; 2:9, 21. In 2:21 and here in 3:9, the voice of the verbs is passive, meaning that the person does not call themselves, but it is God who calls us.

C. Experience good days (3:10-11)

The remainder of our study passage is a quote from Psalm 34:12-16. The first part of the quote contains a **causes and effects**. Those that love life and desire to see good days (effects; 3:10), should **obey the** following five **commands** (causes; 3:11). First, as a parallel statement, one should “refrain” his tongue from speaking evil and speak no guile (deceitful words) with his lips (3:10). Our tongue can get us in the biggest trouble. We should follow Jesus’ example who did not speak guile even when He was persecuted, 2:22. The next two commands come in the form of a **contrast**, “eschew” or turn aside from evil, and “do” good (3:11a). There is enough evil in the world. Believers should strive for good in their lives. The last two commands pertain to peace. One should “seek” peace and also “ensue” or pursue it (3:11b). The second word speaks of a more intense search and carries with it the sense of hunting.

D. Receive the comfort from the Lord (3:12)

The final verse in this section should provide comfort for believers. Two things are true for believers: (1) the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and (2) the Lord will hear their prayers (3:12a). Believers who face persecution from a hostile world need to know these two truths. **Praise God** for His ever-watchful eye over His people and His attentiveness to their prayers. By way of **contrast**, the Lord is against those who do evil. This should also bring comfort to the believer knowing that the Lord will deal with those who practice evil, a great **truth to believe**.

Conclusion

Believers can avoid trouble in their lives by simply following the instructions found in this passage. God instructs married couples on how to live well in their relationships. God instructs all believers on how to treat people, whether they are fellow believers or part of the lost world. This does not mean that believers will avoid “all” trouble in this life by following the instructions. Difficult days will come and believers may face persecution, but the Lord will provide the help and comfort that believers need to persevere.

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that
 - inward character is of great price in God’s sight.
 - men and women are equally spiritual heirs.
 - the Lord is against those who do evil.
- **Praise God** that His eyes are upon the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers.
- Wives should **obey the command** to submit to their own husbands.
- Husbands should **obey the commands** to dwell with their wives according to knowledge and honor them.
- All believers should **obey the commands** to
 - cease to use their tongue for evil or speaking guile.
 - turn away from evil and do good.
 - seek and pursue peace.
- Wives should **follow the examples** of the holy women of old and Sarah who subjected themselves to their husbands.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the blessedness of suffering for righteousness' sake and appreciate the salvation and victory Christ achieved through His suffering.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:13-22

LESSON 8: SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE

1 Peter 3:13-22 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
followers, troubled, sanctify, "like figure"
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Those who do suffer for righteousness' sake (cause) are considered blessed (effect). Christ suffered for sins (cause) that He might bring us to God (effect).
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?
Instead of fearing the persecutor, "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (3:15a). Water baptism does not wash away the filth of the flesh, but, salvation comes

through a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (3:21b).

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
Being seated at someone's right hand, especially at a great feast, was a seat of the highest honor.
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
God's people do not have to shake in fear because "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous" as noted in 3:12. Jesus used the same word "blessed" to describe
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Followers; troubled; sanctify; "like figure"
4. What related passages need to be considered?
Romans 8:31; Psalm 110:1; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 2:20; Hebrews 1:3; 10:12; 12:2; Matthew 28:18.

Christian suffering in Matthew 5:10.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
Christ can bring us into a relationship with the Heavenly Father.
2. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
 - Christ has suffered once for our sins.
 - Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.
3. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
Sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart.

◦ Baptism pictures the believer's salvation.
◦ Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven.
◦ All angels, authorities, and powers are subject to Christ.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the blessedness of suffering for righteousness' sake and appreciate the salvation and victory Christ achieved through His suffering.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:13-22

Lesson 8: Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

1 Peter 3:13-22 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Christian —Suffering for Righteousness (3:13-17)

A. Eagerness to do good in the midst of suffering (3:13)

B. The blessed state of suffering (3:14)

C. The key to facing suffering (3:15a)

D. Bearing a Christian witness while suffering (3:15b-16)

E. Better to suffer for doing right (3:17)

Part Two: The Christ —Suffering for Sin (3:18-22)

A. The purpose of His suffering (3:18a)

B. The preaching of victory beyond His suffering (3:18b-20)

C. The picture of salvation through His suffering (3:21)

D. The position of the One who suffered (3:22a)

E. The power of the One who suffered (3:22b)

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that
 - Christ has suffered once for our sins.
 - Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.
 - Baptism pictures the believer's salvation.
- **Obey the command** to sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart.
- **Praise God** that Christ can bring us into a relationship with the Heavenly Father.

Get Attention:

Review the major sections of 1 Peter as described in the introduction. include: (1) Peter's doctrinal understanding of salvation, 1:3-12; (2) Emphasis on holy living, 1:13—2:3; (3) The blessings of God's election, 2:4-10; (4) The importance of submission, 2:11—3:12. Explain that this section focuses primarily on Christian suffering.

- Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven.
- All angels, authorities, and powers are subject to Christ.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 8: Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

1 Peter 3:13-22 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand the blessedness of suffering for righteousness' sake and appreciate the salvation and victory Christ achieved through His suffering.

Introduction

First Peter 3:13—4:19 marks a new major section in this epistle. This section focuses primarily on Christian suffering. No believer wants to endure suffering for the gospel, but it is good to know that Scripture provides encouragement and help for those who do. Jesus reminded Peter and His other disciples that they would experience persecution on account of Him (John 15:20). Peter witnessed Jesus' persecution and endured his own. Peter wrote this epistle, in part, to help other believers who were facing persecution. This lesson focuses on believers suffering for righteousness' sake and examines Christ's own suffering in light of the salvation He provided.

Part One: The Christian—Suffering for Righteousness (3:13-17)

There are different types of suffering a person can endure. One can suffer through sickness, the loss of something or someone, emotional pain, or because of the results of bad choices. The kind of suffering described in 3:13-17 involves suffering for the sake of righteousness.

A. Eagerness to do good in the midst of suffering (3:13)

Peter began with a rhetorical question at the beginning of this section, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (3:13). Paul posed a similar question in Romans 8:31, a **related passage**, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Peter's question, as well as Paul's, demands an answer of "No one!" Now it is true that people might abuse or mistreat Christians because of their beliefs, but God will see to it that Christians can endure such treatment.

Following that which is good becomes the best way to handle those who might harm the believer. The **key word** followers literally refers to a zealot, one who enthusiastically follows a certain belief or movement. The believer should have great zeal for that which is good, even becoming a zealot of goodness. Spiritually lost people may have evil intentions toward believers, but the believer should be intent on promoting what is good.

B. The blessed state of suffering (3:14)

Not every believer will suffer persecution to the same extent. Peter began with a conditional statement in 3:14a that refers to a probable future of suffering. While there is no guarantee that a believer will suffer for righteousness, the likelihood remains strong that it might happen. So, every believer should be prepared for such an experience. Notice the **cause and effect**. Those who do suffer for righteousness' sake (cause) are considered blessed (effect). Jesus used the same word "blessed" to describe Christian suffering in Matthew 5:10, a **related passage**.

The blessed state of suffering should overshadow any fear of the

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the blessedness of suffering for righteousness' sake and appreciate the salvation and victory Christ achieved through His suffering.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:13-22

Get Attention:

Review the major sections or 1 Peter as described in the introduction. include: (1) Peter's doctrinal understanding of salvation, 1:3-12; (2) Emphasis on holy living, 1:13—2:3; (3) The blessings of God's election, 2:4-10; (4) The importance of submission, 2:11—3:12. Explain that this section focuses primarily on Christian suffering.

Leader's Guide: Previous major section include: (1) Peter's doctrinal understanding of salvation, 1:3-12; (2) Emphasis on holy living, 1:13—2:3; (3) The blessings of God's election, 2:4-10; (4) The importance of submission, 2:11—3:1

Leader's Guide: A rhetorical question is the type of question that has an obvious answer.

Active Learning

Ask learners, Are you a zealot? How would others rate your zeal for a sports team? How would others rate your zeal for goodness?

persecutor. Peter quoted from Isaiah 8:12 in 3:14b when he stated that the believer should not fear the terror that the persecutor can produce, nor be troubled by it. The **key word** *troubled* literally means to stir or shake something up; thus, the believer need not be intimidated by those who cause suffering. God's people do not have to shake in fear because "the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous" as noted in 3:12, the **immediate context**.

C. The key to facing suffering (3:15a)

Instead of fearing the persecutor, in **contrast**, Peter **commanded** believers to "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (3:15a), taken from Isaiah 8:14. Possibly the better reading of this verse is to "sanctify Christ as Lord." The **key word** *sanctify* means to treat the Lord as holy or revere Him. This may be the main key to facing Christian suffering. The heart is considered the center of a person's being. Reverencing the Lord and keeping Him close to one's heart will help the believer stand strong in an intimidating world.

D. Bearing a Christian witness while suffering (3:15b-16)

Peter called upon his readers to be a witness even if suffering should come. A believer's witness can be observed in one of two ways. **First**, the believer should always be ready to answer anyone who might ask of the hope that is in them (3:15b). When the world sees the Christian's zeal for good and reverence for God, it just might spark a question as to how hope can be maintained through suffering. What a great witnessing opportunity! Of course, such a response to the lost must be done with a spirit of meekness and fear, or gentleness and respect.

The **second** form of witness a believer possesses involves his behavior. The believer can have a good conscience by maintaining "good conversation [behavior] in Christ" (3:16). Maintaining good behavior (cause) will result in shame to the one speaking evil of the Christian and falsely accusing him (effect). How a believer behaves truly matters. One commentator wrote, "One cannot explain the hope we have in Christ while living in ways that contradict that hope."

E. Better to suffer for doing right (3:17)

As a word of summary, Peter reminded his readers that it is much better to suffer for doing right than for doing evil (3:17). Peter previously noted that there is no glory when suffering for doing wrong in 2:20. As stated in 3:17, when believers do suffer, it is because of God's will. What a great reminder that God is in control of our suffering!

Part Two: The Christ—Suffering for Sin (3:18-22)

Peter focused on Christ's suffering in 2:21-24. He does the same here in 3:18-22. The believer suffers for righteousness' sake; Christ suffered for sin.

A. The purpose of His suffering (3:18a)

The purpose of Christ's suffering is straight forward. He "hath once suffered for sins" (3:18a). Before Christ's sacrifice on the cross, Israel sacrificed countless animals upon the altar. Yet, Christ only suffered "once." His one-time sacrifice was "for sins," possibly the greatest **truth to believe** in Scripture. Christ dying for sins

Leader's Guide: Some Greek manuscripts read, "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" in 3:15a, while others read, "sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts." Whichever is correct, the point is to regard God as holy and reverence Him.

Leader's Guide: The word "conversation" is used 6x in 1 Peter: 1:15, 18; 2:12; 3:1, 2, 16. Each time, the word refers to the believer's behavior.

Leader's Guide: This quote comes from Karen H. Jobes' commentary on 1 Peter in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 231.

Leader's Guide: Some Greek manuscripts read, "Christ suffered," while others read, "Christ died." The idea of suffering fits the context better. Whichever is correct, Christ's suffering did lead to His death.

Leader's Guide: The writer of Hebrews also noted Christ only suffering once in Hebrews 7:27; 9:26, 28; 10:10, 14.

speaks of His role as our substitute. He died in our place and “bare” our sins (2:24). Christ, the just (righteous) one, dying for the unjust (unrighteous). This leads to a great **cause and effect**. Christ suffered for sins (cause) that He might bring us to God (effect). **Praise God** it is only through Christ that believers have access to the Father!

B. The preaching of victory beyond His suffering (3:18b-20)

Part of the good news of the gospel is that Christ did not remain dead. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit quickened or resurrected Him, a most glorious **truth to believe** (3:18b)! Jesus rose from the dead just as the four Gospels record. By the same Spirit’s power, Jesus also went and preached to the spirits in prison (3:19). This verse has been deemed one of the most difficult verses to interpret in the New Testament. These spirits likely refer to fallen angels who demonstrated their disobedience during the days of Noah when the ark was being prepared (3:20a). They may have played a role in the corruption of the human race in Noah’s day (Genesis 6:5). What they did was so horrible that God placed them in some sort of holding place (i.e., prison) and may be the very ones described in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.

What kind of message would Christ preach to fallen angels? The most appropriate message for them would be a message of victory, that is, Christ’s victory over sin and death. What Satan may have been trying to accomplish in the days of Noah by corrupting the human race, was to keep the promised “Seed” of Genesis 3:15 from coming. However, God still had Noah and his family through whom the line of the promised Seed would continue. In all, God preserved eight souls in the ark and carried them safely “through” the water (3:20b). Jesus, the promised “Seed” likely proclaimed to those in prison the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 and His victory over sin and death.

C. The picture of salvation through His suffering (3:21)

Through Noah’s ark, God preserved a family in the midst of His watery judgment upon sinful humanity. In essence, God saved them. What a beautiful picture of salvation! Baptism, the “like figure” also speaks of salvation. This **key phrase** means corresponding to something. Baptism itself does not save a person, as some religious groups propose. Rather, baptism “corresponds to” salvation. Peter clearly stated that water baptism does not wash away the filth of the flesh, but, in **contrast**, salvation comes through a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (3:21b). That is what baptism corresponds to or symbolizes—the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the core of the gospel message. What baptism symbolizes is what saves a person, a **truth to believe**.

D. The position of the One who suffered (3:22a)

Jesus ultimately ascended into heaven after His resurrection. Luke 24:51 and Acts 1:9 record His ascension. When Jesus did ascend back to Heaven, He took His rightful position at the right hand of God, a **truth to believe** (3:22a). Other **related passages** that speak of Christ seated at the right hand of God include Psalm 110:1; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 1:3; 10:12; 12:2. According to **cultural background**, being seated at someone’s right hand, especially at a

Leader’s Guide: Some of the major views surrounding Jesus preaching to the spirits in prison include: (1) Preaching the gospel to fallen angels or men; (2) Announcing judgment upon the wicked people who died in the flood; (3) Announcing judgment to fallen angels and triumph over Satan; (4) Christ went and emptied Paradise; (5) Christ preached through Peter to those living in the figurative prison of sin; (6) Christ went “in the Spirit” and preached through Noah during the time that he was building the ark.

Leader’s Guide: While there may be many views on Christ preaching to the spirits in prison. Do not allow discussion of this to derail the lesson. Keep in mind the main point of this passage is to demonstrate Christ’s victory in light of suffering.

Leader’s Guide: Some religious groups, even Christian groups, believe that 1 Peter 3:21 teaches what is called “baptismal regeneration.” They believe that water baptism saves a person. This is an erroneous belief about baptism and a gross misinterpretation of 3:21.

great feast, was a seat of the highest honor. There is none other qualified or worthy than Jesus to be seated at the Father's right hand.

E. The power of the One who suffered (3:22b)

If Christ did indeed preach a message of victory to fallen angels, then 3:22b fits beautifully into that context. There has been a great deal of discussion surrounding subjection ever since 3:13. Now we see that after Christ's suffering, preaching to the spirits in prison, and ascension, that angels, authorities, and powers were subjected to Him, a **truth to believe**. The reference to angels likely refers to both good and bad angels. Jesus told His disciples shortly before His ascension, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" in Matthew 28:18, a **related passage**. Likewise, the writer of Hebrews in 2:5-8 (quoting Psalm 8:4-6) spoke of all things being subjected under His feet.

Conclusion

Peter definitely wrote to an audience that endured Christian persecution. He wrote to them that they are blessed if they endure persecution for righteousness' sake. He encouraged them to reverence Christ and keep Him close to their hearts. This would allow them to be a strong witness both with their lips and their life. He quickly moved to discuss Christ's own suffering for the sins of mankind which resulted in the believer's ability to approach the Father. Christ was gloriously raised to new life by the Holy Spirit, thus having complete victory. He went and proclaimed that victory to the spirits in prison and then took His rightful place in Heaven and secured His rightful power over all angels and authorities. All of this culminates in Noah's ark and baptism as beautiful pictures of God's salvation.

Believers today continue to be Peter's audience as they read and study his first epistle. They too can experience Christian persecution at the hands of evil men. May Peter's message to his original audience continue to ring in the ears of today's believers. Not all believers experience persecution to the same degree. But, it is very possible that if you have not yet experienced persecution that you may in the near future. If such persecution comes to your life, be sure to consult Peter's first epistle for help in enduring difficult days.

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that
 - Christ has suffered once for our sins.
 - Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.
 - Baptism pictures the believer's salvation.
 - Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven.
 - All angels, authorities, and powers are subject to Christ.
- **Obey the command** to sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart.
- **Praise God** that Christ can bring us into a relationship with the Heavenly Father.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the importance of living out God's will and avoiding the sins of the past knowing that all people will give an account of their lives before God.

LESSON 9: FAR BETTER TO DO THE WILL OF GOD

1 Peter 4:1-6 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
Arm yourselves, Same mind, lusts, Lasciviousness, Excess of wine, Revellings, Banqueting, Abominable idolatries, Excess of riot
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
"For he that hath suffered in the flesh (cause) hath ceased from sin (effect; 4:1b). the lost Gentiles thought it strange (or they were surprised; effect) that the
3. What contrasts and comparisons do you note in this passage?
*In **contrast** to lust, the believer should strive after the will of God. Believers to Christ when (4:1a).*

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. What is the cultural/historical background of this passage?
When a believer stopped engaging in the immoral practices noted in 4:3, their abstinence served as a condemnation to those who still practiced them.
2. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
The word "therefore" points back to 3:18, where Peter wrote about Christ suffering once for sins, thus picking up this theme of suffering once more.
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
"Same mind;" lusts; Lasciviousness; Excess of wine; Revellings; Banqueting; Abominable idolatries
4. What related passages need to be considered?
Romans 13:12; 2 Corinthians 6:7; 10:4; Ephesians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Revelation 20:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:8

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
 - believers should not live according to the lusts of men.
 - that both the living and dead will give an account of their lives before God's
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
Arm yourself with the same mind as Christ when it comes to suffering.
3. Is there an error to avoid in this passage?
Living like lost people.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:1-6

Get Attention:

As noted in the commentary, According to historical background, when a believer stopped engaging in the immoral practices noted in 4:3, their abstinence served as a condemnation to those who still practiced them. Ask learners to describe ways this still happens today.

believers no longer engaged in the same "excess of riot" (cause; 4:4a). speaking to Jacob (31:29).

judgment.

- believers will live eternally with God.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the importance of living out God's will and avoiding the sins of the past knowing that all people will give an account of their lives before God.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:1-6

Get Attention:

As noted in the commentary, According to historical background, when a believer stopped engaging in the immoral practices noted in 4:3, their abstinence served as a condemnation to those who still practiced them. Ask learners to describe ways this still happens today.

Lesson 9: Far Better to Do the Will of God

1 Peter 4:1-6 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Live According to God's Will (4:1-2)

A. Arm yourself with the mind of Christ (4:1a)

B. Cease from sin (4:1b-2)

Part Two: Walk No More According to the Will of Gentiles (4:3-5)

A. The days of walking like the lost are over (4:3)

B. The lost do not understand the ways of the believer (4:4)

C. All will stand before God's judgment (4:5)

Part Three: The Purpose of the Preached Gospel (4:6)

A. Believers will be judged according to men in the flesh (4:6a)

B. Believers will live according to God in the spirit (4:6b)

Apply It

- **Believe the truths that**
 - believers should not live according to the lusts of men.
 - that both the living and dead will give an account of their lives before God's judgment.
 - believers will live eternally with God.
- **Obey the command**
 - to arm yourself with the same mind as Christ when it comes to suffering.
- Believers should **avoid the error**
 - living like lost people.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 9: Far Better to Do the Will of God

1 Peter 4:1-6 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand the importance of living out God's will and avoiding the sins of the past knowing that all people will give an account of their lives before God.

Introduction

This writer has often said that the safest place for any believer is to be found dead center in God's will. Peter mentioned to his readers that slaves must be in subjection to their masters (2:18). Peter stated at the opening of his second epistle that he was a slave of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1). All believers should view themselves as slaves of God (Romans 6:22). With God as our Master, our wills are bound up in His will.

The whole of the Christian life should be marked by strict obedience to the will of God. Our God is not some harsh taskmaster either, because Jesus said, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30). Even when facing Christian persecution, the believer is not exempt from continuing to fulfill God's will. Before coming to Christ, believers followed the will of a pagan world, but now God expects more from His people. Knowing that all people will stand before God's judgment should be motivation enough for the believer to follow God's will.

Part One: Live According to God's Will (4:1-2)

In discussing God's will, Peter continued his thoughts on Christian suffering as it relates to both Christ and the believer. Christ's suffering serves as a great example for the believer as he or she faces suffering.

A. Arm yourself with the mind of Christ (4:1a)

The "forasmuch" or "therefore" at the beginning of 4:1 points the reader back to a previous passage. Most scholars agree that the word "therefore" points back to 3:18, the **immediate context**, where Peter wrote about Christ's suffering once for sins, thus picking up this theme of suffering once more.

Peter **compared** believers to Christ when he stated, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (4:1a). Peter employed a military term with the **key phrase**, "arm yourselves," which means to equip oneself for battle. Just like a soldier must strap on his protective gear and take up his weapons for battle, the Christian must prepare for the spiritual battle involved in suffering. Paul, likewise, in other **related passages**, encouraged believers to pick up their spiritual weapons and put on their spiritual armor (Romans 13:12; 2 Corinthians 6:7; 10:4; Ephesians 6:11).

Believers are called upon to arm themselves with the "same mind" as Christ. This **key phrase** refers to possessing the same way of thinking. Christ willingly suffered in the flesh when He endured harsh physical persecution at the hands of sinners. Believers should possess the same mind when it comes to their own suffering. No one wants to endure suffering; however, when suffering for righteousness' sake, the believer enters into a blessed state (3:14).

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the importance of living out God's will and avoiding the sins of the past knowing that all people will give an account of their lives before God.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:1-6

Get Attention:

As noted in the commentary, according to historical background, when a believer stopped engaging in the immoral practices noted in 4:3, their abstinence served as a condemnation to those who still practiced them. Ask learners to describe ways this still happens today.

Leader's Guide: Teach your learner(s) that any time they see a "therefore" in Scripture, they should investigate what it is "there for." This type of word should cause the student of God's Word to examine how one passage relates to a previous passage.

Leader's Guide: Many scholars believe Peter included 1 Peter 3:19-22 as more of a parenthetical statement (i.e., bonus information) to his main point surrounding suffering. This means the "forasmuch" or "therefore" connects back to 3:18.

Leader's Guide: The word "likewise" is not the same word in the original language as used in 3:1, 7. The Greek word in 4:1 can be translated "also."

Active Learning

Ask your learners to share in what ways they "arm themselves" on a daily basis to face a hostile world that is often against the ideals of Christianity.

Leader's Guide: The same root word of the word "cease" was also used in 3:10 to speak of the believer "refraining" his tongue from evil.

Leader's Guide: The same Greek word translated "lusts" in 4:2, can also be translated to desire something good, such as in 1 Thessalonians 2:17. But, the primary usage of the word in the New Testament refers to craving something bad.

Leader's Guide: This quote came from the NIV Study Bible regarding 1 Peter 4:1. John H. Skilton was also responsible to commentary for 1 Peter.

B. Cease from sin (4:1b-2)

Peter mentioned a **cause and effect** worth pointing out to the reader, "for he that hath suffered in the flesh (cause) hath ceased from sin" (effect; 4:1b). The first time the phrase "hath suffered in the flesh" was used at the beginning of 4:1, it referred to Christ's suffering. The second time Peter used the phrase, it referred to believers. Christ Himself never had to cease from sin because He never sinned, as noted in 2 Corinthians 5:21, a **related passage**. The **key word** ceased means to stop doing something or discontinue an activity. Furthermore, according to the grammar, this word conveys the idea "to cease and continue to cease." In other words, there should be an ongoing effect of believers ceasing from sin.

Peter further explained the idea of ceasing from sin in 4:2. The believer should no longer live the rest of his time on earth "in the flesh" by participating in the lusts of men, a **truth to believe**. The **key word** lusts means to crave or desire something bad. In **contrast**, the believer should strive after the will of God, a key point in the discussion about suffering. The believer's suffering should not be an excuse to drop one's guard and fall into sin. The believer should have an ever-increasing desire to fulfill God's will.

The question remains, "How then does suffering in the flesh (i.e., persecution) result in a believer's ceasing from sin?" Some hold that somehow suffering purifies a person from his sins. This view cannot be right as it is taught nowhere else in Scripture. Others believe this passage to teach that the literal death of the Christian will result in him ceasing from sin. However, Christian suffering does not always end in one's death. Rather, what Peter seems to be saying, is that the believer's resolve to take on the mind of Christ with regards to suffering also causes him to be resolved to turn away from sin. Commentator Donald W. Burdick noted, "Serious suffering for Christ advances the progress of sanctification." Christ chose obedience to God's will despite the suffering He endured. Christians should be so resolved to obeying God's will that they will, by God's grace, be done with sin as a way of life (see Romans 6:18; 1 John 3:9).

Part Two: Walk No More According to the Will of Gentiles (4:3-5)

Believers should indeed follow after God's will in every aspect of their lives. Peter further reminded his readers that they used to follow the will of another.

A. The days of walking like the lost are over (4:3)

Peter reminisced for a moment concerning his readers' past lives of walking according to the will of the Gentiles (i.e., the lost). There are two wills in opposition to one another—the will of God vs. the will of man. Concerning the will of man, Peter stated that it "may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles" (4:3a). This phrase basically means, "We have spent enough time living like pagans." In what ways did these believers live before Christ? Peter mentioned six ways his recipients formerly lived, all noted as **key words** and **errors to avoid**.

- **lasciviousness** (lah-shiv-ee-uhs-ness) - This word means to live with no moral restraint, even engaging in sensual or outrageous sexual behavior.
- **lusts** - This **repeated word** from 4:2, means to crave or desire something bad. In the context of Peter's list, it likely refers to sexual lusts.

- excess of wine - This word literally means to bubble over with wine and clearly speaks of drunkenness. Such excess of wine often resulted in drunken orgies.
- revellings - This word refers to excessive feasting and originally referred to a feast in honor of the god for wine.
- banqueting - This word basically refers to a drinking party.
- abominable idolatries - This word refers to the unlawful (that is, opposing God's law) worshipping of images.

One cannot help but notice that all the words in this list refer to drunkenness and sexual impurity. These are the types of things the world craves, but the believer should no longer engage in such activities.

B. The lost do not understand the ways of the believer (4:4)

According to **historical background**, when a believer stopped engaging in the immoral practices noted in 4:3, their abstinence served as a condemnation to those who still practiced them. Noted as a **cause and effect**, the lost Gentiles thought it strange (or they were surprised; effect) that the believers no longer engaged in the same "excess of riot" (cause; 4:4a). This **key phrase** refers to the extreme degree of reckless immoral behavior. They not only think it strange, but they also speak evil of these believers (4:4b). Believers today can still face this issue. Sometimes, in wisdom, believers might need to disassociate from some people of their past. Such people may not understand the believer's lack of engagement with past sinful behaviors. Instead, believers need to associate more with like-minded people of faith.

C. All will stand before God's judgment (4:5)

When the subject of God's judgment comes up, people often think of the lost being judged. And it is true, that lost people who engage in such activities as listed in 4:3 will have to give an account of their lives before God (4:5a). However, believers are not exempt from facing God's judgment, as Paul told the believers at Corinth, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:10). God is "ready to judge the quick (living) and the dead" (4:5b). It matters not whether one has already died or is still living when God judges, all will face Him, a **truth to believe**. It will certainly be better to face God's judgment as a believer. As Paul stated in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The lost who stand before God's judgment will face eternal punishment, as stated in Revelation 20:11-14, a **related passage**.

Part Three: The Purpose of the Preached Gospel (4:6)

Peter closed this section with thoughts about the gospel being preached. After all, it was the gospel that caused Peter's recipients to suffer under persecution. Therefore, it is important to understand the preached gospel as it relates to Christian suffering.

A. Believers will be judged according to men in the flesh (4:6a)

Peter wrote 4:6 as a **cause** followed by two **effects**. The gospel was preached to those who are now dead (cause) so that they might be judged

→ **Leader's Guide:** The types of sins listed in 4:3 lead one to believe that Peter solely has his Gentile audience in mind. However, Jews were capable of committing such sins as well, and so it applies to all of his recipients. This is not to say that all of Peter's recipients lived this way, but some most certainly did.

Active Learning

Ask your learners to reflect upon the kind of behaviors from which God saved them.

→ **Leader's Guide:** The **key phrase** translated, "speaking evil" comes from the Greek word which refers to blaspheming.

according to men in the flesh (first effect; 4:6a). The dead mentioned in 4:6 likely refers to believers. They heard the gospel preached and responded positively toward it and were persecuted because of it. They may have even suffered martyrdom for their faith. The phrase, “that they might be judged according to men in the flesh,” probably refers to persecution of believers by the lost because of the gospel. If martyrdom is in mind here, the pagans who judged them likely viewed their deaths as a judgment upon them (i.e., upon the martyred believers).

B. Believers will live according to God in the spirit (4:6b)

The second effect, which also serves as a **contrast** to the first effect, is that even though men judged these believers, they “live according to God in the spirit,” a great **truth to believe**. Once these believers died, they found themselves in the presence of God. Paul also stated that to be absent from the body meant to be present with the Lord in 2 Corinthians 5:8, a **related passage**. Believers that die in the Lord are “in the spirit” until the time they receive new resurrected bodies according to other **related passages** (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 3:21).

Conclusion

Once a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, God instills new desires into him. Believers possess a longing to fulfill God’s will in their lives and depart from fulfilling the will of the lost world. Those who are still in their sins may not understand the believer’s new way of life, and may even persecute believers because of righteousness. This, however, should not deter the believer from living the kind of life God desires. All people, the lost and the saved, will one day stand before God to give an account of their lives. May believers today continue to practice faith to live for the Lord even when persecution comes!

Apply It

- **Believe the truths** that
 - believers should not live according to the lusts of men.
 - that both the living and dead will give an account of their lives before God’s judgment.
 - believers will live eternally with God.
- **Obey the command** to arm yourself with the same mind as Christ when it comes to suffering.
- Believers should **avoid the error** of living like lost people.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

LESSON 10: LIVING WITH THE END IN SIGHT

1 Peter 4:7-11 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
Sober, Watch, Fervent, "Charity shall cover the multitude of sins," Grudging, Gift, Minister, Steward, Dominion
2. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Because the end of all things is at hand, believers should be sober and watch unto prayer (effects; 4:7b). Those who speak the oracles of God and serve with

God's ability (causes), should glorify God (effect) (4:11c).

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
God's judgment in 4:5-6
2. How is the passage affected by its cultural/historical background?
Sober;" "watch;" Fervent;" Charity shall cover the multitude of sins;" Grudging; Gift; Steward; Dominion
3. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
John 13:34 and 15:12; Romans 12:1
4. What related passages need to be considered?

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe or promises to claim in this passage?
We are living in the last days.
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
 - be of sound mind.
 - have a well-balanced state of mind.
3. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
Jesus has dominion forever and ever.
4. Claim the promise that love will cover a multitude of sins.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will prepare his/her mind for effective prayer, love fellow believers, and serve the Lord faithfully through spiritual gifts as the end of all things draws near.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:7-11

Get Attention:

Discuss what learners think when they see someone with a sign that says: THE END IS NEAR? (Make a sign if possible.) Explain that this lesson explores how to prepare the end.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will prepare his/her mind for effective prayer, love fellow believers, and serve the Lord faithfully through spiritual gifts as the end of all things draws near.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:7-11

Get Attention:

Discuss what learners think when they see someone with a sign that says: THE END IS NEAR? (Make a sign if possible.) Explain that this lesson explores how to prepare the end.

Lesson 10: Living with the End in Sight

1 Peter 4:7-11 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: How to Prepare for the End (4:7-9)

A. Be of sound mind for the purpose of prayer (4:7)

B. Have fervent love for one another (4:8)

C. Show hospitality to one another (4:9)

Part Two: How to Serve Until the End (4:10-11)

A. Be good stewards of spiritual gifts (4:10)

B. Know the different types of spiritual gifts (4:11a-b)

C. Know the purpose of spiritual gifts (4:11c-d)

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** *that we are living in the last days.*
- **Claim the promise** *that love will cover a multitude of sins.*
- **Obey the commands to**
 - *be of sound mind*
 - *have a well-balanced state of mind*
- **Praise God**
that Jesus has dominion forever and ever.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 10: Living with the End in Sight

1 Peter 4:7-11 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will prepare his/her mind for effective prayer, love fellow believers, and serve the Lord faithfully through spiritual gifts as the end of all things draws near.

Introduction

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ and God's final judgment upon this world are the next monumental events on the biblical calendar. The angel told the disciples as they watched Jesus ascend into heaven that He would one day return to earth (Acts 1:11). The Bible never says when that day will be. Jesus stated, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36). The way believers wait for this event becomes very important. Believers should not just sit back and do nothing as they await the Lord's return. The passage for this study helps to address how to live with the end in sight. It requires both preparation and active service.

Part One: How to Prepare for the End (4:7-9)

Christians often cite a portion of Revelation 22:20, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," or some variation of it, when facing difficult times. This world can be full of trouble which often causes believers to wish for the Lord's return. Many of Peter's recipients were facing persecution, and so thoughts about the end drawing near likely brought comfort to them. Peter let them know in 4:7-9, how best to prepare for the end.

A. Be of sound mind for the purpose of prayer (4:7)

The phrase, "The end of all things is at hand" (4:7a), comes on the heels of Peter writing about God's judgment in 4:5-6, the **immediate context**. The end of all things likely refers to God's final judgment and the return of Jesus. "At hand" means that these events are drawing near. **Believe the truth** that we are living in the last days. Peter challenged his readers to do certain things as they awaited these final events.

Noted as a **cause and effect**, because the end of all things is at hand, believers should be sober and watch unto prayer (effects; 4:7b). Both of these **key words** have to do with the mind. The word "sober" means to have a sound mind or think straight. One who has such a mind can make reasonable and wise decisions. The word "watch" means to have a well-balanced state of mind, and is a **repeated word** from 1:13, where it is translated as "sober." Believers living in difficult days, whether first-century Christians or modern-day Christians, need to have clarity of thinking. Believers must remain focused on living holy in a hostile world and serving the Lord faithfully. Clear thinking will help facilitate such godly living. Believers should **obey the commands** to have a sound and well-balanced state of mind.

The main reason offered by Peter for Christians to be sober and watchful is so they can pray. Peter used the common word for prayer which refers to prayer in general. Prayer affords the believer the opportunity to fellowship with God and seek His help or wisdom. The most effective prayers can be uttered from those who possess sound minds. A believer with a sound mind will be focused on God's will

Lesson Aim:

The learner will prepare his/her mind for effective prayer, love fellow believers, and serve the Lord faithfully through spiritual gifts as the end of all things draws near.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:7-11

Get Attention:

Discuss what learners think when they see someone with a sign that says: THE END IS NEAR? (Make a sign if possible.) Explain that this lesson explores how to prepare the end.

Active Learning

Ask learners to consider how they pray. What is their state of mind when praying? Ask learners to pray through this verse.

Leader's Guide: The word "watch" in 4:7 and "sober" in 1:13 come from the same Greek word in the original language.

Leader's Guide: Other words for prayer in the New Testament include the ideas to ask (Matthew 7:7), beg (Luke 9:38), urgent requests (1 Timothy 2:1), intercession and petitions (1 Timothy 2:1).

Leader's Guide: The word "charity" comes from the Greek word *agape* (uh-gah-pay)

in their prayers, not seeking their own will or selfish things. Believers should never neglect the power of prayer in their lives.

B. Have fervent love for one another (4:8)

Another effect of knowing that the end of all things is at hand involves having "fervent charity among yourselves" (4:8a). The Greek word for charity is often translated as "love" in many places in the New Testament. This word refers to unconditional love. Peter further clarified that this love should be fervent, a **key word** that means earnest or constant. Believers should be eager to love one another on a constant basis. Peter stressed that such love should be a priority among believers when he stated, "Above all." The outside world brings enough hatred and persecution against believers. The last thing believers need is strife and hatred coming from within the church. Unconditional love between believers will help to sustain each other through difficult days. Peter likely recalled Jesus' own words to the disciples to love one another in John 13:34 and 15:12, **related passages**.

Peter also stated that "charity shall cover the multitude of sins," a wonderful **promise to claim** (4:8b). This **key phrase** from Peter seems to indicate that Christians should extend love to fellow believers and offer forgiveness for wrongs committed against them. The specific word "cover" means to hide or conceal. This does not mean to "cover up" sin, as no sin should be overlooked or minimized. Peter may have in mind passages such as Proverbs 10:12 and 17:9 that speak of forgiveness as opposed to holding a grudge or holding a wrong to someone's account.

C. Show hospitality to one another (4:9)

The third effect stemming from the knowledge of the end of all things includes showing hospitality to one another (4:9a). The **key word** hospitality means to show kindness to strangers. Peter's readers were scattered across the five provinces or regions mentioned in 1:1, which indicates these believers were displaced from their homes. According to **historical background**, without many lodging places available in the first century, people depended upon the hospitality of others. Also, these scattered Christians would need places to gather for worship. What a glorious use of one's home!

Peter made a qualifying statement regarding showing hospitality. It must be done without grudging. This **key word** means to grumble or complain. It is not enough merely to do the right thing, but it must be done with the right attitude. Believers today should still strive to demonstrate hospitality to one another. It might seem easy to secure a hotel room for someone who needs a place to stay (such as an evangelist or missionary). But, we should not use this as an excuse not to show hospitality. Psalm 24:1 states that everything in this world belongs to the Lord. Our homes and vehicles (along with all our possessions) belong to the Lord, and we are called to be stewards of these possessions. Serving and helping others with our possessions marks a good use of these resources.

Part Two: How to Serve Until the End (4:10-11)

Preparing for the end involves possessing a sound mind so that we might

Leader's Guide: If a fellow church member has committed a serious sin, especially those that warrant criminal charges, the church may need to involve the authorities to resolve the matter both legally and properly.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word for "grudging" (gong-goohs-mahn) is an onomatopoeic (ah-no-mat-oh-poetic) word. This is a fancy way of saying that the pronunciation of the word sounds like it's meaning. Saying *gong-goohs-mahn* under your breath sounds like grumbling.

Active Learning

Ask your learners to discuss briefly how they might use their homes and vehicles to show hospitality to others.

pray and love one another with the proper actions. The believer also has the responsibility to serve the Lord actively until He returns. Peter reminded his readers of service involving their spiritual gifts.

A. Be good stewards of spiritual gifts (4:10)

Peter acknowledged that every believer has received a gift (4:10a). The **key word** gift refers to God's granting special ability so that believers might serve Him faithfully according to His will for each person. We commonly refer to these varied abilities as spiritual gifts. Paul also mentioned in Romans 12:3, a **related passage**, that God has given a measure of faith to every believer in his discussion of spiritual gifts.

Peter expects his readers to minister to or serve one another with these gifts. This **key word** literally referred to those who waited on tables but also spoke of general service of various kinds. Believers receive these gifts from God and are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (4:10c). The **key word** steward literally refers to the manager of a household or estate. On a more spiritual level, the word carries the connotation of using one's spiritual gift in a responsible way. God gifts His people not to sit around and do nothing, but to serve the church actively.

Obviously, believers must know their gift before they use it to serve. One can study passages where spiritual gifts are mentioned such as Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, and Ephesians 4:11. As one studies Scripture, it is also important to pray and ask God to reveal His gift. God might also use other believers to point out abilities in your life that would point toward a specific gift. There are spiritual gift questionnaires that believers can take which can help to determine where they might be gifted. While such questionnaires are not full proof, they can point one in the right direction.

B. Know the different types of spiritual gifts (4:11a-b)

Paul used the parts of a human body working together to function as a healthy body to illustrate how members of the church should function (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31). Peter seems to summarize or categorize spiritual gifts in terms of speaking and serving.

1. Speaking gifts (4:11a)

Those who have gifts that involve speaking must speak "as the oracles of God" (4:11a). The **key word** oracle refers to a message originating from God. Those who are gifted to teach must make sure they are declaring God's Word accurately when they speak and that their words line up with Scripture. Even those who have the gift of mercy or exhortation (Romans 12:8) will also use their voice to offer words of compassion or encouragement. All speaking gifts must be done with great care, speaking words that come from God. If one claims to be speaking from God, but such speech violates or goes against God's Word, that person's words did not come from God.

2. Serving gifts (4:11b)

Other gifts fall under the category of service and do not necessarily involve

Leader's Guide: Some of the gifts listed in these passages such as speaking in tongues and miracles likely ceased after the time of the apostles (see 1 Corinthians 13:9-10).

Active Learning

Ask your learners if they know what their spiritual gifts are and if they are serving the body of Christ with their gifts. If they do not know, commit to praying with them that God would reveal this to them.

speech. Those who minister (a **repeated word** from 4:10) or serve must do so with the ability that God gives (4:11b). No believer should speak or serve depending on his or her own ability. Such service will prove to be ineffective. God not only grants the gift but gives the power to perform it.

C. Know the purpose of spiritual gifts (4:11c-d)

The primary purpose of spiritual gifts is meant to glorify God through Jesus Christ (4:11c). A great **cause and effect** should be noted here. Those who speak the oracles of God and serve with God's ability (causes), should glorify God (effect). The whole of one's life should be to glorify God. Believers should serve so that others see God at work through them, rather than for personal recognition. Only God is worthy of such glory. Peter further described Jesus as One who should receive "praise and dominion for ever and ever" (4:11d). Just as believers glorify God, so they should give praise to Jesus, the Son of God. The **key word** dominion speaks of Christ's supremacy and mighty power. Such dominion belongs to Him forever and ever. Peter closed 4:11 with the word "Amen" to highlight these words about Jesus. **Praise God** that Jesus has dominion forever and ever!

Conclusion

Persecution causes tense and difficult moments. Believers must learn to remain focused under such trying circumstances. This requires believers to have clear-headed thinking so that they can enjoy an effective prayer life. To endure times of persecution, believers must seek God in prayer for help and guidance to navigate through the turmoil. During times of persecution, believers also need to depend upon one another. The command to love one another cannot be overstated. On top of prayer and love, the church must still be the church during persecution. Believers must exercise their spiritual gifts so that the church may function as the healthy body of Christ. The good news for the persecuted church—the end of all things is drawing near! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that we are living in the last days.
- **Claim the promise** that love will cover a multitude of sins.
- **Obey the commands** to
 - be of sound mind.
 - have a well-balanced state of mind.
- **Praise God** that Jesus has dominion forever and ever.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson Aim:

The learner will rejoice and glorify God during times of suffering as a Christian.

LESSON 11: REJOICING IN SUFFERING

1 Peter 4:12-19 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:12-19

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. Who is being addressed in this passage?
Peter's heart is seen in 4:12 when he **addressed** his recipients as, "Beloved."

2. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
strange, "fiery trial," reproached, scarcely, busybody, commit

3. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
As partakers of Christ's sufferings, when His glory is revealed (cause), believers can be glad with exceeding joy (effect; 4:13b). In 4:14a, believers who are

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
"Strange" means to be struck with amazement or wonder. In 4:4, the pagans thought it strange that these believers no longer lived as they did in unholy
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Strange; "Fiery trial," Reproached; Busybody; Commit
3. What related passages need to be considered?
John 15:19-21; Matthew 5:11-12.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
Believers are blessed when reviled for the name of Christ.; Believers suffer persecution according to God's will.
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
Not think it strange when suffering comes; rejoice that you can share in the sufferings of Christ; not be ashamed if you suffer as a Christian; glorify God when
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
Suffering because of wrongdoing.
4. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
The spirit of glory and of God rests on believers.

Get Attention:

Ask learners what they pray when in trouble, discomfort, or pain. Usually the first thing is to pray for healing or relief. Rejoicing is not usually the first thing we do, if we do it at all.

reproached for the name of Christ (cause) are happy and the spirit of glory and of God rests upon them (effects). Believers who suffer according to God's will (cause) should commit the keeping of their souls to a faithful Creator.

behavior.

you suffer as a Christian; commit yourself to a faithful Creator during times of suffering.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will rejoice and glorify God during times of suffering as a Christian.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:12-19

Get Attention:

Ask learners what they pray when in trouble, discomfort, or pain. Usually the first thing is to pray for healing or relief. Rejoicing is not usually the first thing we do, if we do it at all.

Lesson 11: Rejoicing in Suffering

1 Peter 4:12-19 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Proper Attitude in Suffering (4:12-14)

A. Do not view suffering as strange (4:12)

B. Rejoice in suffering (4:13-14)

Part Two: The Proper Kind of Suffering (4:15-16)

A. Not the kind that characterizes sinners (4:15)

B. The kind that leads to glorifying God (4:16)

Part Three: Judgment as it Relates to Suffering (4:17-18)

A. Judgment begins from the house of God (4:17a)

B. God reserves worse judgment for sinners (4:17b-18)

Part Four: God's Will as it Relates to Suffering (4:19)

A. God is in control of suffering (4:19a)

B. Those who suffer should commit themselves to God (4:19b)

Apply It

- **Believe the truth that** *Believers are blessed if they are reviled for the name of Christ; Believers suffer persecution according to God's will.*
- **Obey the command to** *Not think it strange when suffering comes; Rejoice that you can share in the sufferings of Christ; Not be ashamed if you suffer as a*
- **Avoid the error** *of suffering because of wrongdoing.*
- **Praise God** that *the spirit of glory and of God rests on believers.*

Christian; Glorify God when you suffer as a Christian; Commit yourself to a faithful Creator during times of suffering.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson



Lesson Aim:

The learner will rejoice and glorify God during times of suffering as a Christian.

Lesson 11: Rejoicing in Suffering

1 Peter 4:12-19 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: learner will rejoice and glorify God during times of suffering as a Christian.

Introduction

When one thinks of the word “rejoicing,” it often invokes thoughts of being happy during positive or uplifting occasions. People rejoice over the birth of a new baby, receiving a new job or promotion at work, graduating from high school or college, etc. Rarely does one think about rejoicing over something that might cause discomfort or pain. However, this is exactly what Peter called for in his final section about Christian suffering in 1 Peter 4:12-19. Rejoicing in suffering may not be a popular thought amongst Christians, but it most definitely should be considered. The Bible teaches that suffering needs to be viewed as a norm for believers. Jesus told His disciples that they would be hated and persecuted for His name’s sake in John 15:19-21, a **related passage**. Since Jesus promised persecution would come, it would be wise to consider what the believer’s attitude should be when suffering becomes reality.

Part One: The Proper Attitude in Suffering (4:12-14)

An old saying states, “Attitude is everything.” One’s attitude about circumstances can impact one’s perspective about what is happening. Peter offered two commands— (1) what not to think and (2) what to think when suffering comes.

A. Do not view suffering as strange (4:12)

Peter’s heart comes to the forefront right at the beginning of 4:12 when he **addressed** his recipients as, “Beloved.” This term describes an emotion of endearment and attachment Peter had with these recipients. He knew them well and desired the best for them. He addressed them the same way in 2:11 when he encouraged them to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Peter commanded these beloved believers not to think it strange when suffering comes. The **key word** strange means to be struck with amazement or wonder. Peter used this word in 4:4, the **immediate context**, when the pagans thought it strange that these believers no longer lived as they did in unholy behavior. Jewish believers in Christ were all too familiar with persecution as they endured it first at the hands of the Jewish authorities. Peter’s primary recipients for this letter were likely Gentiles. Persecution for them may have been a new experience. Peter referred to their suffering as a “fiery trial.” This **key phrase** refers to an extremely difficult circumstance. In the context of the passage, it seems that God allowed it to test their faith.

Remember, attitude is everything. First-century Christians found themselves at odds with a pagan Roman society. Twenty-first-century Christians are also at odds with their pagan society. If believers expect fiery trials to come, then they will not be surprised when they do. **Obey the command** not to think it strange when suffering comes for following Christ.



Scriptures:

1 Peter 4:12-19

Get Attention:

Ask learners what they pray when in trouble, discomfort, or pain. Usually the first thing is to pray for healing or relief. Rejoicing is not usually the first thing we do, if we do it at all.

B. Rejoice in suffering (4:13-14)

If believers are not to think it strange when suffering comes, what attitude should they take? Peter commanded his recipients in way of **contrast** to rejoice that “ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings” (4:13a). The grammatical construction of the word “rejoice” indicates that believers are “to keep on rejoicing.” Rejoicing should be a constant attitude for the Christian. What a privilege that believers can partake or share in the sufferings of Christ! Note the **cause and effect**. By being partakers of Christ’s sufferings, then when His glory is revealed (cause), the believer can be glad with exceeding joy (effect; 4:13b). Peter noted the revelation of Jesus Christ, also in 1:7. When Christ returns to this earth and believers behold His glory, they will be glad and rejoice with supreme gladness that they lived faithfully for Him.

Believers need to be cautious on how they handle Scripture texts on suffering. Christians of the past sought to experience suffering by provoking certain situations or buffeting their bodies thinking that this would make them more spiritual. Peter is not telling believers to enjoy suffering or even seek it. But, when suffering comes naturally for the cause of Christ, believers should **obey the command** to rejoice. Never should a believer go out of his or her way to bring on suffering.

Notice the **cause and two effects** in 4:14a. Believers who are reproached for the name of Christ (cause) are happy and the spirit of glory and of God rests upon them (effects). The **key word** reproached means to revile or insult someone. Earlier in Peter’s ministry, he did rejoice that he was able to suffer for His name (Acts 5:41). The **key word** happy could also be translated as “blessed.” Jesus spoke of the same blessed state for believers being persecuted in Matthew 5:11-12, a **related passage**.

Peter appears to be referring to Isaiah 11:1-2 when he mentioned the “spirit of glory and of God.” Isaiah prophesied of the same spirit that would rest on Christ. Peter opened his letter by mentioning the sanctifying work of the Spirit in 1:2. Believers can find comfort that God’s presence remains with them during times of suffering.

Peter further noted a **contrast** of thought in 4:14b. Unbelievers (i.e., persecutors) speak evil of God, but believers glorify Him. To glorify God means to give Him praise. God’s presence and help during difficult times should cause believers to give Him due praise.

Part Two: The Proper Kind of Suffering (4:15-16)

A person can experience suffering for different reasons. When a person does something wrong or illegal, he should expect some sort of punishment. For the believer, however, sometimes suffering comes from doing the right thing. Peter already told his recipients that it would be better for them to suffer for doing right than doing wrong in 3:17. He emphasized once again that they should endure the proper kind of suffering.

A. Not the kind that characterizes sinners (4:15)

There is one kind of suffering reserved for those who murder, steal, and participate in evil acts. These are obvious examples of wrongdoing, indeed **errors to avoid**. Those who commit these actions deserve the punishment that comes to

Leader’s Guide: You may be using an English translation that does not contain the phrase, “on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.” The difference is based on manuscript evidence. The KJV is based on Greek manuscripts that contain this phrase. Other English versions are based on manuscripts that do not contain this phrase. The phrase itself certainly declares truth.

them. Peter also mentioned a not-so-obvious action when he included a “busybody in other men’s matters.” The **key word** busybody refers to someone who meddles or gets involved in someone else’s business. The believer should not bring on undo trouble by being too nosy in the business of others. As a “lesser” sin, some might not think of being a busybody as wrong. Peter, however, included this wrongdoing that can bring unnecessary stress to one’s life.

B. The kind that leads to glorifying God (4:16)

Noted as a **cause and effect**, if anyone suffers as a Christian (cause), he is commanded not to be ashamed (effect). Believers should not feel dishonored or embarrassed for being a Christian. The term “Christian” is used only two other times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28). Based on its usage in Acts, the term appears to be a title of disdain given to believers by the lost. Believers claimed the term, however, and perceived it as a title of honor to be considered a follower of Christ. In **contrast** to feeling ashamed, believers should glorify God, a **repeated idea** from 4:14.

Part Three: Judgment as it Relates to Suffering (4:17-18)

When it comes to suffering, it is far better to suffer on this earth than to suffer for all of eternity. There is one kind of judgment for the believer and another type for the unbeliever. Peter stressed both in 4:17-18.

A. Judgment begins from the house of God (4:17a)

Peter used an unusual phrase in 4:17a concerning God’s judgment beginning “at” or from the house of God. Believers will stand before God’s judgment as stated by Paul in Romans 14:10 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15. But those references to judgment refer to a future time when all will stand before God and give an account of their lives. Peter has something different in mind here. He stated in 1:7 that the believer’s faith will be tested by fire, just like gold is tested and purified by fire. Likewise, in 4:12, he mentioned the fiery trial of believers. In context, the judgment regarding the house of God seems to be equated with the persecution that believers face.

B. God reserves worse judgment for sinners (4:17b-18)

So, if God’s people face judgment or suffer on this earth, what kind of judgment awaits those who are not part of God’s house? In 4:17b, Peter basically asked, “What sort of end awaits those who do not obey the gospel of God?” Stated simply, their end will not be good! Peter asked another question in 4:18, “And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?” The **key word** scarcely means with great difficulty or just barely. This does not mean that God has a hard time saving His people. What Peter means is that persecution makes it hard for the believer to stay strong in faith to the end. If God allows believers’ lives to be wrought with such difficulty on this earth, the lost will have no chance before God’s judgment.

Part Four: God’s Will as it Relates to Suffering (4:19)

It should comfort the believer to know that Christian suffering serves

Leader’s Guide: There is a grammatical connection between the first three vices mentioned in 4:15 as they are all connected by a singular conjunction (“as”) in the Greek at the beginning of the list. The fourth vice is introduced by its own conjunction (“as”). The emphasis with the construction could be that the first three are noted as the “greater” sins and the last one as a “lesser” sin. The believer should not find himself suffering for any “great” sins or “small” sins.

Active Learning

Have your learners look up and read Acts 11:26; 26:28 to see where the term “Christian” originated and how it was used in a mocking way by a pagan ruler.

a purpose. There remains One whom the believer can look to during times of suffering. Peter reminded his recipients not to forget God when enduring persecution.

A. God is in control of suffering (4:19a)

Peter acknowledged that believers suffer according to the will of God, a **truth to believe** (4:19a). Did you catch that? God is in control of suffering. He is the One who allows it to happen and to endure for a certain length of time and intensity. God allows it to test the believer's faith (1:7). Believers do not suffer just for the sake of suffering, but God has a distinct purpose in it. He is after our growth and dedication to Him that we might be a strong witness to a lost world.

B. Those who suffer should commit themselves to God (4:19b)

Stated as one last **cause and effect**, believers who suffer according to God's will (cause) should commit the keeping of their souls to a faithful Creator (effect), a **command to obey** (4:19b). The **key word** commit means to entrust one's life to another. Jesus entrusted His very spirit to the Father right before He died upon the cross (Luke 23:46). Believers, too, can commit or entrust their lives to God. As believers commit themselves to God, they should also be focused "in well doing." This **key phrase** refers to living the right way. Even while facing persecution, believers should strive to live holy in a hostile world.

Conclusion

The apostle Paul stated in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." The idea of rejoicing is not only reserved for positive experiences in life that make us feel good. Sometimes believers are called upon to rejoice when things are not going so well. Persecution of Christians may not be enjoyable, but we can still rejoice in it because we are suffering for the name of Christ. They should not only rejoice, but believers should also glorify God in moments of suffering. Give God praise for the opportunity to suffer for Him. Believers should constantly be reminded to pray for each other so that they might stand strong in the midst of an evil world that despises biblical truth.

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that
 - believers are blessed if they are reviled for the name of Christ.
 - believers suffer persecution according to God's will.
- **Obey the command** to
 - not think it strange when suffering comes.
 - rejoice that you can share in the sufferings of Christ.
 - not be ashamed if you suffer as a Christian.
 - glorify God when you suffer as a Christian.
 - commit yourself to a faithful Creator during times of suffering.
- **Avoid the error** of suffering because of wrongdoing.
- **Praise God** that the spirit of glory and of God rests on believers.

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson



Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand how elders are to serve the congregations entrusted to them.



Scriptures:

1 Peter 5:1-4

LESSON 12: EXHORTATION TO ELDERS

1 Peter 5:1-4 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. Who is being addressed in this passage?
Peter to the elders in 5:1-4.
2. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
elder, partaker, oversight, feed, oversight, constraint, "chief shepherd" "being lords over"
3. What contrasts are noted in this passage?
"not by constraint, but willingly" (5:2b); "not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (5:2c); "neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the
4. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
"When the chief shepherd shall appear (cause), ye shall receive a crown of glory" (effect; 5:4b).

→ flock" (5:3).

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
In 4:11, God gifts to believers with various abilities related to speaking and serving. As gifted as the body of Christ may be, the church still needs leaders who
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Elder; Partaker; Oversight; Constraint; "Filthy lucre;" "Chief shepherd;" "Being lords over"
3. What related passages need to be considered?
Hebrews 11:2; Luke 7:3; Mark 11:27; John 21:15-19; 2 Peter 2:3; Jude 11; John 10:11, 14.

→ can guide them.

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe in this passage?
The Chief Shepherd, Jesus, will appear one day.
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
Elders are to feed the flock of God.
3. Are there any errors to avoid in this passage?
Elders should avoid (1) feeding the flock by constraint. (2) feeding the flock for money. (3) feeding the flock to for personal prestige and power.
4. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
Elders for the crown of life that the Chief Shepherd will reward to them for faithful service.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand how elders are to serve the congregations entrusted to them.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 5:1-4

Get Attention:

Ask learners to consider the question: Since Peter specifically **addressed** the elders in 5:1-4, why should church members study the passage? (There are many insights a lay person can take away from this section regarding the role and function of elders. Such information should prompt church members to remember to pray for their pastor.)

Lesson 12: Exhortation to Elders

1 Peter 5:1-4 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: Peter's the Elder (5:1)

A. *His role among the elders* (5:1a)

B. *His privilege as a witness of Christ's sufferings* (5:1b)

C. *His status as a partaker of the future glory* (5:1c)

Part Two: The Command to Elders (5:2-3)

A. *The command stated* (5:2a)

B. *The command specified* (5:2b-3)

1. Obey it willingly (5:2b)
2. Obey it eagerly (5:2c)
3. Obey it to provide an example (5:3)

Part Three: The Elder's Reward (5:4)

A. *Identity of the Chief Shepherd* (5:4a)

B. *Receiving the crown of glory* (5:4b)

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that *the Chief Shepherd, Jesus, will appear one day.*
- Elders should **obey the command** *feed the flock of God.*
- Elders should **avoid the errors** of
 - *feeding the flock by constraint.*
 - *feeding the flock for money.*
- Elders should **praise God** for *Elders for the crown of life that the Chief Shepherd will reward to them for faithful service.*

◦ *feeding the flock to for personal prestige and power.*

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 12: Exhortation to Elders

1 Peter 5:1-4 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: The learner will understand how elders are to serve the congregations entrusted to them.

Introduction

Sports teams need good coaches or managers who can lead their teams as they prepare for competition and guide them throughout the games. A team may have tremendously talented and gifted athletes, but without a coach to lead them, they may not experience much success. Likewise, churches are full of gifted people. Peter noted in 4:11, the **immediate context**, that God gifts believers with various abilities related to speaking and serving. As gifted as the body of Christ may be, the church still needs leaders who can guide them.

God has provided churches with leaders called “elders” or “pastors.” Peter exhorted the elders in 5:1-4. They can help churches navigate both in general areas of service and through the rough times that a church might endure. Peter wrote this letter to Christians facing persecution. They desperately needed the leaders of the church (i.e., elders) to guide them.

In modern times, churches might equate elders with a more familiar term, “pastors.” This section of 1 Peter gives insight into the role and responsibilities of those men God calls to lead His congregations. As you study this passage, be reminded to be prayerful over your pastor or pastors whom God has called to watch over your congregation.

Part One: Peter the Elder (5:1)

Peter identified himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ in 1:1. As an apostle, God both called and sent Peter to be a leader of the early church. Peter never viewed his title in a domineering sense, but humbly and faithfully served the church. Peter identified himself further in 5:1.

A. Peter’s role among the elders (5:1a)

Peter specifically **addressed** the elders in 5:1-4. Even if you have not been called to be an elder or pastor, please pay attention to this section. There are many insights a church member can take away from this section regarding the role and function of elders. Such information should prompt church members to pray for their pastor.

The **key word** elder can be defined simply as an older man, such as in Acts 2:17. The word can be a reference to one’s ancestors or previous generations as noted in Hebrews 11:2, a **related passage**. Peter used the term “elder” in 5:1 to refer to Christian leaders over the churches. An example of this usage can also be observed in Acts 14:23 and 15:2, **related passages**. When it comes to religious leaders or elders, it does not necessarily denote older men only. Younger men can also serve as elders. Both older and younger elders must meet the biblical requirements for an elder/bishop or pastor (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

The primary goal Peter had in mind when addressing these elders was

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand how elders are to serve the congregations entrusted to them.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 5:1-4

Get Attention:

Ask learners to consider the question: Since Peter specifically **addressed** the elders in 5:1-4, why should church members study the passage? (There are many insights a lay person can take away from this section regarding the role and function of elders. Such information should prompt church members to remember to pray for their pastor.)

Leader’s Guide: The idea for this illustration came from I. Howard Marshall’s commentary on 1 Peter in the IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 158-59.

Leader’s Guide: We have not used the observation question, “Who is being addressed in this passage?” very often in this study. Be sure to point out to your learners who Peter is specifically addressing in this passage

Leader’s Guide: The English words “presbytery” and “Presbyterian” come from the Greek word translated “elder.”

Active Learning

Have your learners look up the **related passages** referring to elders to see the different usages of the word. This can be done quickly by assigning a different learner a passage to read just to note the different usages.

Leader's Guide: Most scholars agree that the preposition "with" that forms a compound word with the word "elder" in 5:1 (translated in the KJV as "also an elder"; translated in other English translations as "fellow elder"), can also be applied to the word for "witness." Thus, Peter is saying that he is both a fellow elder and a fellow witness.

Leader's Guide: Scripture gives no indication that Peter was present when Christ was crucified as he went away after denying his Lord (Matthew 26:75; Luke 23:61-62). Peter does not appear again in the narrative until the day of Christ's resurrection (Luke 24:12; John 20:2-6).

Active Learning

Ask your learners, "How faithful have you been as a witness for Christ?" Have each learner make a list of people in their world of influence that could use a gospel witness.

Leader's Guide: The terms "elder" and "overseer" are used interchangeably in Titus 1:5, 7 to refer to the same office. Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17, 28. The text says he gathered the elders together (20:17) and he told them to be on guard for the "flock" which the Holy Spirit made you "overseers" to "shepherd" them (20:28). Acts 20:28 uses all three words that are used in 1 Peter 5:2.

exhortation, "The elders which are among you I exhort" (5:1a). The **key word** exhort means to encourage someone or urge them on to action. Peter further identified himself as a fellow elder. Even though he was an apostle, Peter placed himself on the same level as those he addressed. As a fellow elder, he wanted to give them both an encouraging and challenging word of exhortation. Some religious traditions consider Peter to be the first pope of the church; however, Peter's reference to himself as a fellow elder seems to diminish such an idea.

B. Peter's privilege as a witness of Christ's sufferings (5:1b)

Not only was Peter a fellow elder, but he was also a fellow witness of Christ's sufferings (5:1b). The **key word** witness may refer to one who gives eyewitness testimony or one who proclaims the truth. Both meanings can be applied to Peter. **First**, Peter observed Christ's suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-37) and His trial before the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:58). **Second**, Peter also faithfully preached the gospel in the early days of the church as noted in Acts. Believers today cannot claim to have witnessed Christ's suffering literally, but they can proclaim the truth of His suffering from Scripture.

C. Peter's status as a partaker of the future glory (5:1c)

Peter also stated that He is a "partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (5:1c). The **key word** partaker means to be a fellow participant or to share something in common with another. As a **repeated idea**, Peter previously noted the revelation of Jesus' future glory in 1:7 and 4:13. All believers will participate in this future glory, not only of Jesus in all of His glory, but the glory of the new heaven and earth (Revelation 21:1).

Part Two: The Command to Elders (5:2-3)

In 5:2-3, Peter gave a specific exhortation or command. He not only stated the **command for these elders to obey** but also how best to obey that command.

A. The command stated (5:2a)

The main command Peter gave was to, "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (5:2a). The **key word** feed literally refers to shepherding or taking care of a flock of animals. Peter used the word in a figurative sense and **compared** the church to a flock of animals. Jesus gave Peter a similar command in John 21:15-19, a **related passage**. One might automatically think of preaching the Word when hearing the word "feed." The elder or pastor's primary job involves prayer and accurate study and preaching of the Word (Acts 6:2, 4). This should never be neglected in the pastor's duties.

Part of this command included "taking the oversight" of the flock. The **key word** oversight in the original language comes from combining the words meaning "upon" and "to look." Thus, the idea is to look upon another or to keep a careful and watchful eye for the health and safety of a group.

A shepherd's job is twofold: (1) make sure the flock can find pasture for nourishment, and (2) protect the flock from wild animals that might harm them. That is the job of a pastor! God brings a pastor alongside a congregation to care for their spiritual health by feeding them the Word and protecting them from evil. Pray for

your pastor as he fulfills these duties for your church.

B. The command specified (5:2b-3)

Peter not only gave the command, but he specified how the command should be carried out. Peter did this through a series of three **contrasts**. In each contrast, he noted first how **not** to obey this command followed by how **to** obey it.

1. Obey it willingly (5:2b)

Peter stated for elders to shepherd the flock, “not by constraint, but willingly” (5:2b). The **key word** constraint means to do something in a forced manner or merely out of obligation. It carries the sense of doing something unwillingly or reluctantly. A pastor should never perform his duties begrudgingly, but rather willingly. There should be a sense of joy and fulfillment for what God has called the pastor to do. Giving oversight to a church should be viewed as a glorious work!

2. Obey it eagerly (5:2c)

Peter further stated, “not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (5:2c). The **key phrase** “filthy lucre” refers to a fondness for dishonest gain. Peter and Jude both mentioned that false teachers seek after such things in 2 Peter 2:3 and Jude 11, **related passages**. In other **related passages**, Jesus Himself stated that “the labourer is worthy of his hire” in Luke 10:7, and Paul taught that elders should be compensated in 1 Timothy 5:17-18. Indeed, churches should take care of their pastors financially, but this should never be the elder’s goal for ministry. A man should not view the pastorate as an easy job with easy pay. Such an attitude causes one to seek after dishonest gain. Rather, an elder or pastor should serve “of a ready mind.” This **key phrase** refers to one’s eagerness to serve regardless of compensation.

3. Obey it to provide an example (5:3)

Lastly, Peter stated, “neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” (5:3). The **key phrase** “being lords over” refers to a domineering dictator. Jesus reminded His disciples not to lord their positions over the people (Matthew 20:25-27; Mark 10:42-45; Luke 22:25-27). The pastor should not have some great lust for power. Just as Peter said he was a fellow elder, so the pastor must see himself as a fellow member of the congregation he serves.

The **key word** heritage refers to what is assigned or allotted to another. This word provides a beautiful image of God giving the elder a certain allotment of people to shepherd and oversee. These are the sheep God has assigned to each elder or pastor for which to provide care. Elders and churches should take seriously such a charge!

In contrast to a domineering persona or lording over God’s heritage, elders should be “ensamples to the flock” or examples to the congregation. Jesus demonstrated this **key word** beautifully to Peter and the other disciples when He washed their feet in John 13:5 and later stated that what He did served as an “example” for them (John 13:15). If Jesus, the Master of all can serve in a lowly manner, believers should desire to do the same.

Leader’s Guide: Paul warned about the unhealthy desire for wealth in 1 Timothy 3:3; 6:5; Titus 1:11.

Leader’s Guide: The same Greek word translated “heritage” or “allotted” is used when the soldiers cast lots for Jesus’ garment (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:24).

Active Learning

Take a moment with your learners and pray for your pastor as he leads your congregation. Particularly pray for his willingness and eagerness to serve, and thank the Lord for the example he provides.

Part Three: The Elder's Reward (5:4)

As noted above, the elder should not serve for personal gain or prestige. However, the Bible does promise a reward for elders who serve faithfully.

A. Identity of the Chief Shepherd (5:4a)

Peter compared the elder's job to a shepherd and the congregation he serves as a flock. He also compared and identified Jesus as the chief Shepherd (5:4a). Jesus referred to Himself as the good shepherd in John 10:11, 14, **related passages**. The **key phrase** "chief Shepherd" referred to an overseer of shepherds who were taking care of several flocks. Elders and pastors today are "under shepherds" serving under the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

B. Receiving the crown of glory (5:4b)

Stated as a **cause and effect**, "when the chief shepherd shall appear (cause), ye shall receive a crown of glory" (effect; 5:4b). This verse serves as a great reminder and **truth to believe** that the Lord will return one day. When He does return, He will have His reward with Him for those elders who served their allotments well. Scripture refers to this reward as a crown of glory. The image of the crown likely invoked for Peter's recipients the thoughts of wreaths given to athletes who competed in the Roman games. The winner would be given a wreath as a crown to wear. The Lord has some kind of reward or recognition for faithful elders who serve as Peter described in 5:2-3. This reward is further described as one that "fadeth not away." **Praise God** that He awards His elders for their faithful service.

Conclusion

The best leaders for God's churches are the elders He gives to serve them. God gives each elder an "allotment" of people to care for and watch over. The way elders provide oversight definitely matters. They must do so willingly and eagerly, and not for dishonest profit or personal prestige. Above all, elders should provide a good example for those to whom they minister. Just as it was not easy for Peter's recipients to live holy in a hostile world, neither is it easy for Christians today. Thank God for the faithful pastors He provides for His churches who can help guide them through difficult times. Let us commit to praying for pastors consistently as they shepherd the flock of God.

Apply It

- **Believe the truth** that the Chief Shepherd, Jesus, will appear one day.
- Elders should **obey the command** to feed the flock of God.
- Elders should **avoid the errors** of
 - feeding the flock by constraint.
 - feeding the flock just for money.
 - feeding the flock for personal prestige and power.
- Elders should **praise God** for the crown of life that the Chief Shepherd will reward them for faithful service.

Leader's Guide: The key word fadeth refers to the amaranth flower that has red blossoms that do not fade. Even if the pedals of the flower are plucked, they will revive with water. This provides a beautiful picture of immortality

Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Instructions: Encourage learners to study the Bible passage for themselves before reading the student book or coming to the learning session. Brief answers are provided below from the lesson commentary. The answers are not exhaustive so encourage learners to expand as much as desired. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson



Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the need for submission and humility, along with resisting the devil and embracing God's strength.



Scriptures:

1 Peter 5:5-14

LESSON 13: FINAL ADMONITIONS FROM THE APOSTLE

1 Peter 5:5-14 Learning Option 1: Guided Bible Study

Guided Bible Study

This lesson provides questions designed to guide learners in discovering what this lesson's Bible passage says, means, and how it applies. Before reading the lesson, prayerfully read the Bible passage and ask the Lord to help you see answers to the following questions that will guide you. When finished, compare your answers to those found in the lesson.

Observation: Discover the facts or accurate information God presents in the passage of Scripture.

1. What key words or phrases are in the text? (Are any repeated?)
Submit, Clothed, Exalt Sober, perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle
2. What contrasts or comparisons are noted in this passage?
God resists or opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Devil compared to a lion.
3. What cause/effect relationships are noted in this passage?
Those who humble themselves under God's mighty hand (cause) will be exalted in due time (effect; 5:6). The reason for clear-headedness and watchfulness

Interpretation: Determine what the passage of Scripture means.

1. How is the passage affected by its immediate context?
5:1-4 included an exhortation to the elders. In 5:5a, younger men are commanded to submit themselves to the elders (5:5a).
2. What key words or phrases need to be researched?
Submit; Clothed; Exalt; Sober
3. What related passages need to be considered?
Proverbs 3:34

Application: Apply the passage to our lives as God intends.

1. Are there any truths to believe or promises to claim in this passage?
(1) God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. (2) God will exalt believers in due time. (3) God cares for believers. (4) the devil wants to devour
2. Are there any commands to obey in this passage?
(1) submit to elders and each other. (2) clothe oneself with humility. (3) humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. (4) have a sound mind and be watchful.
3. Is there anything to praise God for in this passage?
(1) He has called believers unto His eternal glory. (2) He has dominion forever and ever.

Get Attention:

Review the purpose of 1 Peter as stated in the introduction to the book. Peter stated his purpose in 5:12, "I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." As Peter expanded upon this purpose, he touched on themes such as Christian hope, living in holiness and humility, and how to endure persecution while faithfully serving the Lord and His churches. Peter placed an emphasis on the sufferings of Christ as an example of how to bear up under pressure



(effects) is because our adversary the devil walks around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (5:8b).



believers. **The promise** that God will restore, establish, strengthen, and provide believers a strong foundation.



(5) resist the devil. (6) greet one another.

Learning Option 2: Outline

Instructions: Use the lesson outline to facilitate your Bible teaching. All answers for the blanks are found in the headers of the lesson commentary. The Outline may be used alone, or along with the Commentary. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand how elders are to serve the congregations entrusted to them.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Scriptures:

1 Peter 5:5-14

Lesson 13: Final Admonitions from the Apostle

1 Peter 5:5-14 Learning Option 2: Outline

Part One: The Importance of Submission and Humility (5:5-7)

A. Submit to elders and each other (5:5a)

B. Be humble before others (5:5b)

C. Be humble before God (5:6-7)

Part Two: Watch Out for the Adversary (5:8-9)

A. Be sober and vigilant (5:8a)

B. The adversary seeks to devour (5:8b)

C. Resist the adversary (5:9)

Part Three: Embrace the Strength God Supplies (5:10-11)

A. God will strengthen His people (5:10)

B. God Himself is strong (5:11)

Part Four: Purpose of the Epistle and Greetings (5:12-14)

A. The purpose of the letter (5:12)

B. Final greetings (5:13-14a)

C. The final word (5:14b)

Apply It

• Claim the promise

God will restore, establish, strengthen, and provide believers a strong foundation.

• Obey the commands

◦ Submit to elders and each other.

◦ clothe oneself with humility.

• Praise God

◦ He has called believers unto His eternal glory.

◦ He has dominion forever and ever.

Get Attention:

Review the purpose of 1 Peter as stated in the introduction to the book. Peter stated his purpose in 5:12, "I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." As Peter expanded upon this purpose, he touched on themes such as Christian hope, living in holiness and humility, and how to endure persecution while faithfully serving the Lord and His churches. Peter placed an emphasis on the sufferings of Christ as an example of how to bear up under pressure.

- humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.
- have a sound mind and be watchful.
- resist the devil.
- greet one another.

Learning Option 3: Commentary

Instructions: Encourage learners to compare their answers to the Guided Bible Study questions. In the Learner Book and in this Leaders Guide, questions will be in bold print, key words will be underlined, related passages, etc. will appear in italics. Need more help? Read the Leader Training beginning at page 6.

Teaching is simple as:

1. **Share** the lesson aim.
2. **Read** the scriptures
3. **Lead** the lesson

Lesson 13: Final Admonitions from the Apostle

1 Peter 5:5-14 Learning Option 3: Commentary

Aim: Learners will understand the need for submission and humility, along with resisting the devil and embracing God's strength.

Introduction

When writing a letter to a family member or friend, it can be difficult to say everything that needs to be said. People often close out a letter with some brief last words for their loved ones to consider. Peter closed out his letter with several admonitions and commands and seems to do so in a hurried fashion. There was probably much more Peter wanted to say to his scattered recipients, but these final admonitions would suffice for now. He would write to these same recipients again in 2 Peter. Pay special attention to the **commands** in 5:5-14, and seek **to obey** them in your own walk with Christ.

Part One: The Importance of Submission and Humility (5:5-7)

Peter wrote about submission and humility in 2:13–3:12. He picked up these themes again in 5:5-7. True godly submission and humility are important virtues to live out before others and God.

A. Submit to elders and each other (5:5a)

The **immediate context** of 5:1-4 included an exhortation to the elders. Now Peter commanded the younger men to submit themselves to the elders (5:5a). The **key word** submit means to place oneself voluntarily under the control of another and is a **repeated word** from 2:13, 18; 3:1, 5. In Peter's time and culture, the younger men revered older men. It should be noted that some younger men could be categorized as biblically qualified elders. So, this command could be viewed as the least qualified and least mature men submitting to the most qualified.

In a more general fashion, Peter also noted that everyone should practice mutual submission, "be subject one to another." While some believers may have positions of authority in the church, such as elders, no believer should view himself as more important in the church than another. Believers should treat and respect others as they wish to be treated and respected.

B. Be humble before others (5:5b)

Along with submission comes another command, "be clothed with humility" (5:5b). In this context, the phrase refers to humility before others. A truly humble person does not place himself first nor view himself as more important than others. The **key word** clothed referred to the apron a slave might put on to distinguish himself from others. A Christian who puts on humility distinguishes himself as a true follower of Christ.

The opposite of humility is pride. Peter quoted Proverbs 3:34, a **related passage**, when he wrote, "for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." The **key word** resisteth means to oppose or set oneself against another. No believer wants to be opposed by God. Notice the **contrast** in the above quote. God resists or opposes the proud, *but* gives grace to the humble. Believers must guard themselves against a prideful spirit and seek to embrace a spirit of humility.

Lesson Aim:

The learner will understand the need for submission and humility, along with resisting the devil and embracing God's strength.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 5:5-14

Get Attention:

Review the purpose of 1 Peter as stated in the introduction to the book. Peter stated his purpose in 5:12, "I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." As Peter expanded upon this purpose, he touched on themes such as Christian hope, living in holiness and humility, and how to endure persecution while faithfully serving the Lord and His churches. Peter placed an emphasis on the sufferings of Christ as an example of how to bear up under pressure.

Leader's Guide: Note 2 Peter 3:1. Peter likely was referencing this first epistle when he wrote, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you."

Active Learning

Have your learners keep count of and write down the commands as they are mentioned throughout the lesson.

Leader's Guide: While some Greek manuscripts do not contain a second mention of the Greek word translated "subject," in 5:5a, it is most certainly implied.

Leader's Guide: Peter quoted from the Septuagint (LXX) version of the Old Testament, which is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament from the 3rd century BC.

Leader's Guide: The Greek word translated "casting" in 5:7 was also used in Luke 19:35, when they cast garments upon the donkey for Jesus to ride.

Active Learning

Ask your learners to contemplate this question, "What cares, worries, or anxieties do you need to place upon God today?" Give them a brief moment to think about it, but do not allow this question to dominate the lesson.

Leader's Guide: God told Cain that sin lieth or was crouching at the door in Genesis 4:7 when he was he was frustrated over God not accepting him or his sacrifice.

Leader's Guide: In a **related passage**, James 4:7 commands believers to resist the devil.

Leader's Guide: The modern spelling of the word "stedfast" is "steadfast."

C. Be humble before God (5:6-7)

Not only should humility be demonstrated toward others, but also toward God. As a **cause and effect**, those who humble themselves under God's mighty hand (cause) will be exalted in due time (effect; 5:6). The **key word** exalt means to lift up or raise high. Enduring persecution may not be enjoyable and often makes one feel low. But, in God's perfect timing, He will one day lift Christians high by His mighty hand.

One way that believers can truly humble themselves before God is to cast all their care upon Him (5:7). The **key word** casting calls for a deliberate act. It literally refers to throwing an object onto something else. Who better to throw our cares onto than God! The reason we should throw our cares upon Him (effect) is *because* He cares for us. It takes a truly humble person to show this kind of dependence upon God.

Part Two: Watch Out for the Adversary (5:8-9)

First Peter 5:8-9 marks the letter's only reference to the devil, the believer's primary adversary. The believer may face persecution from other humans, but the devil is the main one behind it.

A. Be sober and vigilant (5:8a)

Peter gave two more commands, "Be sober, be vigilant," both noted as **key words** (5:8a). The word sober is a **repeated word** from 1:3 and 4:7 and means to be clear-headed. It literally means not to be drunk with wine but has the general connotation to be of a sound mind. A clear-headed person stands ready to obey the next command, to be vigilant. This word means to be on the alert or watchful. Believers must possess a clear mind and stay alert.

B. The adversary seeks to devour (5:8b)

Noted as a **cause and effect**, the reason for clear-headedness and watchfulness (effects) is *because* our adversary the devil walks around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (5:8b). Peter **compared** the devil to a lion. A lion is known as a ferocious beast that hunts down and kills its prey. Just as a lion does not care about the feelings of its prey, so the devil does not care about you. He is the master of destruction and will take everyone down that he can. So, believers need to keep their minds clear and stay alert, because the devil is constantly lurking around the corner.

C. Resist the adversary (5:9)

The good news for the believer is that he can resist the devil by being "stedfast in the faith" (5:9a). The **key word** resist comes from a different word than the one used in 5:5. The word in 5:9a also means to oppose but carries a sense of standing firm and refusing to yield. The believer does not have to yield to the devil for one proverbial minute as long as he remains stedfast. This **key word** means to be firm or strong. The stronger the believer is in his faith, the better he can resist the devil. The devil is powerful, but he can be resisted. Peter's recipients were not alone in their affliction. Peter reminded them that their fellow brothers in the world have suffered the same kind of afflictions they have (5:9b).

Part Three: Embrace the Strength God Supplies (5:10-11)

The devil wants to seek and devour. God wants to lift up and strengthen His people, a strong **contrast** indeed from the devil! Many scholars agree that 5:10-11 is a prayer of Peter for his recipients.

A. God will strengthen His people (5:10)

Scripture notes that the source of grace comes from God as He is the “God of all grace” (5:10a). This same God has called believers unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus (5:10b), something for which to **praise God**. Peter previously mentioned the believer’s calling in 1:15; 2:9, 21; 3:9. The believer must first suffer a little while on this earth before experiencing this eternal glory. It often has been said that suffering is the pathway to glory. Thankfully, the suffering endured on this earth only lasts a little while, especially when compared to the eternal glory that will follow. Suffering can be endured if one is assured a good outcome. What better outcome can a believer expect than eternal glory!

Peter mentioned four things God does to strengthen believers. All of these can be noted as **key words** and **promises to claim**. These are all future tense verbs that find their ultimate fulfillment in eternity. However, the believer can experience a taste of these actions from God while on this earth. **First**, God will perfect believers. This word means to repair what is broken or make one fully qualified or adequate for a task. God equips believers for serving Him now and will bring them to a completed state in glory. **Second**, God will stablish believers, which means to make one immovable. **Third**, God will strengthen believers. The believer’s true strength comes from God Himself. **Fourth**, God will settle believers. This word speaks of a foundation. God alone provides believers a firm foundation in Jesus Christ where they can stand unwavering in their faith.

B. God Himself is strong (5:11)

The reason God can help and strengthen believers is because He Himself possesses strength. Peter ascribed to God glory and dominion (strength) forever and ever (5:11). Peter offered a similar doxology or word of praise in 4:11. He appropriately closed this short prayer with an “Amen!” This word means truly, or let it be so. Believers may experience suffering temporarily, but **praise God** that His dominion lasts forever!

Part Four: Purpose of the Epistle and Greetings (5:12-14)

As Peter came to the end of his letter, he wrote his benediction or closing words. These closing words remind the reader of Peter’s purpose for writing and for receiving and giving greetings to others.

A. The purpose of the letter (5:12)

Peter mentioned that it was through Silvanus that he wrote this brief letter (5:12a). This is likely the same Silvanus from the book of Acts, also known as Silas, the traveling companion of Paul. Writing a letter with the help of a scribe was a common practice in the first century. For example, Paul employed Tertius who helped him write the book of Romans (Romans 16:22). Even though Silvanus may have helped pen the letter, the words and content came from Peter.

Peter wrote this letter to exhort and testify of the true grace of God. The believer can stand firm in this grace and truth found within this letter.

Leader’s Guide: Silas is mentioned 13 times in Acts. Paul referenced him as Silvanus (Latin form of his name) in 2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:12. Paul even acknowledged Silas as a Roman citizen in Acts 16:37.

Leader's Guide: John uses the word "Babylon" in a similar fashion in Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21

Leader's Guide: Paul referred to it as a "holy kiss" in Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12.

Leader's Guide: For most western cultures, greetings are often met with a handshake.

Leader's Guide: The other two "Amens" are mentioned at the end of 4:11 and 5:11.

B. Final greetings (5:13-14a)

Peter gave a greeting to his recipients from the church at Babylon (5:13a). The word "Babylon" is likely a code name for Rome. Babylon represents the evil system that opposes God. Rome was a mighty empire in the first century and stood in opposition to Christ's churches.

Not only did the church at Rome offer a salutation or greeting, but so did Marcus, whom Peter noted as his son (5:13b). This is probably the same Mark or John Mark mentioned in Acts. He was more like a son in the faith like Timothy was to Paul (1 Timothy 1:2). He also encouraged these scattered believers to greet one another with a "kiss of charity" (5:14a). It was common in this culture for people to greet each other with a literal kiss on the cheek. This is still common in some cultures. Giving greetings to one another is still a **command that believers should obey** today.

C. The final word (5:14b)

The final word Peter left his recipients was the word "peace." Even during persecution, believers can experience God's peace because they are in Christ Jesus. Peter offered a third "Amen" at the end of his letter.

Conclusion

As believers navigate through a hostile world, they should look to their elders/pastors and submit to their authority. As believers endure persecution together, they must depend on each other through mutual submission and possess a humble attitude before each other and God. The devil is the main adversary and persecutor of God's people. He is noted as a ravenous lion seeking to destroy believers. The God who has all dominion and power can strengthen His people enabling them to resist the onslaught of the devil. Believers must depend upon God's strength now and look Forward to experiencing His eternal glory!

Apply It

- **Claim the promise** that God will restore, establish, strengthen, and provide believers a strong foundation.
- **Obey the commands** to
 - submit to elders and each other.
 - clothe oneself with humility.
 - humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.
 - have a sound mind and be watchful.
 - resist the devil.
 - greet one another.
- **Praise God** that
 - He has called believers unto His eternal glory.
 - He has dominion forever and ever.

NOTES
