1 Peter

Chapter 1

Vocabulary:

commissioned: appointed for a task

dispersed: spread out

designed: its purpose

prophesied: to tell God’s future plans

set our mind: focus on

impartial: fair, not biased

fulfillment: completion

redeemed: saved

wither: dry up

A. Greetings

Peter was an apostle of Jesus Christ. An apostle was chosen and commissioned by God to spread the gospel and serve God. Peter wrote this letter to believers dispersed from Rome to different regions of the world. In this greeting, we can see the work of God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God chooses us, Christ’s blood saves us, and the Holy Spirit works in us to make us holy. All of this is designed to build a relationship between God and Christ followers.

Read 1 Peter 1: 1-2

B. Peter Praises God for a Living Hope

In God’s great mercy, we have been given new birth. Jesus said that no one could see God’s kingdom unless they were born again. We are now His children not because of human choice but because of what God did through Christ.

We also have a living hope. Why is it “living”? It is living because Jesus rose from the dead. Our living hope is the promise of eternal life. This hope can never be destroyed. It is kept for us in heaven.

John 1: 12-13, John 3: 3, Titus 3: 4-7, 1Peter 1: 3-4

We are kept safe by God’s power through faith. As Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will not die.

God has saved us and our salvation will be completed when Christ comes again.

Because of this, we can be full of joy. We can have joy even when we are suffering. Our suffering strengthens our faith. As we grow in faith, we will bring praise, honor, and glory to God. By faith, we love God even though we have never seen Him. By faith, we believe in God even though we do not see Him now.

Salvation is the final result of our faith.

The prophets knew about the salvation to come. They prophesied about the sufferings of Jesus. Isaiah prophesied that God’s servant would suffer on our behalf. He would take the pain that should have been ours. The servant was pierced for our sin. But the prophets knew that these things were for the future.

Isaiah 53: 4-5, John 10: 27-28, 1Peter 1: 5-12

C. Be holy

Because of our salvation through Christ, we should set our minds on the hope to come. This hope will be fulfilled when Christ returns. Until then, we should obey our Father God. Jesus said that we should put God’s kingdom first and seek His righteousness. We should desire to obey God and not give in to our sinful nature. God is holy and this is His desire for us as well.

Matthew 6: 33, 1Peter 1:13-16

God is impartial in His judgement. So we should live as if we are foreigners in this land. And we are, since our true home is God’s heavenly kingdom. In Hebrews, we read about people of faith who understood that they were strangers on earth. They looked to the fulfillment of God’s promises in the future.

We have been redeemed from our life of sin not by something that doesn’t last like gold. Instead, we’ve been redeemed by the holy lamb of God, Jesus Christ, God’s only Son. It was God’s plan from the beginning to send Jesus at the right time. It was God’s plan for Christ to die for us. God raised Christ from the dead and gave Him glory.

1 Peter 1: 17-21, Hebrews 11:13

We become pure and holy as we obey God’s command. Jesus said, “Love one another, just as I have loved you.” We should continue to love each other because we have been born again through the living Word of God. The word is not like a seed that will die or a flower that will wither. It is the word of the Lord that last forever.

John 15:12-13, 1Peter 1: 22-25

Questions

1. What is the purpose of an apostle?

2. What must happen before we can see God’s kingdom?

3. What is our living hope?

4. When will our salvation be complete?

5. What should we do until Christ returns?

6. Why should we live like foreigners?

7. What command did Jesus give us as recorded in the book of John?

1 Peter

Chapter 2

Vocabulary

Get rid of: stop doing something

Foundation: the beginning or the basic part

Cornerstone: in a building, it is the first stone

Stumble: trip

Ridicule: make fun of

Get even: have revenge

Aimlessly: with no direction

A. Our response to God’s salvation

Because God saved us, we should not be involved in anything that is evil including lies. In Ephesians, Paul says to get rid of lying and to speak the truth since we are all one body. In addition, we shouldn’t lie about ourselves. We should love each other. As I Corinthians 13 says the love doesn’t want what others have. It does nothing that dishonors other people.

We should desire God’s word in the same way as babies’ desire milk. As we read the scriptures, we can grow in our faith. In his letter to Timothy, Paul reminds him that God’s word teaches us and corrects our mistakes. It trains us in the way that is right.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-5, Ephesians 4: 25, 2 Timothy 3: 16-17, 1 Peter 2:1-3

B. A Living Stone and a holy people

Jesus Christ is a living stone – the foundation of our faith. Although Jesus was rejected by men, He is the precious Son of God. Believers are referred to as the church or the body of Christ. As the church, we are like living stones which are built up to form a holy church. The prophet Isaiah wrote that a chosen precious cornerstone would be laid and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame. This precious cornerstone is Jesus Christ, God’s Son. Christ Jesus is the cornerstone that joins the whole structure together. This means that Jesus is the foundation that holds us as the church and makes us one.

Psalm 118: 22, Ephesians 2: 20-22, Colossians 1: 18,1 Peter 2:4-6

Some people chose to reject this cornerstone and this stone became a stumbling block for them. They stumble and fall into sin and refuse to obey God.

However, those who believe have become God’s people. We are referred to as a holy nation and royal priests. In Revelation, we read that God has made us part of His royal family. We are priest who serve God the Father. We are His special treasure designed to give God praise.

Acts 4: 11-12, 1 Peter 2: 7-10, Revelation 1:6b

C. Living Godly lives among people who don’t believe

We belong to God’s Kingdom but we must live in this world. So we must be careful that we do not give into our sinful nature. God has given us His Holy Spirit. When we live by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can keep from being controlled by wrong desires. God’s values are different from the world’s so people may ridicule you. But we should lead an honorable life. In fact, Jesus Himself said that we are the light of the world. We should let this light shine so that people can see the good things that we do and give glory to God.

Because we live in this world, we have to obey the authorities that God has placed here. Our role as Christians is to be good servants and love those around us. We have freedom in Christ. We are free from the power of sin. But just because we are free, we still have to obey God. To obey God, we must love those around us. This means to show respect to everyone and to be more concerned about others than yourself.

Matthew 5:14-16, Galatians 5: 16-18, 1Peter 2: 11-17

Peter sends a message to masters and slaves but this information applies to boss/employees or any relationship with leaders and followers. Those under authority should respectful and obey those that lead. Paul also gives Timothy the same message. If we show respect, maybe people won’t speak evil of God. If a person is treated unfairly because they obey God, this brings God praise. If you do something wrong and are punished, it is deserved. If you suffer for doing good, you will receive God’s praise. After all, Christ suffered for us and we should follow His example.

Jesus was perfect. He never committed a sin. Even when people yelled at Jesus and mocked Him, He did not respond. Jesus never tried to get even. Instead He trusted God to judge correctly. Isaiah tells us that Jesus was pierced and crushed because of our sin. He was punished and wounded to heal us. However, we are like sheep. We wander around aimlessly but are too stubborn to obey God.

So God gave Jesus all of our sins. Because Jesus’ wounds heal us, we can lead godly lives. We were like aimless sheep but now we have a Shepherd who watches over us.

Isaiah 53: 6-7,1Timothy 6:1, 1Peter 2: 18-25

Questions

1. Because God saved us, what should we **not** do and what should we do?

2. What does it mean that Jesus is the “living stone”?

3. What happens when people reject the cornerstone?

4. People who believe are referred to as what?

5. Who keeps us from being controlled by our desires?

6. How should we live in this world?

7. How should we respond to people in authority?

8. How did Jesus respond to suffering and why did He suffer?

1 Peter

Chapter 3

Vocabulary:

designed: made

pursue: make something your goal

outward beauty: how we look

of one mind: united, in agreement

retaliate: get even, do bad things in return for bad things

curse: say bad things or to want bad things to happen to someone

A. Living godly lives in a marriage.

God has designed marriage to represent our relationship with God. As Christ is the head of the church, He has placed husbands in the role of authority in a marriage. Peter says that women should follow the lead of their husbands. In Ephesians, Paul explains that women should follow their husbands as they follow the Lord. This also means that women should follow even if their husbands are not obeying. God calls us to live a life of obedience. As we choose to obey, other people can see our respect for God. As a result, husbands and others we meet may accept Christ through our actions. Jesus Himself told us to let our light shine so that others can see and give glory to God.

Instead of concentrating on outward beauty, women should desire to pursue the inner beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. As Proverbs 31 says beauty doesn’t last but a woman who respects the Lord will be praised. Godly women like Sarah chose to obey their husbands.

Proverbs 31: 30, Matthew 5: 16, Ephesians 5:22-23, 1 Peter 3:1-6

As leaders in their family, husbands must guide their wives in love. In Ephesians, Paul tells husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church. This passage reminds husbands to show understanding towards wives. Wives are to be treated with respect.

Ephesians 5: 25, 1 Peter 3:7

B. Suffering for doing good things.

Peter reminds the believers to be of one mind. Paul tells the Philippian believers to be one in the Spirit and in the way we think and act. In fact, it is the Holy Spirit that makes us one. We must have sympathy and love for others. Sympathy and love require action. Jesus gave us a wonderful picture of sympathy in action. In Luke, we read that when the Samaritan saw the wounded Jewish man, he had compassion. Because of his compassion, the Samaritan helped the stranger by bandaging his wounds. We must be kind, tender, and humble.

Luke 10: 33-34, Ephesians 4: 3, Phil 2:2, 1Peter 3:8

When people do or say bad things to us, we should not retaliate. As Paul says in Romans, don’t get even. God will take care of it. Instead of retaliation, we should do the opposite. If our enemies are in need, we should help them.

Read Romans 12: 17-21, 1Peter 3:9

We should be careful about what we say. James says that the tongue is the most evil part of the body. With our tongue, we praise God. But with that same tongue we curse people. We must keep our tongues from lies and evil speech. In fact, we should live our lives pursuing godliness and peace. Even if we suffer for doing what is right, we know that God will bless us. If people ask why you believe in God, be ready to explain with respect and gentleness.

James 3: 6&9, 1Peter 3: 10-15

We may suffer for doing good things. But remember that Christ suffered for our sins even though He was sinless. Christ died for us but He was brought back to life through the power of the Holy Spirit. In the time of Noah, people chose not to obey God. Only Noah and his family were saved through the flood. Like the flood, baptism saves us through salvation in Christ. Baptism is the outward sign of our inward faith in Jesus Christ as our savior. This is the Christ who now sits at God’s right hand. All authority and angels are under His control.

1Peter 3:16-22

Questions

1. What does marriage represent?

2. How should wives respond to their husbands?

3. What is the husband’s responsibility?

4. How should believers interact with one another?

5. What should we do when people say or do things bad things to us?

6. How should we live our lives?

1 Peter

Chapter 4

Vocabulary:

As a result: because of something

The end times: the time from when Christ returned to Heaven to when He

will come to earth again as King.

erases: removes

hospitality: receiving and treating guests and strangers warmly

compulsion: requirement, obligation

face difficulty: encounter problems

A. Living for God

As Peter says in Chapter 3, Christ suffered and died for our sins. Our thinking should be the same. Just like Christ, we have died to sin. Our lives are now hidden in Christ. As a result, we should live for God and not for our own desires. Before we accepted Christ, we lived ungodly lives. We fulfilled our natural desires by making bad choices. Your former friends don’t understand why you are different. They want you to join them in their poor life choices. So they make fun of you. But God knows you are His child and God will judge those who oppose Him. In fact, every person will stand before Christ and be judged. As Paul writes in Corinthians we will be judged for both the good and bad things that we have done.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He told the disciples and us to go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone. All who believe and are baptized will be saved. Believers will have eternal life. This means that their spirits will live forever through God’s power. Those who do not believe will be punished.

Colossians 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5: 10, Mark 16: 15, 1Peter 4: 1-6

Because we are living in the end times, we need to have self-control. In addition we need to be watchful in prayer. Being watchful means that we should be aware of what is around us. We should be watchful for possible temptations but also we should be looking for opportunities to help others. Most importantly, we should love one another. God loves and comforts us so we can comfort and love others in difficulty. Peter writes that love erases sins by forgiving them. When we choose to love and not retaliate, we cover sins with love. God showed the ultimate love for us by erasing our sin when Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 1 Peter 4: 7-8

Peter reminds us that we should show hospitality to others without grumbling. We should be ready to help anyone by using our homes to meet their needs. We need to help with generosity and compassion not out of compulsion.

God has given us different gifts so that we can serve others well. We should use these gifts faithfully. When we serve others using the gifts God gives us, we bring praise to God.

Romans 12:6-8 ,13; 2 Corinthians 9: 7, 1 Peter 4: 9-11

B. Suffering for being a Christian

Don’t be surprised when you face difficulties of all kinds. God uses suffering to train and test us. When we suffer, we gain strength. Strength leads to character. As our character develops, it produces hope. All of this is possible through the Holy Spirit which God gives us because of His great love. We should be joyful in our suffering. We should be joyful because heaven is our reward. So consider it a blessing when you are hurt or suffer for doing what is right.

If we suffer for doing wrong, then it is deserved. If we suffer, it should be for doing something honoring to God. Then we should praise God. As mentioned before, everyone will stand before Christ to be judged both godly believers and the ungodly. What should we do when we suffer? We should commit ourselves to God and continuing doing good.

Romans 5:3-5, Matthew 5: 10-12, 1 Peter 4: 12-19

Questions

1. What were we like before Christ?

2. How do our former friends respond to our new life in Christ?

3. Since we are living in the end times, what should we do?

4. What’s the most important thing we should do?

5. How should we use the gifts God’s given us?

6. How does God use suffering in our lives?

7. Why should we be joyful in our suffering?

1 Peter

Chapter 5

Vocabulary:

Shepherd: takes care of sheep

Flock: name for a group of sheep

Fade away: diminish or become less

Held accountable: to be responsible for your action

Humble: not proud

Vigilant: alert, watchful

Exhorts: strongly urge

A. Shepherding God’s flock

In this final chapter, Peter is writing to the leaders of churches. In this passage, the leaders are called elders. There are characteristics which these leaders should possess: faithfulness, self-control, hospitality, respectability, and gentleness. Peter and all the leaders shared in the sufferings of Christ and, in the future, will share in His glory. Peter tells the elders to be shepherds of God’s flock. What do shepherds do? They care for their sheep. Jesus was called the Good Shepherd of the sheep. As Jesus says in John, “the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep”.

It is the job of the elders to take care of God’s people. Jesus tells a story about a shepherd found in the gospel of Luke. He said that if only 1 sheep out of 100 gets lost, the shepherd would search until he found it. The elders of the church should go after those in need. They are also responsible for teaching and speaking God’s word. Elders should care about God’s flock because they want to, not because they have to or for some reward. When Christ comes again, the elders will receive a crown of glory that will never fade away. Elders must set an example for the church.

Read 1 Timothy 3: 1-7, John 10: 11, Luke 15: 3-6, Hebrews 13:7, 1Peter 5: 1-4

To the younger people in the church, Peter reminds them to follow the lead of the elders. The writer of Hebrews tells us to trust our leaders. Their job is to watch over us. They will be held accountable to God for all that they do. All of us should be humble and to serve one another. Jesus gave us a wonderful example of humility when He washed the feet of His disciples. God gives grace to the humble but is against the proud. Therefore we are to humble ourselves and God will exalt us in His time.

We should turn all our worries over to God because He cares for us. Like a mother hen, God longs to cover us with his wings. We should be vigilant at all times. The devil wants to make us doubt God. We need to obey and trust God. If we resist the devil, he will run away. All of us will suffer but God will always give us the grace that we need. God will restore us and we will share in His eternal life.

Read Hebrews 13: 17, John 13: 10-17, Matthew 23:37, James 4: 7, 1Peter 5: 5-11

B. Final Greetings

Peter closes his letter acknowledging a few people. Silas was an encouragement to Paul and helped with the letter. Silas often accompanied Paul on his missionary trips. Members from the church of Babylon were mentioned as sending their greetings. Mark also was with Peter at this time. Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on missionary trips.

Peter’s purpose in writing this letter was to encourage the recipients. It was also written to share God’s true grace. He exhorts us to stand firm in God’s grace.

Read 1Peter 5: 12-14

Questions

1. What are the leaders of the church called?

2. What characteristics should the leaders have?

3. Peter tells the elders to be shepherds. What does that mean?

4. What should the younger people in the church do?

5. What did Jesus do that showed humility?

6. Why should we be vigilant at all times?