

## 1 Peter: Discipleship Lessons from the Fisherman Participant Handouts for Groups or Classes

If you're working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the following handouts in this appendix at no additional charge. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" sheets, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

<http://www.jesuswalk.com/1peter/1peter-lesson-handouts.pdf>

### Discussion Questions

You'll find 4-5 questions for each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in discussion of the key points of the passage. If you're running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions.

1. Rejoicing in Our Salvation (1 Peter 1:1-12)
2. Living Holy Lives (1 Peter 1:13-2:3)
3. Being God's Chosen People (1 Peter 2:4-12)
4. Submitting and Suffering Like Jesus (1 Peter 2:13-23)
5. Appreciating Jesus' Atonement for Our Sins (1 Peter 2:24-25)
6. Living as Christian Husbands and Wives (1 Peter 3:1-7)
7. Suffering with a Clear Conscience (1 Peter 3:8-22)
8. Serving God in Everything (1 Peter 4:1-11)
9. Suffering According to God's Will (1 Peter 4:12-19)
10. Leading with Humility (1 Peter 5:1-6)
11. He Cares for You (1 Peter 5:7-14)



Anthony Van Dyke, "Peter the Apostle" (1617-18), oil on canvas, The Hermitage, St. Petersburg. Van Dyke shows the joy in Peter's face upon receiving the keys to the kingdom.

## 1. Rejoicing in Our Salvation (1 Peter 1:1-12)

Q1. (1:1) How would you describe the behavior of a Christian who identifies more with his present homeland than his heavenly one? Have you ever caught yourself doing this? What has to happen to get our spiritual priorities straight?

Q2. (1:2) Why do forgiveness (sprinkling) and obedience come together as a package? Why is it deceptive to think you can have one without the other? Extra credit: If true faith requires obedience, how can we say that we are saved by grace rather than works? (Ephesians 2:8-10)



Q3. (1:5) According to 1 Peter 1:5, what is God's part in securing your salvation? What is your part?

Q4. (1:6-7) Can you remember any instances in which God used difficult circumstances to refine and purify your faith? What did God accomplish in your life? How, exactly, does genuine, tested faith bring glory to Jesus?

Q5. (1:8-9) According to 1 Peter 1:8-9, what is the basis of Christian joy that is "inexpressible and glorious"? How does this joy interplay with human emotions? Is it essentially emotional? How does it differ from what is generally regarded as the pursuit of "happiness"? Extra Credit: How can you tell the genuine article of joy from the counterfeit?

## 2. Living Holy Lives (1 Peter 1:13-2:3)

Q1. (1:13) What about Christ's coming should get our undivided attention? Why should it inspire hope? Why should it inspire self-control and soberness? What happens in our lives when we don't *really* expect Christ to come soon?

Q2. (1:15-16) In your own words, how would you define "holiness"? In what sense are you (by definition) holy now? In what sense must you be obedient in order to become holy? What is your biggest struggle with holiness?

Q3. (1:17) Why are people in our culture so upset when they sense they are being judged by someone else? How do you reconcile final judgment with God's love for the world? Why must final judgment be at the core of the Good News of Jesus Christ? What happens to the Gospel when final judgment is left out or ignored?

Q4. (1:18-19) Have you ever felt you were of no worth or of no value? What does 1 Peter 1:18-19 say about your worth? What does it say about God's love for you? What does it indicate about the long-term value of your balance sheet and financial assets? What are your true long-term investments? Why?

### 3. Being God's Chosen People (1 Peter 2:4-12)

Q1. (2:5) Christians often look at their relation to God as consumers, delighting in what God does for them. What is the mindset of a priest towards God? What actions does this mindset inspire in you?

Q2. (2:5) If your praise is primarily for God's benefit, not your own, how should *you* be offering praise?

Q3. (2:9) What actions and attitudes should this idea of being part of God's own people inspire in us?

Q4. (2:11) Read 1 Peter 2:11 carefully. The world tells us (1) to conform and (2) that sin won't hurt us. What does Peter tell us to combat these lies? How can this reminder help us?

Q5. (2:12) How can the good deeds we commit by living openly as Christians increase God's praise? How does our "blending in" detract from God's praise?

#### **4. Submitting and Suffering Like Jesus (1 Peter 2:13-23)**

Q1. (2:15-16) In what way is God's glory dependent upon us living submissive, obedient lives? How is God hurt when we get rebellious?

Q2. (2:18) If we are to submit to our employers and respect them, what is that saying about God's expectation that we do a good job? In what sense do we dishonor God when we don't give our full effort to our jobs?

Q3. (2:18-20) How does being an employee "conscious of God" affect the way we act and react to injustice in the workplace? Can a conscientious Christian be a complainer? Why or why not? How do you usually react to prolonged, unfair treatment at your work?

Q4. (2:21-23) How does Christ's example speak to your situation? How is your behavior going to be different because of what you see in Jesus' character in this passage?

## 5. Appreciating Jesus' Atonement for Our Sins (1 Peter 2:24-25)

Q1. (2:21) According to 2:21, in what sense did Jesus suffer for you personally?

Q2. Why is Jesus' sinlessness important to understanding your salvation? In what way do you think Jesus suffered when your sins were poured into his soul? How could a sinless Man stand this kind of corruption?

Q3. (2:24a) This may seem like a simplistic question, but give it thought before you answer, and then answer thoughtfully. What is the significance to you personally that Jesus bore your sins in his own body on the cross?

Q4. (2:24b) If Jesus died to set us free from sin's power, why does sin have such power over us still? According to 2:24b, how must we deal with sin? In practical terms, how can we "die to sin"? In everyday language, what does "live for righteousness" mean?

## 6. Living as Christian Husbands and Wives (1 Peter 3:1-7)

Q1. (3:1) Why is submission so difficult for us humans? Does submission require you to be silent when you don't agree or feel something can be improved? When is submission wrong for Christian?

Q2. (3:3) Why should women try to look their best? How can trying to look their best divert women from what is more important? What is the balance?

Q3. (3:4-6) How does a person cultivate inner beauty? How does one gain character? Why is true character so important and precious to God? How can character help a Christian woman win and hang onto her husband?

Q4. (3:7) Why should a husband relate to his wife with knowledge and wisdom? In what way does this demonstrate love? In what way does this demonstrate self-interest? Why do men sometimes try to dominate their wives? Why do wives sometimes try to dominate their husbands? What harm does this do? How is domination of another person contrary to God's nature?

Q5. (3:7) How can treating one's wife wrongly hinder a husband's prayers? How can treating a husband wrongly hinder a wife's prayers?

## 7. Suffering with a Clear Conscience (1 Peter 3:8-22)

Q1. (3:8-9) Which of the qualities Peter mentions in 3:8-9 are most evident in your congregation? Which are most needed? What can you and your friends do to change the relational climate at your Church so it is more Christ-like?

Q2. (3:15-16) Why is it so hard for us to be a witness when we're persecuted? Why is it easy in tough places to be the wrong kind of witness? Which one of Peter's four instructions do you find most needed in your particular situation?

Q3. (3:18a) Meditate for a few minutes on this verse: "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." Now personalize it to imagine (1) your sins, (2) your unrighteousness, and (3) your reconciliation with God. Each of these ideas is awesome! Which of these three aspects of the verse has God impressed most strongly on you today? Select one of the three and share it.

Q4. (3:20-21) Various Christian traditions have different practices of baptism – the mode (sprinkling, pouring, immersion) and the age (infant vs. an age when a person can profess his or her own faith). Let's not argue about that in this forum. Let me ask you the crucial question for you – Have you pledged your faith in Jesus Christ and promised to serve him as his disciple? How does this pledge relate to your own baptism?



## **8. Serving God in Everything (1 Peter 4:1-11)**

Q1. (4:1-2) When the scripture says “arm yourselves with the same attitude” as Christ had, how should this attitude help keep you from sin? What attitude are we talking about?

Q2. (4:3-4) Why do non-Christians try to get you to sin with them? Why are we tempted to do so? How can we resist this temptation?

Q3. (4:5-7) Why don't non-Christians like the idea of giving an account of their actions? Why don't we Christians like it? What should the realization that we must give an account of our actions inspire in us? With what attitude should we live as a result?

Q4. (4:10-11) If people are always promoting themselves and pointing to how God is using them, what does that say about them? Their sense of self-worth? Their maturity? Their realism? Their humility? What spiritual gifts has God given you, and how are you using them to his glory?

## 9. Suffering According to God's Will (1 Peter 4:12-19)

Q1. (4:12) What's the danger of trying to avoid persecution and suffering for Christ? Have you ever been distracted by persecution from what you should have been doing? Have you ever observed this in other Christians?

Q2. (4:13) When you meditate on the idea of partaking of or being a sharer in Christ's sufferings, what perspective does it give you on whatever persecution you may experience?

Q3. (4:14) If we are never persecuted, what does that say about how people view us? In what way should persecution make us happy?

Q4. Why is a willingness to die, if need be, essential to healthy Christianity during persecution? What happens when we aren't willing to die, when we are afraid to "take up our cross daily" (Luke 9:23) and follow Jesus? What does this have to do with "committing ourselves to a faithful Creator"?

## 10. Leading with Humility (1 Peter 5:1-6)

Q1. (5:1-2) What do you learn about the responsibilities of an elder from the definitions of “elder,” “pastor,” and “overseer”? What stood out to you as you considered these words?

Q2. (5:2) What’s wrong with the common practice in churches of “twisting a person’s arm” to get him or her to serve as a church leader? What damage does this do to the church? What kind of leader does it produce?

Q3. (5:3) How can we best keep elders and pastors from being power-mongers? From limiting a pastor’s authority? What’s the danger here? From testing a person before bestowing authority? How can this be difficult? How can we deal with this serious problem properly?

Q4. (5:5-6) What acts of humility are appropriate for church leaders? How can we discern a person’s humility before putting him or her in a place of leadership in the church? What happens when we fail to do this?

## 11. He Cares for You (1 Peter 5:7-14)

Q1. (5:7) According to this verse *what* should you do with your fears? What reason is given why you should do this? In what manner should you do it? How will you apply this verse's instruction in your own life?

Q2. (5:8) Why is it important to be aware of Satan's existence? What does this verse teach us about the devil? Why is this teaching important?

Q3. (5:8-9) What instructions does Peter give us to guide us in spiritual warfare? Extra credit: How are these instructions similar or different than Paul's instructions in Ephesians 6:10-17?

Q4. (5:10-11) Which promises in verses 10 and 11 are most meaningful to you at this point in your life? Why?