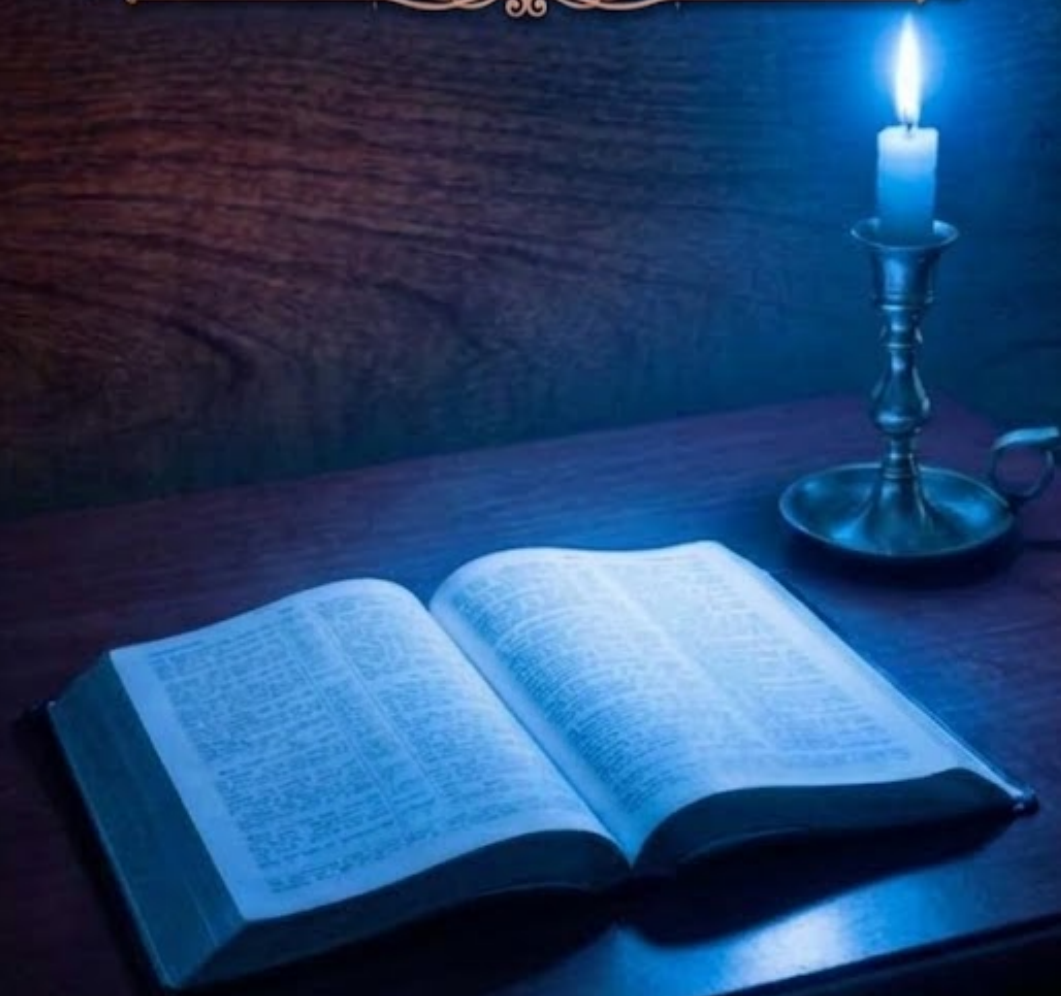


THE LETTER OF 1ST PETER

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH



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Welcome, Teacher

This book guides you through thirteen 45-minute sessions on **The Letter of 1 Peter** for Middle School students. Peter wrote to people who were misunderstood and mistreated for following Jesus. His answer was not to fight or hide, but to hope, to be holy, and to love, because that is how Jesus loves us. Everywhere you teach, keep returning to the words of Jesus: *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* (John 13:34-35, NKJV).

How each session works

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

What is in each session

- **Big idea** and key verse for the teacher and the students.
- **Teacher background notes:** history, culture, and society behind the passage (for your preparation).
- **Teaching outline** in three points with NKJV verses, plus the Jesus connection and a Love in Action challenge.
- **Discussion questions**, a closing prayer, a “What We Learned” summary, and a memory verse.
- **One-page student handout** (fill-in-the-blank, think-it-through, challenge, memory verse).
- **PowerPoint slide deck**, provided as a separate file for each session.
- **Think • Feel • Do** reflection questions, also in the companion web app.
- **Podcast episode:** a short audio lesson for students, in the companion web app.

A note on Scripture

All Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version® (NKJV). Teachers are encouraged to have students read the passage aloud from their own Bibles, so the page and the verses are familiar to them.

The Letter at a Glance

Author: Peter, the apostle (formerly Simon the fisherman). **Written from:** “Babylon,” probably Rome (5:13).

Date: about AD 62–64. **Carried by:** Silvanus (Silas) (5:12). **To:** believers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (modern Turkey). **Theme:** A living hope and holy, loving conduct in the face of suffering, grounded in the grace of God and the example of Jesus Christ.

Outline of 1 Peter

Passage	Theme
1:1-2	Greeting: chosen strangers
1:3-12	Living hope and tested faith
1:13-2:3	Holy living and fervent love
2:4-10	Living stones, God's people
2:11-3:12	Honorable living and love in every relationship
3:13-4:6	Suffering for righteousness, following Christ
4:7-11	Love, hospitality, and gifts
4:12-19	Fiery trials and faithful Creator
5:1-14	Shepherds, humility, and standing firm

The 13 sessions

#	Title	Passage	Memory verse
1	Strangers with a Mission	1 Peter 1:1-2	1 Peter 1:2
2	A Living Hope	1 Peter 1:3-9	1 Peter 1:3
3	Be Holy, Because He Is	1 Peter 1:10-16	1 Peter 1:16
4	Love One Another Fervently	1 Peter 1:17-2:3	1 Peter 1:22
5	Living Stones, Royal Family	1 Peter 2:4-10	1 Peter 2:9
6	Good Citizens, Good Neighbors	1 Peter 2:11-17	1 Peter 2:17
7	Following Jesus' Footsteps	1 Peter 2:18-25	1 Peter 2:21
8	Beauty That Lasts	1 Peter 3:1-7	1 Peter 3:4
9	Overcoming Evil with Good	1 Peter 3:8-17	1 Peter 3:8
10	Christ Died Once for All	1 Peter 3:18-22	1 Peter 3:18
11	Love Covers, Gifts Serve	1 Peter 4:1-11	1 Peter 4:8
12	Standing Firm in the Fire	1 Peter 4:12-19	1 Peter 4:19
13	The Chief Shepherd Cares for You	1 Peter 5:1-14	1 Peter 5:7

Why Peter matters here

Peter is the best possible teacher of this lesson. He walked with Jesus for three years, boasted, failed, wept bitterly, and was restored on a beach by the Lord who asked him, “Do you love Me?” Peter knew what it felt like to be

forgiven, so he could write with tenderness: “love one another fervently with a pure heart” (1 Peter 1:22). As you teach, let students see that Jesus loves and restores people, and that His love is the pattern for ours.

Session 1 · Strangers with a Mission

1 Peter 1:1-2 · Chosen by the Father, cleansed by Jesus, and sent to love a watching world

BIG IDEA

Jesus chose us, cleansed us, and sent us out into the world to live and love like Him, even when we feel like we don't fit in.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three "Did You Know?" facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

"elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied."

1 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher's preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

WHO WROTE IT. The letter begins, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ." Peter was born Simon, a fisherman from Bethsaida who lived in Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus renamed him Cephas (Aramaic) or Peter (Greek), both meaning "rock" (John 1:42). Peter was bold, quick to speak, and quick to fail. He walked on water, confessed Jesus as the Christ, and then denied Him three times on the night of His arrest. After the resurrection Jesus restored him on the shore of Galilee (John 21). By the time of this letter Peter is an older man, a respected leader of the early church, writing out of deep personal experience of grace.

WHERE AND WHEN. Peter signs off from "Babylon" (5:13). Most conservative scholars understand this as a code name for Rome, which the early church often compared to ancient Babylon, the great empire that held God's people in exile. The letter was most likely written around AD 62 to 64, in the years when the emperor Nero's hostility toward Christians was growing. Tradition says Peter was martyred in Rome not long after. The letter was carried by Silvanus (Silas), Paul's former traveling companion (5:12).

WHO RECEIVED IT. Peter writes to believers scattered across five Roman provinces in what is now modern Turkey: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The route of the carrier would have followed a circle through these regions. The readers were mostly non-Jewish converts who had left pagan temple worship (1:14, 4:3-4), together with some Jewish believers. Their old friends, families, and trade guilds thought it strange that they no longer joined festivals honoring the Roman gods or the emperor. Christians were slandered as troublemakers, and local neighbors could make life very hard for them. The word "pilgrims" (Greek *parepidemos*) describes a resident foreigner without full citizenship. Spiritually, it also reminds believers that this world is not their final home.

THE BIG PICTURE OF THE LETTER. First Peter is a letter of hope for people under pressure. Its themes are our living hope in Christ, holy living, Christ as our example in suffering, humble service, and standing firm in grace. It has more to say about loving one another and loving even those who mistreat us than almost any other short letter. Keep returning to Jesus' words in John 13:34-35 as the anchor for the whole series.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Peter was a fisherman from Galilee whom Jesus renamed “Rock.”
- The letter was likely written from Rome around AD 62–64, just before Nero's persecution.
- Readers lived in what is now Turkey, and many were treated as outsiders for following Jesus.

Opener (5 min)

Ask: Has anyone ever been the new kid, walked into a lunchroom where everyone seemed to know where to sit, and felt like a stranger? Let two or three students share. Then say: Today we begin a letter written to people who felt like strangers every single day, and the man who wrote it knew what it was like to fail and be forgiven.

Teaching (20 min)

1. The Writer: A Restored Failure

Peter did not write this letter because he was perfect. He wrote it because he was forgiven. Remember the night Jesus was arrested? Peter said he would never deny Jesus, and then three times he said, “I don't know Him.” But after the resurrection, Jesus made breakfast on the beach and asked Peter three times, “Do you love Me?” Each time He gave Peter a job: take care of My people.

Jesus did not say, “You're done.” He said, “Feed My lambs.” Peter's whole letter flows from that moment. A person who has been loved back to life is the best person to tell others how to love.

“So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.””

John 21:15 (NKJV)

2. The Readers: Strangers on a Journey

Peter calls his readers “pilgrims of the Dispersion,” which means believers scattered like seeds across many places. They were not famous or powerful. Many felt left out because they followed Jesus. Peter tells them something wonderful: you are not forgotten, and you are not alone. Being a stranger in this world is not a sign that something is wrong with you. It is a sign that your home is with Jesus.

Jesus said the same thing to His followers on the night before the cross. He told them they were not of the world and that He had chosen them out of it. Being different for Jesus can be hard, but it is also a way to shine.

“If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”

John 15:19 (NKJV)

3. The Gift: The Whole Trinity Is at Work in You

Verse 2 is like a gift box with three ribbons. God the Father chose us (“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father”). God the Spirit sets us apart for Him (“sanctification of the Spirit”). God the Son cleansed us with His blood (“sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”). Every part of God is working for our good.

Then Peter gives the best greeting: “Grace to you and peace be multiplied.” Grace is God's love we do not earn. Peace is the calm of belonging to Him. Peter asks God to pile both on, to multiply them, like loaves and fish in

Jesus' hands.

“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”

1 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Peter's first words point us to Jesus. The chosen strangers are cleansed by “the blood of Jesus Christ.” Peter, who once ran from the cross, will soon call Jesus the Lamb without blemish (1:19), the living Stone (2:4), the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls (2:25), and the Chief Shepherd (5:4). Everything in this letter is a picture of Jesus.

LOVE IN ACTION

Being a stranger yourself makes you notice other strangers. This week, find one person who seems left out (a new student, a quiet kid, someone eating alone) and welcome them. Jesus said, “Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them” (Matthew 7:12).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. When have you felt like a stranger or left out? What helped, or what would have helped?
2. Peter failed badly, yet Jesus gave him a job. What does that tell you about how Jesus treats people who fail?
3. What do you think it means that God the Father, the Spirit, and Jesus are all working for you?
4. What is one way you can make someone feel welcome this week?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for choosing us, cleansing us, and not giving up on us when we fail. Help us to notice people who feel like strangers and to welcome them with Your love. Multiply Your grace and peace in us. Amen.

What we learned

- Peter, a man who failed Jesus, was forgiven and given a new start.
- Believers can feel like strangers in the world, but we belong to God.
- Father, Spirit, and Son are all at work in our salvation.
- Grace and peace come from Jesus, and we can share them with others.

Memory verse

“Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”

1 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it means to be “chosen” by God and still feel like a stranger in the world?

FEEL How do you feel knowing that Jesus forgave Peter and gave him a fresh start?

DO What will you do this week to welcome someone who feels left out?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. The Writer: A Restored Failure › 2. The Readers: Strangers on a Journey › 3. The Gift: The Whole Trinity Is at Work in You › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 1

Strangers with a Mission

1 Peter 1:1-2

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:2*“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”***Big idea**

Jesus chose us, cleansed us, and sent us out into the world to live and love like Him, even when we feel like we don't fit in.

Fill in the blanks

1. Peter was a fisherman before Jesus called him.
2. Peter wrote to believers who felt like strangers and pilgrims.
3. We are cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
4. Peter prays that grace and peace would be multiplied.
5. Jesus told Peter to feed His lambs.

Think it through

Who in your life might feel like a stranger right now?

How could you show them Jesus' love this week?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Welcome one person who seems left out this week. Write their first name here (or just a description):

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:2*“Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”*

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 2 · A Living Hope

1 Peter 1:3-9 · *Hope that cannot die because Jesus rose from the dead*

BIG IDEA

Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have a living hope and a heavenly inheritance, and our faith is being tested like gold so it will shine.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

1 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

HOPE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. In the Greco-Roman world, “hope” often meant a wish with no guarantee, like hoping for good weather. Many people believed in fate or in gods who could be moody and unreliable. Tombstones from this era sometimes carried bleak messages about death. Against that backdrop, the Christian claim that Jesus actually rose from the dead and that believers will share His resurrection was astonishing. Biblical hope is not wishful thinking. It is confident expectation based on what God has already done.

INHERITANCE. In the Old Testament, Israel’s inheritance was the Promised Land, but land could be conquered, stolen, or ruined by drought and invasion. Peter’s readers had often lost property, jobs, or reputation because of their faith. Peter tells them their inheritance is “incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away” (1:4), and it is “reserved in heaven.” The word “kept” in verse 5 is a military term meaning guarded, like a fortress garrison. God guards His people while they wait.

FIRE AND GOLD. Gold was tested by heating in a furnace so impurities rose to the surface and could be skimmed off. What remained was pure. Peter says trials do the same for faith. Yet gold, however valuable, eventually perishes (can be lost, stolen, or worn away), while genuine faith will result in praise and glory when Jesus is revealed. Note that Peter says trials come “if need be” and “for a little while.” God is not careless with His children’s pain.

SEEING JESUS. Peter had seen Jesus with his own eyes. His readers had not. Peter honors them: “whom having not seen you love.” This echoes Jesus’ words to Thomas in John 20:29. Faith that loves an unseen Savior is precious.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- In Peter's day "hope" often meant a wish, not a promise.
- The word "kept" (v.5) is a military word for a garrison guarding a city.
- Gold was refined in fire so impurities rose to the top.

Opener (5 min)

Hold up a nice cup or toy and then quietly drop a cheap plastic one on the floor. Ask: Which one will last? Then say: Peter says there is a hope that will never break, rust, or fade, because it is tied to a Person who is alive. Let's find out who.

Teaching (20 min)

1. A New Birth into a Living Hope

The first word of Peter's praise is "Blessed." He cannot help but worship. Why? Because God, in His abundant mercy, "has begotten us again." That means a brand new start, a spiritual birth. And the hope that comes with it is alive, because the One it is built on is alive.

Think of the difference between a hope that says "I hope it doesn't rain" and a hope that says "My dad promised to pick me up and he has never broken a promise." Our hope is the second kind. Jesus walked out of the tomb, and that is the guarantee.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"

1 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)

2. An Inheritance That Cannot Be Ruined

Peter uses three words to describe what is waiting for us: incorruptible (cannot rot), undefiled (cannot be stained), and unfading (cannot lose its beauty). Everything we own on earth will eventually break, wear out, or go out of style. Not this.

And it is not just the inheritance that is protected. Verse 5 says that we are "kept by the power of God." We are the ones being guarded. Jesus said that no one can snatch His sheep out of His hand.

"to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

1 Peter 1:4-5 (NKJV)

3. Faith That Shines in the Fire

Life can still hurt. Peter does not pretend otherwise. He says we may be "grieved by various trials." But he gives a reason: the testing proves that our faith is real, like fire proves gold is pure. Real faith is more precious than gold.

And look at the amazing thing in verse 8: even though we have not seen Jesus, we love Him and we have joy "inexpressible and full of glory." Joy is not the same as having a perfect day. It is knowing Jesus, and the end of the story is that He saves our souls.

"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,"

1 Peter 1:6-7 (NKJV)

"whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls."

1 Peter 1:8-9 (NKJV)**JESUS CONNECTION**

The living hope is Jesus Himself. Because He rose, our hope lives. Jesus told His disciples, “Because I live, you will live also” (John 14:19). He also said, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29). Peter’s readers, and we, are in that blessing.

LOVE IN ACTION

People around us are hurting and many have no hope. Hope is something you can give away. This week, encourage someone who is going through a hard time. Send a text, write a note, or simply say, “I’m praying for you, and Jesus loves you.” Jesus said, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. What is the difference between a wish and a hope that is certain?
2. Why does it matter that Jesus is alive, not just a good teacher from long ago?
3. Peter says trials test our faith like fire tests gold. Has a hard time ever made your trust in God stronger?
4. Who do you know who needs hope? What could you say or do?

Closing prayer

Father, thank You for the new birth and the living hope we have through Jesus' resurrection. When life gets hard, remind us that You are guarding us and that our faith is precious to You. Help us to share hope with someone who needs it. Amen.

What we learned

- Our hope is alive because Jesus is alive.
- Our inheritance in heaven cannot spoil, stain, or fade.
- God guards believers by His power.
- Trials test and strengthen our faith, and the end is joy and salvation.

Memory verse

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

1 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think makes a hope “living” instead of just a wish?

FEEL How do you feel when you think about an inheritance in heaven that can never be lost?

DO What will you do this week to give hope to someone who is hurting?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. A New Birth into a Living Hope › 2. An Inheritance That Cannot Be Ruined › 3. Faith That Shines in the Fire › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 2

A Living Hope

1 Peter 1:3-9

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

Big idea

Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have a living hope and a heavenly inheritance, and our faith is being tested like gold so it will shine.

Fill in the blanks

1. We have a living hope through Jesus' resurrection.
2. Our inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and does not fade away.
3. We are kept by the power of God.
4. Faith is tested like gold in the fire.
5. Even though we have not seen Jesus, we love Him.

Think it through

What is one hard thing you are facing right now?

How could you trust Jesus with it this week?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Encourage someone this week with a kind note or message. Who will you encourage?

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

Jesus said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 3 · Be Holy, Because He Is

1 Peter 1:10-16 · *The prophets wondered, the angels watch, and now we get to live set apart for God*

BIG IDEA

The salvation the prophets longed to see has come in Jesus, so we are called to live set apart, ready, hopeful, and obedient, because our Father is holy.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.””

1 Peter 1:15-16 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

THE PROPHETS WHO WONDERED. Peter says Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah, Micah, and Daniel “inquired and searched carefully” about the coming salvation. They were told that a Messiah would suffer and then be glorified (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, Daniel 7). Peter’s point is that the story of Jesus fits perfectly with what God had planned. He also says that even angels long to look into these things (1:12). The gospel is so wonderful that heavenly beings are fascinated by it.

“GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND.” In the ancient world people wore long, flowing robes. To run, work, or fight, they tucked the robe into their belt (“girded their loins”). Peter uses the picture for the mind: get ready for action, think clearly, and do not let your thoughts drag in the dirt. Being “sober” means clear-headed and self-controlled.

HOLY. The Hebrew word qadosh and the Greek hagios mean set apart, different, dedicated to God. Peter quotes Leviticus (11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7), where God told Israel to be holy as He is holy. For Gentile readers who came from pagan backgrounds, this was a call to live differently from the surrounding culture’s immorality and idol worship. Holiness is not about being weird or proud. It is about belonging to God and reflecting His character, which includes love. In Leviticus 19:18, in the same chapter as the call to holiness, God commands: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

OBEDIENT CHILDREN. Peter uses a family picture: “as obedient children.” In Roman households, children bore the family name and reputation. Likewise, believers carry the name of their Father. Their conduct reflected on His honor. “Former lusts” and “ignorance” (1:14) describe life before knowing Christ, not a life Peter looks down on, but one Christ has rescued them from.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Prophets like Isaiah studied hard to understand the Savior who was coming.
- “Gird up the loins of your mind” comes from tucking a robe in your belt to be ready for action.
- “Holy” means set apart for God, and it is meant to look like love.

Opener (5 min)

Show a plain white shirt and a chef's apron or a team jersey. Ask: Why do people wear a uniform or a team jersey? Let students answer (to show who they belong to). Say: Today we learn that God's people are set apart, and the way we live shows whose team we are on.

Teaching (20 min)

1. The Greatest Story Ever Told

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophets wrote about a coming Savior. They did not understand all the details. They studied, asked questions, and waited. Peter says the same Spirit of Christ was in them, pointing to Jesus' suffering and the glory that would follow.

Now the story has come true, and we get to read the ending! Even angels want to look into it. If the Old Testament prophets and the angels in heaven find the gospel amazing, we should not take it lightly.

“Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”

1 Peter 1:10-11 (NKJV)

2. Get Ready and Keep Hoping

Because of what God has done, Peter gives three quick commands. Gird up your mind: think on purpose. Be sober: keep a clear head. Rest your hope fully on grace: do not put your hope in popularity, grades, or things, but in what Jesus is bringing.

Think of a runner at the starting line. She is not slouching. She is focused, ready, and she knows where the finish line is. That is how God wants us to live.

“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;”

1 Peter 1:13 (NKJV)

3. Set Apart Like Our Father

Here is the main call: “Be holy, for I am holy.” God is perfectly good, perfectly loving, and perfectly pure. Because we are His children, we want to look like our Father. Holiness is not about a list of do-nots. It is about belonging to God so completely that our words, choices, and attitudes show Him.

Notice the phrase “in all your conduct.” Holiness is for lunchtime, group chats, the ball field, and the car ride home. And remember, Jesus summed up God's law by saying the greatest commandments are to love God and love your neighbor. A holy life is a loving life.

“as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.””

1 Peter 1:14-16 (NKJV)

“Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as

yourself.’””

Matthew 22:37-39 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus is the One the prophets pointed to, and He is the perfect picture of holiness. He was “holy, harmless, undefiled” (Hebrews 7:26) and yet He was the friend of sinners. His holiness drew people in rather than pushing them away. We can only be holy because He makes us clean and gives His Spirit to help us.

LOVE IN ACTION

Holiness shows up in how we treat people. This week, pick one habit that does not look like Jesus (gossip, sarcasm, put-downs) and replace it with something that does (an encouraging word, a kind comment). “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why do you think the prophets and even angels were so interested in the gospel?
2. What does it mean to “gird up the loins of your mind” in everyday life, for example with what you watch, read, or scroll?
3. How is being holy different from being stuck-up or judgmental?
4. What is one area of your conduct (words, attitudes, online life) where you want to look more like Jesus?

Closing prayer

Holy Father, thank You for sending Jesus, whom the prophets longed to see. Help us think clearly, hope fully, and live set apart for You. Make us people whose words and actions show Your love. Amen.

What we learned

- The prophets and angels marveled at the salvation we now know in Jesus.
- God wants us to think clearly and put our hope fully in Jesus.
- Holy means set apart for God, belonging to Him and looking like Him.
- A holy life is a loving life.

Memory verse

“because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.””

1 Peter 1:16 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it looks like to be “set apart” for God at school or at home?

FEEL How do you feel when you hear that God wants us to be holy because He is holy?

DO What one habit will you change this week so your words and actions look more like Jesus?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. The Greatest Story Ever Told › 2. Get Ready and Keep Hoping › 3. Set Apart Like Our Father › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we

learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 3

Be Holy, Because He Is

1 Peter 1:10-16

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:15-16*“but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”***Big idea**

The salvation the prophets longed to see has come in Jesus, so we are called to live set apart, ready, hopeful, and obedient, because our Father is holy.

Fill in the blanks

1. Peter says to **gird** up the loins of your mind.
2. We should rest our hope fully on **grace**.
3. God said, “Be **holy**, for I am holy.”
4. Even the **angels** desire to look into the gospel.
5. Holiness shows up in all our **conduct**.

Think it through

Where do you most need to “look like your Father” right now?

What would it look like to replace one unkind habit with a kind one?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Choose one unkind habit to replace with a kind one this week. Habit: _____ Replace with:

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:16*“because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”*

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 4 · Love One Another Ferently

1 Peter 1:17-2:3 · Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, we are born again to love

BIG IDEA

Jesus paid for us with His own precious blood and gave us a new birth through God's lasting Word, so we now love one another deeply and grow up in Him.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three "Did You Know?" facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,"

1 Peter 1:22 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher's preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

REDEMPTION. "Redeemed" (Greek lutroo) was a marketplace word for buying back a slave or prisoner by paying a ransom. In Exodus, God redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt, and the Passover lamb's blood marked the houses that were spared. Peter says believers were bought back, not with silver or gold, the usual price of freedom, but with "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The Passover lamb had to be without defect (Exodus 12:5), and John the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

ANCESTRAL TRADITION. Peter mentions "aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers." In Roman and Greek cities, religion and family tradition were closely tied. Following the ancestors' gods was expected and was proof of loyalty to the household and city. Turning to Christ meant going against family tradition, which could cost relationships and honor. This is why Peter reminds them of the price Christ paid and the certainty of a new, lasting life.

BORN AGAIN BY THE WORD. Peter uses the picture of seed. Human life is like grass: beautiful for a season and then gone (quoting Isaiah 40:6-8). But the Word of God is imperishable seed, and it gives eternal life. In the Greco-Roman world, philosophers and teachers came and went, empires rose and fell. The Scriptures endure.

FERVENT LOVE. The Greek word for "fervently" (ektenos) literally means stretched out, like a runner straining toward a finish line or a muscle stretched to the limit. It is love with effort and stamina, not just a feeling. The "love of the brethren" is philadelphia, and the love in "love one another" is agape, sacrificial love. In the same breath, Peter lists the habits that destroy community: malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking (2:1). The "pure milk of the word" (2:2) pictures a baby's hunger. This pairs well with John 13:34-35, where Jesus gives His new commandment.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- “Redeemed” means bought back, like paying a ransom for a slave.
- “Fervently” means stretched out, like a runner straining toward the finish line.
- The Passover lamb had to be without blemish. Jesus is the Lamb of God.

Opener (5 min)

Bring a price tag or ask: What is the most expensive thing you own or have ever wanted? Then ask: What would you never trade for any amount of money? Let students share (a pet, a family member). Say: Peter says God thought we were worth more than silver and gold, and He paid the highest price.

Teaching (20 min)**1. Bought with a Price Beyond Gold**

Imagine a shopper walks into a store, sees you on the shelf, and pays everything they have to take you home. That is what Jesus did. Peter says we were not redeemed with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like a perfect lamb.

Why does Peter bring this up? Because it changes how we live. Verse 17 says to live with respect for God as our Father. If God paid this much for us, then we are valuable, and so is every person we meet. Each classmate, sibling, and neighbor is someone Jesus also loves.

“knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NKJV)

2. Born Again to Love Deeply

Because we have been cleansed and born again, we are family. Peter says, “love one another fervently with a pure heart.” Fervent means stretched out, like a runner straining to reach the finish line. Real love takes effort. It listens, forgives, shares, and shows up.

This is exactly what Jesus taught. On the night before the cross, He said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” The world will know who we follow by the way we treat each other.

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,”

1 Peter 1:22-23 (NKJV)

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35 (NKJV)

3. Clear Out the Junk, Grow Up on the Word

In chapter 2, Peter gives a clean-up list: malice (wanting to hurt), deceit (lying), hypocrisy (faking), envy (jealousy), and evil speaking (tearing people down with words). Notice that every one of these hurts relationships.

Then he gives the better plan: desire God's Word like a hungry baby wants milk. When we feed on Scripture, we grow strong and loving. The more we taste how good the Lord is, the more we want to be like Him.

“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”

1 Peter 2:1-3 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus is the “Lamb without blemish and without spot,” and His love is the pattern for ours. He said, “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends” (John 15:12-13). He did that on the cross.

LOVE IN ACTION

Pick one of the five junk habits (malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, evil speaking) and ask Jesus to help you stop. Then do one deliberate act of “stretched-out” love, such as helping a sibling with a chore without being asked or standing up for someone being teased.

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. What does it say about your worth that Jesus paid for you with His own blood?
2. What does “fervent” love look like compared to casual love?
3. Which of the five habits in 2:1 is hardest for you? How can the Word help?
4. What is one way you can read or listen to the Bible more regularly this month?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for paying the highest price for us. Help us to love one another with a stretched-out, steady love. Take away the junk in our hearts, and make us hungry for Your Word so we can grow up in You. Amen.

What we learned

- Jesus redeemed us with His precious blood, not silver or gold.
- We are born again through God's Word, which lasts forever.
- God calls us to love one another fervently with a pure heart.
- We put away malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking and feed on God's Word.

Memory verse

“love one another fervently with a pure heart,”

1 Peter 1:22 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think Peter means when he says to love “fervently”?

FEEL How do you feel knowing that Jesus thought you were worth His own blood?

DO What one act of fervent love will you do for someone this week?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Bought with a Price Beyond Gold › 2. Born Again to Love Deeply › 3. Clear Out the Junk, Grow Up on the Word › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 4

Love One Another Fervently

1 Peter 1:17-2:3

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:22*“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,”***Big idea**

Jesus paid for us with His own precious blood and gave us a new birth through God's lasting Word, so we now love one another deeply and grow up in Him.

Fill in the blanks

1. We were not redeemed with silver or gold.
2. Jesus is like a lamb without blemish and without spot.
3. Peter says to love one another fervently.
4. The word of God lives and abides forever.
5. We should desire the pure milk of the word.

Think it through

Which junk habit do you most need Jesus' help with?

Who could use some “stretched-out” love from you this week?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Do one act of fervent love this week without being asked. What will it be? _____

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 1:22*“love one another fervently with a pure heart,”*

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 5 · Living Stones, Royal Family

1 Peter 2:4-10 · *Jesus is the Cornerstone, and we are stones in His house*

BIG IDEA

Jesus is the living Cornerstone, and everyone who trusts in Him becomes part of God's family, a chosen people with a purpose to show His goodness to others.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three "Did You Know?" facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher's preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

THE CORNERSTONE. In ancient construction, the cornerstone (or foundation stone) was the first block laid, and every other stone was positioned in relation to it. It determined the angles and the lines of the whole building. Peter quotes three Old Testament passages about the stone: Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, and Isaiah 8:14. Jesus Himself quoted Psalm 118:22 about His rejection (Matthew 21:42), and Peter used it before the rulers in Acts 4:11. Many in Israel stumbled over Jesus because He did not fit their picture of the Messiah.

A SPIRITUAL HOUSE. Every city Peter's readers lived in had grand temples to Roman and Greek gods, built of stone, with priests and sacrifices. Christians had no such buildings, no altars, and no images. Their neighbors sometimes called them "atheists." Peter answers: you are the temple. Believers are "living stones" in a spiritual house. In the Jerusalem temple, only priests from the tribe of Levi could approach God with sacrifices. Peter says every believer is now a priest who can offer "spiritual sacrifices" (see Hebrews 13:15-16: praise and doing good and sharing).

A CHOSEN PEOPLE. The phrases in 2:9 come from Exodus 19:5-6 ("a kingdom of priests and a holy nation") and Isaiah 43:20-21. They were originally said to Israel. Now Peter applies them to the church, made up of Jews and Gentiles who trust Jesus. Verse 10 echoes Hosea 1:6-10 and 2:23, where God says to those who were "Not My people," "You are My people." People who felt like outsiders now belong to God's family. Note that the purpose is outward: "that you may proclaim the praises of Him."

TEACHING TIP: Hold up a rock and ask students to think about how they would feel being called a "living stone." The oxymoron is deliberate: stones are dead, but Jesus is alive, and He makes us alive.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- The cornerstone was the first stone laid, and it set the lines for the whole building.
- Roman cities were full of stone temples. Christians said, “We are the temple.”
- Verse 10 echoes Hosea, where God says to outsiders, “You are My people.”

Opener (5 min)

Build a small wall or tower with blocks or cups. Ask: What happens if you remove the bottom corner block? Let it fall. Say: Builders always start with a cornerstone, the first stone that holds everything else in line. Peter says Jesus is that stone, and we are the other stones.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Jesus Is the Living Cornerstone

Peter says to come to Jesus, the “living stone.” Stones are not alive, but Jesus is the stone who rose from the dead and gives life. Though people rejected Him, God chose Him and called Him precious.

Think about it: the same people who threw Jesus away (the builders) could not build without Him. Everything God is building lines up with Jesus. If you trust Him, you will never be put to shame.

“Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,”

1 Peter 2:4 (NKJV)

“Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.””

1 Peter 2:6 (NKJV)

2. You Are a Living Stone in God's House

Here is the surprise. Peter says we are stones too! God is building a house out of people. You may feel like a small pebble, but you are a living stone, cut and placed by the Builder. No two stones are alike, and the house needs every one.

We are also priests. Under the old covenant only certain men could enter the temple. Now each believer can come to God directly through Jesus. Our sacrifices are praise, kindness, and sharing what we have.

“you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

1 Peter 2:5 (NKJV)

3. From Nobody to God's Own People

Verse 9 piles up four names: chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, His own special people. If you have ever felt like a nobody, hear verse 10: “who once were not a people but are now the people of God.”

But notice why God did this: “that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” We are not chosen to be the only ones in the light. We are chosen to shine it. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world.” Our job is to tell others how good God is and to show it by how we love.

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus is the Cornerstone, the foundation of everything God builds. He said, “I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18), words He spoke to Peter himself. Peter, the “rock,” points everyone to the true Rock. He is also the One who gave us mercy.

LOVE IN ACTION

A building is held together by stones that stay in place. Find a way this week to be a “load-bearing stone” for someone: invite a classmate to youth group, text a friend who is struggling, or help set up and clean up after a church event. Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why do you think Peter calls both Jesus and believers “living stones”?
2. What does it mean to you that you are a “priest” who can come to God directly?
3. Which of the four names in verse 9 means the most to you? Why?
4. If we are chosen to “proclaim the praises” of God, how can we do that without being pushy?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, You are our Cornerstone, and we trust You. Thank You for making us part of Your house and Your family. Help us to shine Your light and show others the goodness of God. Amen.

What we learned

- Jesus is the living Cornerstone, rejected by men but chosen by God.
- Believers are living stones, built into God's spiritual house.
- Every believer is a priest who can come to God through Jesus.
- We are God's special people so that we can tell others about His goodness.

Memory verse

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it means to be a “living stone” in God's house?

FEEL How do you feel about being called chosen, royal, holy, and special by God?

DO Who will you invite or encourage this week so they can feel part of God's family?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Jesus Is the Living Cornerstone › 2. You Are a Living Stone in God's House › 3. From Nobody to God's Own People › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 5

Living Stones, Royal Family

1 Peter 2:4-10

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 2:9*“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”***Big idea**

Jesus is the living Cornerstone, and everyone who trusts in Him becomes part of God's family, a chosen people with a purpose to show His goodness to others.

Fill in the blanks

1. Jesus is the living cornerstone of God's house.
2. Believers are being built up as living stones.
3. We are a royal priesthood.
4. God called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.
5. We were once not a people, but now we are the people of God.

Think it through

Which name in verse 9 do you most need to hear today?

Who is someone you could invite into God's family?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Invite someone to youth group or church this week. Who will you invite? _____

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 2:9*“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”*

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 6 · Good Citizens, Good Neighbors

1 Peter 2:11-17 · *Honor everyone and let your good works speak louder than rumors*

BIG IDEA

Followers of Jesus show His love by living honorably in the world: honoring all people, respecting authority, doing good, and using freedom to serve rather than to sin.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

CHRISTIANS UNDER SUSPICION. Believers in the Roman Empire were misunderstood. Because they refused to burn incense to the emperor or to worship the city gods, they were accused of being atheists and disloyal to Rome. Rumors spread that Christians were immoral and secretive. Their meeting for the Lord's Supper (“This is My body... My blood”) was twisted into stories of cannibalism. Peter's advice is that holy living is the best answer, and “by your good works which they observe” their neighbors may come to glorify God “in the day of visitation” (2:12), meaning the day God draws people to Himself.

SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY. In Peter's day the emperor was Nero (likely, at time of writing), whose reputation was cruel. Even so, Peter says to respect governing authority. Paul says the same in Romans 13:1-7. This does not mean obeying commands that violate God's law; Peter himself told the Sanhedrin, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). It means believers should be law-abiding, peaceful, and honorable in public life. The good citizen who follows Jesus becomes a testimony. Jesus Himself said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's” (Mark 12:17).

FREEDOM WITH LIMITS. Christians are free in Christ from the law's condemnation and from fear. But Peter reminds them that freedom is not a “cloak for vice.” A cloak hides things. Misusing freedom as an excuse for wrongdoing harms others and dishonors Christ. Instead, we become “servants of God” and use freedom to serve (Galatians 5:13: “through love serve one another”).

FOUR SHORT COMMANDS. 2:17 is a compact summary: honor all people (everyone has value because they are made in God's image), love the brotherhood (the church family), fear God (reverent respect), and honor the king (respect for those in authority). Notice the order and the difference in words: we honor people and the king, we love the brotherhood, and we fear only God. Jesus calls us to love even our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Christians were called atheists because they would not worship Roman gods or the emperor.
- Rumors said they were cannibals because of a twisted version of the Lord's Supper.
- Peter says good works, not arguments, are the best answer to rumors.

Opener (5 min)

Ask: If someone said bad things about you that weren't true, what would be the best way to prove them wrong? Take answers. Say: Peter says there's a way to answer false rumors that is more powerful than an argument. Let's find it.

Teaching (20 min)

1. We Are Visitors Who Shine

Peter reminds his readers that they are “sojourners and pilgrims.” Their real home is with God. But while they are here, their conduct matters. He asks them to stay away from the sinful desires that “war against the soul.” Think of a battle going on inside, between what pleases God and what pleases ourselves.

The result of a godly life is a witness. People who talk badly about us may one day see our good works and give glory to God. In Matthew 5:16, Jesus said to let our light shine. Rumors fade, but a life of love speaks for itself.

“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

1 Peter 2:11-12 (NKJV)

2. Respect Authority, Use Freedom to Serve

Peter asks believers to respect government and leaders. This includes school rules, parents, coaches, and teachers, as well as civic leaders. When we do the right thing, it can quiet the foolish things people say about Christians.

He also reminds us that freedom is not a license to do whatever we like. In Christ we are free, but we use that freedom to serve God and others. A free person who loves does not look for loopholes. A free person looks for ways to help.

“For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as servants of God.”

1 Peter 2:15-16 (NKJV)

3. Four Short Commands that Change Everything

Verse 17 is only a few words, but it could change our school, home, and community: Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. Honor every person, even the ones who are hard to get along with. Everyone is made in God's image and loved by Jesus.

Jesus took it even further. He said, “Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you.” When we treat people with dignity, we show the world what Jesus is like.

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,”

Matthew 5:44 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus honored everyone: children, outcasts, tax collectors, and Roman soldiers. When asked about paying taxes to Caesar, He answered wisely and respected the authority God allows (Mark 12:17). He also showed the perfect use of freedom: He laid down His life in love. Our honor for others follows His example.

LOVE IN ACTION

This week, practice “honor all people.” Greet the bus driver and the custodian by name. Say thank you to teachers. Refuse to join in gossip or mocking. Pray for someone who is hard to like. “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise” (Luke 6:31).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why do you think Peter says good works can answer false rumors better than arguing?
2. What are some times when it is hard to honor a teacher, a parent, or a coach? What helps?
3. What is the difference between freedom to serve and freedom to do whatever you want?
4. Who is someone you find hard to honor? What is one way you can treat them with respect this week?

Closing prayer

Father, thank You for making every person in Your image. Help us to honor all people, respect those in authority, and use our freedom to serve. Let our good works shine so others will see You. Amen.

What we learned

- Our good conduct can be the best answer to false rumors.
- We respect authority and obey the law, while always obeying God first.
- True freedom in Christ means serving, not doing whatever we want.
- We honor all people, love the church family, fear God, and honor leaders.

Memory verse

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK Why do you think living honorably can speak louder than arguing with people?

FEEL How do you feel when someone treats you with honor and respect?

DO Who will you honor this week, and what will you do to show it?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. We Are Visitors Who Shine › 2. Respect Authority, Use Freedom to Serve › 3. Four Short Commands that Change Everything › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 6

Good Citizens, Good Neighbors

1 Peter 2:11-17

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 2:17

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

Big idea

Followers of Jesus show His love by living honorably in the world: honoring all people, respecting authority, doing good, and using freedom to serve rather than to sin.

Fill in the blanks

1. We are sojourners and pilgrims in this world.
2. Our good works can lead others to glorify God.
3. We should not use freedom as a cloak for vice.
4. Honor all people.
5. We fear only God.

Think it through

Who do you find hard to honor?

What is one action that would show them respect this week?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Show honor to someone you normally overlook (bus driver, custodian, cafeteria worker). Who?

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 2:17

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 7 · Following Jesus' Footsteps

1 Peter 2:18-25 · *When Jesus suffered unfairly, He answered with love, and He carried our sins*

BIG IDEA

Jesus is our perfect example in how to respond to unfair treatment, and He is also our Savior who bore our sins and our Shepherd who brought us home.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three "Did You Know?" facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

"For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:"

1 Peter 2:21 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher's preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

SLAVERY IN THE ROMAN WORLD. Peter addresses "servants" (Greek oiketai, household servants). In the first-century Roman Empire, perhaps a third or more of the population in cities were enslaved, and many early Christians were slaves. Slavery then was not tied to race, but it was a harsh institution. Slaves could be mistreated with little protection. The New Testament does not endorse slavery. Paul told Philemon to receive his runaway slave as a brother (Philemon 15-16) and condemned slave-trading (1 Timothy 1:10). But the apostles addressed people where they were. Peter's focus is on how Christians who suffer unjustly can follow Jesus. Teachers should be sensitive and make clear that Scripture affirms the dignity of every person.

SUFFERING UNJUSTLY. Peter's point is not that suffering for doing wrong is admirable (2:20). It is that suffering for doing right, while responding with grace, reflects Christ. Many of Peter's readers were mistreated just for being Christians. The word "example" (Greek hypogrammos) refers to a writing exercise in which a teacher wrote letters lightly, and the student traced over them. Jesus, in His suffering, wrote the pattern for how to respond. "Steps" literally means footprints.

ISAIAH 53. Verses 22-25 echo Isaiah 53, the great prophecy about the Suffering Servant written some 700 years before Jesus. Peter was an eyewitness to the trial of Jesus, when Jesus "did not revile in return." "Bore our sins in His own body on the tree" points to the cross (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13). "By whose stripes you were healed" refers to spiritual healing from sin's disease.

SHEPHERD AND OVERSEER. The closing picture (2:25) of straying sheep returning to their Shepherd would be very familiar to a fisherman who had heard Jesus say, "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11) and had been told to "feed My sheep" (John 21:17).

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Many early Christians were household servants in the Roman world. The Bible affirms every person's dignity.
- “Example” was a writing pattern teachers drew lightly for students to trace.
- Verses 22–25 echo Isaiah 53, written about 700 years before Jesus.

Opener (5 min)

Trace footprints with chalk or paper from the door to the front, or ask a student to walk across sand-colored paper. Ask: What does it mean to follow in someone's footsteps? Say: Peter says Jesus left a trail, and it runs straight through the hardest parts of life.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Doing Right When Life Is Unfair

Life is not always fair. Peter's readers were sometimes treated harshly even when they had done nothing wrong. He says that if you do the right thing and still suffer, and you patiently endure it, God sees it and is pleased.

That does not mean we put up with abuse. If someone is hurting you, tell a trusted adult. Peter is talking about the choice to respond with grace instead of hatred when we are wronged. God is the final Judge, and He sees everything.

“For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.”

1 Peter 2:19-20 (NKJV)

2. Jesus Left Us Footprints

Here is the heart of the passage: “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example.” When Jesus was insulted, He did not insult back. When He suffered, He did not threaten. He trusted His Father, who judges rightly.

Remember the cross. Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” That is the pattern. Peter was there that night and watched Jesus handle it. Now he says: put your feet where His feet went.

“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth’; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;”

1 Peter 2:21-23 (NKJV)

“Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.’”

Luke 23:34 (NKJV)

3. More Than an Example: Our Savior and Shepherd

Jesus is not just a good role model. He is our Savior. Verse 24 says, “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree.” He took the punishment we deserved. Because of that, we are healed on the inside, freed from sin's power so we can live for what is right.

And the passage ends with a picture of sheep that wandered off and then came back to the Shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who knows us by name and watches over our souls. We follow His footsteps not to earn His love, but because we have already been brought home.

“who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned

to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

1 Peter 2:24-25 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Everything in this passage is about Jesus: His sinless life, His quiet strength, His death in our place, and His care as our Shepherd. In John 10:11 He said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” At the cross, Jesus did exactly that.

LOVE IN ACTION

This week, when someone is unkind to you (a snarky comment, being left out, an unfair grade), pause and respond the way Jesus would. Don't strike back. Pray quietly, “Father, help me respond like Jesus.” If someone is harming you, tell a trusted adult. “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you” (Luke 6:27).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why is it hard to respond with kindness when someone is unfair to us?
2. What do you notice about how Jesus responded when He was mistreated?
3. What does it mean that Jesus “bore our sins in His own body”? Why did He do it?
4. What does it mean for you to be a sheep who has returned to the Shepherd?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for carrying our sins on the cross and for the example You left us. When people are unkind to us, help us to respond in love as You did. Thank You for being our Good Shepherd. Amen.

What we learned

- Doing right when treated unfairly pleases God.
- Jesus left us a pattern: He did not strike back, but trusted His Father.
- Jesus bore our sins on the cross so we could be healed and live for Him.
- Jesus is our Shepherd and Overseer who watches over our souls.

Memory verse

“because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:”

1 Peter 2:21 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it means that Jesus left us an example to follow in His steps?

FEEL How do you feel when you think about Jesus carrying your sins on the cross?

DO What will you do the next time someone treats you unfairly?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Doing Right When Life Is Unfair › 2. Jesus Left Us Footprints › 3. More Than an Example: Our Savior and Shepherd › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 7

Following Jesus' Footsteps

1 Peter 2:18-25

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 2:21

“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:”

Big idea

Jesus is our perfect example in how to respond to unfair treatment, and He is also our Savior who bore our sins and our Shepherd who brought us home.

Fill in the blanks

1. Christ left us an example.
2. We are to follow His steps.
3. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return.
4. Jesus bore our sins on the tree.
5. Jesus is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.

Think it through

When was the last time someone was unkind to you? How did you respond?

What would it look like to respond the way Jesus did?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

The next time someone is unkind to you, pause and pray before you respond. Write about it:

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 2:21

“because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:”

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 8 · Beauty That Lasts

1 Peter 3:1-7 · Gentle strength, honor at home, and the kind of beauty God treasures

BIG IDEA

God values a gentle, quiet, Christlike heart above outward appearance, and He calls families to treat one another with honor, understanding, and respect, because we are equal heirs of His grace.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

1 Peter 3:3-4 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

THE ROMAN HOUSEHOLD. In the first century the head of a household (the paterfamilias) usually decided the family’s religion. A wife was expected to worship her husband’s gods. When a woman became a Christian before her husband did, she faced a hard situation: she followed Jesus in a home that did not. Peter addresses this directly in 3:1-2. He says her best witness is not nagging or arguing, but her “chaste conduct accompanied by fear” (reverent, pure behavior). Many in the early church were won to Christ this way. Peter’s instructions to wives go on for six verses, while his instructions to husbands take one, but that one verse was radical in its day.

BEAUTY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. Wealthy Roman women were known for elaborate braided hairstyles, gold jewelry, and costly clothing, as writers like Juvenal and Seneca note. Peter does not forbid nice clothing or grooming, since the phrase is “not merely outward.” His point is about priorities: lasting beauty is the character of the heart. For Middle Schoolers who face intense pressure about appearance, this passage applies to boys and girls alike. God looks on the heart (1 Samuel 16:7).

SARAH AND THE HOLY WOMEN. Peter points to Sarah, who “obeyed Abraham, calling him lord” (3:6, referring to Genesis 18:12), as an example of faith and hope in God. Sarah’s life was not easy, and she made mistakes, but she trusted God. The phrase “not afraid with any terror” shows that godly women did not act out of fear.

“THE WEAKER VESSEL.” This phrase (3:7) does not mean women are less intelligent, less spiritual, or less valuable. Most scholars understand it to point to the generally greater physical vulnerability and weaker legal and social protection women had at that time. It is a reason for the husband to be considerate, not to dominate. Peter also adds that husband and wife are “heirs together of the grace of life,” meaning equal in standing before God. The

warning that prayers may be “hindered” shows that how we treat family members matters to God.

TEACHING NOTE: Some students come from homes where one or both parents do not follow Christ, or from single-parent or blended families. Emphasize that Peter's principles of gentle witness, honor, and understanding apply in every kind of family. Treat the material on marriage as background to prepare students for their own future relationships, and focus on how everyone relates to parents, siblings, and friends.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Wealthy Roman women were known for elaborate hairstyles and gold jewelry.
- A Christian wife in a non-Christian home had to live out her faith quietly and bravely.
- “Heirs together” means men and women stand equal before God.

Opener (5 min)

Show two wrapped gifts, one in fancy paper that is empty and one in plain paper that holds something good. Ask: Which would you rather have? Let students open them. Say: Today we learn that God cares much more about what is inside a person than what is on the outside.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Winning Others Without a Word

Peter begins with a believer living in a home where not everyone follows Jesus. What can she do? He says, “without a word.” Not preaching, not arguing, but living a life so gentle and pure that others take notice. Actions can open hearts that words cannot.

This works for us too. Maybe someone in your family or friend group doesn't follow Jesus. You probably can't argue them into believing. But you can serve, be patient, be kind, and pray. Jesus said that people would see our good works and glorify our Father (Matthew 5:16).

“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”

1 Peter 3:1-2 (NKJV)

2. The Beauty God Treasures

Our world tells us that beauty means looking a certain way: the right clothes, hair, or image. Peter says there is a beauty that never fades: “the hidden person of the heart.” A gentle and quiet spirit is not weak or shy. It means a calm confidence that trusts God and treats people with kindness.

Jesus described Himself this way: “I am gentle and lowly in heart.” Gentle does not mean powerless. Jesus calmed storms, cleared the temple, and stood before kings. His strength was under control, and it was always used to love. When we grow in gentleness, we grow in beauty God treasures.

“Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

1 Peter 3:3-4 (NKJV)

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:29 (NKJV)

3. Honor and Understanding at Home

Peter then speaks to husbands, and his words were surprising in a world where men often held all the power: live with understanding, honor your wife, and remember that you are equal heirs of God's grace. If you treat family badly, Peter says, even your prayers will be hindered.

For us, the principle is clear: the people we live with deserve our best treatment, not our leftovers. Treat your siblings, parents, and grandparents with honor. Listen. Say please and thank you. Think about how they feel. This is how Jesus loved: He saw people and honored them, including women and children when others brushed them off.

“Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

1 Peter 3:7 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus showed us gentle strength. He honored women, welcomed children, and washed His disciples' feet. He said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14). He saw each person's heart, and He still does.

LOVE IN ACTION

Treat your family with honor this week. Do a chore without being asked, speak kindly to a sibling even when annoyed, and tell a parent or grandparent thank you. Also, give a compliment this week about someone's character (kindness, honesty, humor) rather than their appearance.

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why do you think our culture puts so much focus on outward appearance? How does that affect people your age?
2. What does a “gentle and quiet spirit” look like in real life? Can you think of someone who has one?
3. Why do you think Peter says that how we treat family can affect our prayers?
4. What is one way you can show honor to someone at home this week?

Closing prayer

Father, thank You for looking at our hearts and not just our outsides. Help us to grow a gentle, loving spirit like Jesus. Teach us to honor our families, to listen with understanding, and to love at home first. Amen.

What we learned

- Our actions can speak louder than words, even to people who do not yet follow Jesus.
- God treasures a gentle, quiet spirit more than outward looks.
- Gentleness is strength under control, like Jesus.
- We honor and understand our families because we are equal heirs of God's grace.

Memory verse

“rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

1 Peter 3:4 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it means to have a gentle and quiet spirit that is precious to God?

FEEL How do you feel about the pressure to look a certain way? What does it mean that God cares about your heart?

DO What is one thing you will do this week to honor someone in your family?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Winning Others Without a Word › 2. The Beauty God Treasures › 3. Honor and Understanding at Home › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 8

Beauty That Lasts

1 Peter 3:1-7

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 3:3-4*“Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”***Big idea**

God values a gentle, quiet, Christlike heart above outward appearance, and He calls families to treat one another with honor, understanding, and respect, because we are equal heirs of His grace.

Fill in the blanks

1. Peter says people can be won “without a word.”
2. The beauty God treasures is the hidden person of the heart.
3. A gentle spirit is very precious in the sight of God.
4. Jesus said, “I am gentle and lowly in heart.”
5. We are heirs together of the grace of life.

Think it through

Where do you feel the most pressure about how you look?

How can you remember that God values your heart?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Give a compliment about someone's character this week, and do one kind thing for a family member without being asked. Who? _____

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 3:4*“rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”*

Jesus said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 9 · Overcoming Evil with Good

1 Peter 3:8-17 · *Be tenderhearted, bless those who hurt you, and always be ready to share your hope*

BIG IDEA

Jesus teaches us to respond to evil with blessing, to pursue peace, and to share the hope we have with gentleness and respect.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”

1 Peter 3:8-9 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

A CHECKLIST FOR COMMUNITY. Verse 8 gives five qualities for the Christian community: unity of mind, sympathy (feeling with others), brotherly love (philadelphia), tenderheartedness (literally “good in the guts,” deep compassion), and humility or courtesy. In a world divided by class, ethnicity, and status, a church in which slaves, free people, Jews, and Greeks sat together as family was a startling witness (see Galatians 3:28).

BLESSING INSTEAD OF REVENGE. Peter’s command, “not returning evil for evil... but on the contrary blessing,” comes directly from Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:38-48; Luke 6:27-36). Peter had heard Jesus say, “Bless those who curse you.” Peter also heard Jesus pray for His killers. The Greek and Roman honor culture encouraged retaliation: you must repay insults to protect your honor. Peter calls Christians to a radically different way.

PSALM 34. Verses 10-12 quote Psalm 34:12-16, a psalm of David written after he escaped from Achish at Gath. It states that God watches over the righteous, hears their prayers, and opposes evildoers. To “seek peace and pursue it” means to chase after it actively. Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9).

SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS. In verses 13-14 Peter quotes Isaiah 8:12-13, “do not be afraid of their threats.” Peter says that if you suffer for doing right, you are “blessed,” echoing Matthew 5:10. Verse 15 is a famous one for sharing our faith: “sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” means to honor Christ as Lord, set Him first. Then “always be ready to give a defense (Greek apologia) to everyone who asks.” The word apologia was a legal term for a defense speech but here it is a gentle explanation of one’s hope. Manner matters: “with meekness and fear,” meaning gentleness and respect. A good conscience (3:16) strengthens a believer’s witness.

APPLICATION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS: this is the age of cliques, social media fights, and sharp words. Revenge feels natural. Consider role-playing realistic scenarios and coaching students on responses.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- “Tenderhearted” literally means “good in the guts,” deep compassion.
- In Roman culture honor demanded revenge. Peter says bless instead.
- Verse 15's “defense” was a legal word, but Peter says to give it gently.

Opener (5 min)

Ask two volunteers to act out a scene in which one student insults the other. Replay it twice: first the second student insults back; second, the student answers kindly. Ask which version ended better. Say: Peter says the second way isn't just nicer, it's the way of Jesus.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Five Marks of a Loving Community

Peter gives a quick list: be of one mind, have compassion, love as family, be tenderhearted, be courteous. This is a recipe for a church or youth group where everyone feels safe.

Think about your own group. Does everyone feel included? Do people feel others care when they are sad? Tenderhearted means having a soft heart toward others' pain. Courteous means being humble and polite. When these five things are in a group, people see Jesus in it.

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;”

1 Peter 3:8 (NKJV)

2. Don't Pay Back: Bless Instead

When someone hurts us, everything in us wants to hurt them back. Peter says to do the opposite: bless them. Jesus taught the same thing: “Love your enemies, bless those who curse you.” How does a person bless an enemy? By speaking kindly, praying for them, and doing good when we can.

It is not easy, and it does not mean pretending nothing happened. It means we choose not to let evil win by making us evil. Peter reminds us that God sees and cares for His children (verse 12), and He is the one who makes things right.

“not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For “He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.””

1 Peter 3:9-11 (NKJV)

3. Always Ready to Share Your Hope

Peter says even if you suffer for doing right, do not be afraid. Instead, set Christ apart as Lord in your heart. Then be ready: if someone asks why you are different or hopeful, be prepared to explain.

But look at how: “with meekness and fear,” which means with gentleness and respect. We are not trying to win an argument. We are trying to win a friend. Our good conduct backs up our words, so those who criticize us may be ashamed. And Peter adds that it is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.”

1 Peter 3:15-16 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus is the one who showed this in real life. He was insulted, mocked, and nailed to a cross, and He prayed, “Father, forgive them.” He also promised, “Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God” (Matthew 5:9). When we bless instead of curse, we act like our Brother.

LOVE IN ACTION

This week, think of someone who has hurt you or whom you find difficult. Do three things: pray for them by name, say one kind thing to or about them, and do one small act of kindness. Also, practice saying, in a sentence or two, why you follow Jesus. Be ready to share it gently.

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Which of the five qualities in verse 8 does your group or family need most?
2. Why is it so hard to bless someone who has hurt us? What helps?
3. What is a time when someone treated you with kindness when you expected something worse?
4. How could you explain, in a few sentences and with gentleness, why you have hope in Jesus?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, You blessed those who cursed You and prayed for those who hurt You. Give us tender hearts and the courage to answer evil with good. Help us to be ready, with kindness, to share the hope we have in You. Amen.

What we learned

- God wants His people to be united, compassionate, tenderhearted, and humble.
- We do not return evil for evil; we bless, as Jesus taught.
- We pursue peace actively.
- We are ready to explain our hope, with gentleness and respect.

Memory verse

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;”

1 Peter 3:8 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK Why do you think Peter says that blessing someone who hurts you is part of being a Christian?

FEEL How do you feel when you think about forgiving or blessing someone who has treated you badly?

DO What will you do this week to bless someone who has been unkind, and how will you be ready to share your hope?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Five Marks of a Loving Community › 2. Don't Pay Back: Bless Instead › 3. Always Ready to Share Your Hope › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 9

Overcoming Evil with Good

1 Peter 3:8-17

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 3:8-9

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”

Big idea

Jesus teaches us to respond to evil with blessing, to pursue peace, and to share the hope we have with gentleness and respect.

Fill in the blanks

1. Be tenderhearted and courteous.
2. Do not return evil for evil.
3. Instead, we should bless.
4. Seek peace and pursue it.
5. Be ready to give a defense with meekness and fear.

Think it through

Who is hard for you to bless?

What might you say if a friend asked why you follow Jesus?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Pray for someone who has hurt you and do one kind thing for them. Who? _____

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 3:8

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;”

Jesus said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 10 · Christ Died Once for All

1 Peter 3:18-22 · *The righteous One suffered for the unrighteous to bring us to God*

BIG IDEA

Jesus suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and He now reigns in heaven with all powers under His authority.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,”

1 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

THE CENTRAL GOSPEL VERSE OF THE LETTER. Verse 18 is one of the clearest statements of the gospel in the New Testament: Christ suffered once (never needing to be repeated), for sins, the just for the unjust, in order to bring us to God. “Bring us” was a term used for introducing someone into the presence of a king. Hebrews 9:26-28 and 10:10-14 stress that Jesus’ sacrifice was “once for all.” The pagan temples of Peter’s day offered endless sacrifices. Jesus’ one sacrifice is enough.

A DIFFICULT PASSAGE. Verses 19-20 are among the most debated in the New Testament, and the teacher should be honest about that. Christian interpreters have offered several views. The most common ones: (1) Christ, by His Spirit, preached through Noah to the people of Noah’s day while the ark was being built, who are now “spirits in prison” (this fits “the days of Noah” and the context well); (2) Christ, after His death, proclaimed His victory to fallen angels or imprisoned spirits (see Genesis 6; 2 Peter 2:4-5; Jude 6); (3) other views. What all interpreters agree on is the main point: Jesus is victorious, and Noah’s story shows that a faithful few can be saved even when the world turns away. For Middle Schoolers, keep it simple: the same Jesus who suffered is now the victorious King.

NOAH AND THE ARK. Genesis 6-9 tells how God judged a violent world with a flood and saved Noah’s family of eight through the ark. Noah preached righteousness (2 Peter 2:5) and waited patiently for about 120 years while the ark was built (Genesis 6:3 refers to this period). Peter’s readers were a small minority, as Noah’s family was. The lesson: being few in number does not mean being wrong or unsafe. What saves is God’s provision, not the crowd.

BAPTISM. Verse 21 says baptism “now saves us,” but Peter immediately clarifies: not the removal of dirt from the body, but “the answer of a good conscience toward God,” through Jesus’ resurrection. The water itself does not save. Baptism is an outward picture of an inward trust in the risen Christ, as the ark’s waters carried Noah through

judgment. Calvary Chapel teaches that salvation is by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), and baptism is an act of obedience that testifies of that faith.

JESUS EXALTED. Verse 22 ends in triumph: He “has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God.” Early Christians often faced fear of dark powers (magic, demons, fate). Peter reminds them that all spiritual authorities are under Christ.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Pagan temples offered endless sacrifices. Jesus' sacrifice was “once for all.”
- Noah's family of eight was saved through the flood while the rest of the world turned away.
- Bible teachers differ on verses 19–20, but all agree on Jesus' victory.

Opener (5 min)

Bring a bridge picture or draw a canyon with two sides labeled “God” and “Us.” Ask: How could someone get from one side to the other? Say: Our sins made a gap we could never cross, but Peter tells us how Jesus built the bridge.

Teaching (20 min)

1. The Bridge: Christ Suffered Once, for All

Here is the gospel in one verse. We sinned. Jesus never did. He is “the just,” and we are “the unjust.” He took our place so He could bring us to God. His sacrifice did not need to be repeated. It was done once, completely.

Picture the canyon between God and us. We could not build a bridge across it. Jesus laid Himself down as the bridge. Because of Him, we are not outsiders but welcomed into God's presence.

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,”

1 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)

2. Noah: A Small Family Saved by God's Plan

Peter mentions Noah. In Noah's day, nearly everyone ignored God. Noah built a huge boat and told people God was coming in judgment, and God waited patiently for years. In the end only eight people were saved. They were safe in the ark because they trusted God's way.

Some of the details of verses 19 and 20 are tricky, and good Bible teachers disagree on them. But the big lesson is clear: God is patient. He gives people time to turn to Him. And a small group who trust God can be safe, even if everyone else laughs.

“who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.”

1 Peter 3:20 (NKJV)

3. Saved by Jesus, Seated on the Throne

Peter connects the flood to baptism. The water in baptism does not wash away sin by itself. It pictures what Jesus does: our trust in Him, a clean conscience, and a new life through His resurrection. Baptism says, “I belong to the risen Jesus.”

And the story ends with victory! Jesus rose, went to heaven, and sits at God's right hand. Angels and authorities and powers are all under Him. No power in the universe is stronger than Jesus. When life is scary, we can remember who is on the throne.

“There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.”

1 Peter 3:21-22 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

This whole passage is about Jesus: the Just One who died for the unjust, raised by the Spirit, and now exalted. He said, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (John 12:32). He also said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).

LOVE IN ACTION

The greatest act of love was Jesus bridging the gap between us and God. This week, build a bridge to someone: reach out to a person you've lost touch with, say sorry to someone you've wronged, or invite someone to hear about Jesus. “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. What does it mean that Jesus is “the just for the unjust”? Why is that good news?
2. Why do you think Peter mentioned Noah's story to people who were being treated badly?
3. What does baptism show? What does it not do?
4. How does it help to know that Jesus is at God's right hand with all powers under Him?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for suffering once for our sins to bring us to God. Thank You that You rose and reign in heaven. Help us to trust You, to follow You, and to build bridges to others so they can know You too. Amen.

What we learned

- Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.
- Noah's family was saved by trusting God's provision, and God is patient.
- Baptism pictures our trust in the risen Jesus; the water itself does not save.
- Jesus is now at God's right hand, and all powers are under Him.

Memory verse

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God,”

1 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK Why do you think Peter says Jesus suffered “once for all” and that this is enough?

FEEL How do you feel when you realize that Jesus took your place to bring you to God?

DO What will you do this week to build a bridge to someone, like Jesus did for us?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. The Bridge: Christ Suffered Once, for All › 2. Noah: A Small Family Saved by God's Plan › 3. Saved by Jesus, Seated on the Throne › Jesus connection › Love in action ›

[Discussion](#) › [Memory verse](#) › [What we learned](#) › [Think · Feel · Do](#)

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 10

Christ Died Once for All

1 Peter 3:18-22

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 3:18

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,”

Big idea

Jesus suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and He now reigns in heaven with all powers under His authority.

Fill in the blanks

1. Christ suffered once for sins.
2. He is the just who died for the unjust.
3. Jesus wants to bring us to God.
4. In Noah's day, eight souls were saved through water.
5. Jesus is at the right hand of God.

Think it through

How do you picture the gap between you and God without Jesus?

Who could use a “bridge” from you this week?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Build a bridge to someone this week: apologize, reconnect, or invite them to church. Who?

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 3:18

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God,”

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 11 · Love Covers, Gifts Serve

1 Peter 4:1-11 · Live for God's will, love deeply, open your home, and use your gift to serve

BIG IDEA

Since Jesus suffered for us, we live for God's will, and the most important way to live is to love each other deeply, welcome people warmly, and use the gifts God gave us to serve so that He gets the glory.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three "Did You Know?" facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

"And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins.'"

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher's preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

ARM YOURSELVES. "Arm yourselves also with the same mind" (4:1) uses a soldier's word: put on your weapons. The mind of Christ, willing to suffer rather than sin, is the armor. The phrase "he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin" does not mean suffering makes us sinless but that a person who is willing to face suffering for doing right has decided to break with sin's grip.

THE OLD LIFE. In 4:3-4 Peter lists pagan habits: "lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries." Greek and Roman social life revolved around feasts at pagan temples and guild banquets. If Christians skipped them, friends were puzzled and sometimes insulted. They "think it strange" and "speak evil of you." Peter says those people will answer to God (4:5). For students today, the pressure may look different, but the principle is the same: following Jesus sometimes means you are not invited anymore.

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE DEAD. Verse 6 is another debated verse. The most common understanding is that the gospel was preached to people who heard it while alive, and are now dead (in this case, believers who were judged by men in the flesh but who live by the Spirit before God). Their death did not mean the gospel failed. Teachers should not spend much time here; mention it briefly.

THE END IS NEAR. "The end of all things is at hand" (4:7) reflects the New Testament view that since Christ's first coming, we live in the "last days" (Hebrews 1:2). It does not give a date. The right response is not panic but to be serious and watchful in prayer, and to love.

LOVE COVERS. Verse 8 quotes Proverbs 10:12: "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins." To "cover" sin means to forgive and not to broadcast it, not to ignore wrongdoing. It is the opposite of gossip. James 5:20 uses a similar idea. Love chooses forgiveness over exposure.

HOSPITALITY. In the first century there were few safe inns, and the ones that existed were often dirty and dangerous. Traveling Christians (missionaries, refugees) depended on the homes of other believers. “Hospitable” (Greek *philoxenos*) literally means “loving strangers.” Peter adds “without grumbling.” Jesus often ate in other people's homes and said, “I was a stranger and you took Me in” (Matthew 25:35).

GIFTS. Each believer has received a gift (charisma) from God's grace to serve others (see Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12). Peter groups them simply: speaking gifts and serving gifts. Gifts are not for show. Peter calls us “stewards”: managers who take care of something that belongs to someone else. All gifts are meant to glorify God “through Jesus Christ.” A doxology ends the section.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Roman social life centered on feasts at pagan temples, so Christians who skipped them stood out.
- “Hospitable” means “loving strangers.” Traveling believers depended on other Christians' homes.
- A steward manages something that belongs to someone else.

Opener (5 min)

Ask each student to think of a talent or skill they have (a funny joke, drawing, sports, listening, organizing). Give them a moment. Say: Every one of you carries a gift that God gave you. Today we find out why He gave it to you, and it isn't just for you.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Arm Yourself with the Mind of Christ

Peter says, since Jesus suffered for us, get ready with the same attitude. Jesus was willing to go through suffering in order to obey God. We don't have to chase the old lifestyle anymore, because we have been rescued from it.

Sometimes friends will think you're strange when you say no to something wrong. It can hurt. But Peter reminds us that this is the life that lasts. Live “for the will of God,” not for what the crowd wants.

“Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.”

1 Peter 4:1-2 (NKJV)

2. Above All, Love Deeply

Peter says, “above all things” have fervent love. Of all the commands in this letter, this one comes first. Love covers a multitude of sins. That doesn't mean we pretend wrong things didn't happen. It means we forgive and don't broadcast people's mistakes. When someone messes up, love doesn't post it, it prays for them and helps them.

Then, open your door. Be hospitable without grumbling. Share your home, your snacks, your seat at the lunch table. Jesus welcomed people to His table constantly, and He said when we welcome a stranger, we welcome Him.

“But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.”

1 Peter 4:7-9 (NKJV)

“for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;”

Matthew 25:35 (NKJV)

3. Your Gift Is Meant for Others

Every follower of Jesus has a gift from God. Maybe you are good at encouraging, serving, teaching, organizing, singing, listening, or giving. Peter says to use it to serve others, as “good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” A steward is someone who takes care of what belongs to someone else. Your gift isn't really yours. It's God's, loaned to you to bless people.

And the goal? “That in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.” When we use our gifts with love, people end up looking at God, not us.

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

1 Peter 4:10-11 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus is the greatest example of love that covers and a gift that serves. He said, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). On the cross He covered our sins with His own love. And at the Last Supper He knelt and washed His disciples' feet (John 13:14-15).

LOVE IN ACTION

Do three things this week. (1) When someone makes a mistake, don't spread it; cover it with forgiveness and kindness. (2) Offer hospitality: invite someone to sit with you, come over, or join your group. (3) Use your gift to serve at church or at home. “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16).

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why do you think Peter says that love is “above all things”?
2. What is the difference between covering a sin with love and pretending it never happened?
3. What gift do you think God has given you? How could you use it to serve this month?
4. What is one way you can show hospitality, even if you're not hosting at your own house?

Closing prayer

Lord Jesus, You served us and covered our sins with Your love. Teach us to love deeply, to forgive, to welcome others, and to use our gifts to serve. May everything we do bring glory to God. Amen.

What we learned

- We live for God's will, not for what the crowd wants.
- Love is the most important thing and covers a multitude of sins.
- We welcome others warmly, without grumbling.
- God gives each of us gifts to serve others so that He gets the glory.

Memory verse

“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.””

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it means that “love will cover a multitude of sins”?

FEEL How do you feel about the idea that God gave you a special gift to serve others?

DO What gift will you use, and who will you serve with it this week?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Arm Yourself with the Mind of Christ › 2. Above All, Love Deeply › 3. Your Gift Is Meant for Others › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 11

Love Covers, Gifts Serve

1 Peter 4:1-11

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 4:8*“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”***Big idea**

Since Jesus suffered for us, we live for God's will, and the most important way to live is to love each other deeply, welcome people warmly, and use the gifts God gave us to serve so that He gets the glory.

Fill in the blanks

1. Above all things have fervent love for one another.
2. Love will cover a multitude of sins.
3. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.
4. We are good stewards of God's manifold grace.
5. In all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Think it through

What gift do you think God has given you?

Who could you serve with it this week?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Use your gift to serve someone this week. Gift: _____ Who I will serve: _____

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 4:8*“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”*

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 12 · Standing Firm in the Fire

1 Peter 4:12-19 · *When trials come, rejoice, trust your faithful Creator, and keep doing good*

BIG IDEA

When we suffer because we follow Jesus, we are not alone or forgotten. We share in Christ's sufferings, we will share His glory, and we can entrust ourselves to our faithful Creator as we keep doing good.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three "Did You Know?" facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

"Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter."

1 Peter 4:16 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher's preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

THE FIERY TRIAL. When Peter wrote, the persecution of Christians was growing. In AD 64 a great fire destroyed much of Rome. Rumors blamed Nero himself, and he shifted the blame onto the Christians (the Roman historian Tacitus records this). Christians were arrested, mocked, and cruelly executed. Peter's letter may have been written just before or during these events. "Fiery trial" could refer both to the severe trials and, in a literal sense, to the burning of Christians. Peter uses the picture of refining fire from chapter 1.

NAMES AND LABELS. Verse 14: "reproached for the name of Christ." Verse 16: "suffers as a Christian." The word "Christian" (Christianos) appears only three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). It began as a nickname used by outsiders, perhaps mockingly, meaning "belonging to Christ." Peter says don't be ashamed of it. Just as Jesus warned, "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you" (Matthew 5:11-12).

THE SPIRIT OF GLORY. "The Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you" (4:14) echoes Isaiah 11:2 and the glory cloud that rested on the tabernacle in Exodus 40. When believers face insults for Christ, God's own Spirit is with them.

JUDGMENT BEGINNING AT GOD'S HOUSE. Verses 17-18 say that judgment begins with God's household. Many commentators understand this as God refining and disciplining His own people through trials (see Malachi 3:1-3; Ezekiel 9:6). If believers who are saved "with difficulty" (carefully and through hardship, with Christ doing the saving), what about those who reject the gospel? This is a sober reminder of God's justice, not a threat to believers who trust Christ.

SUFFERING FOR DOING WRONG. Verse 15 warns: "let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters." Not all suffering is persecution; some comes from our own bad choices. Peter wants his readers' reputation to be clean so that if they suffer, it is for Christ. Teachers should make sure

students don't claim persecution when the real reason is rudeness or sin.

FAITHFUL CREATOR. The title “faithful Creator” (4:19) is found nowhere else in the New Testament. The One who made everything can be trusted with our lives. “Commit” is the same word Jesus used on the cross: “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit” (Luke 23:46).

Did you know? (slide facts)

- A great fire in Rome in AD 64 led to Christians being blamed and persecuted.
- The name “Christian” began as a label used by outsiders.
- “Faithful Creator” appears nowhere else in the New Testament.

Opener (5 min)

Ask: If you were on a boat in a storm, would you rather be alone or with an expert captain? Let students answer.

Say: Peter writes to people in a storm. He doesn't promise the storm will stop right away. He promises that the Captain is with us.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Don't Be Surprised by the Fire

Peter says, “Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial.” Don't be shocked when following Jesus gets hard. Jesus never promised an easy road. He said, “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

And here is the surprising part: Peter says rejoice. Why? Because when we suffer for Christ, we share in what He went through. And when His glory is revealed, we will share the joy, too. It's like standing on the same team as the Champion.

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.”

1 Peter 4:12-13 (NKJV)

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33 (NKJV)

2. Wear the Name Proudly, Keep Your Life Clean

The name “Christian” began as a label other people used. Peter says if you suffer because you belong to Christ, don't be ashamed. Glorify God. The Spirit of glory rests on you.

But he adds a warning; make sure the suffering is for Christ, not for wrongdoing. We shouldn't suffer because we were rude, cheated, or stuck our nose in other people's business. Live in such a way that if someone is against you, it is only because of Jesus.

“If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.”

1 Peter 4:14-16 (NKJV)

3. Trust Your Faithful Creator and Keep Doing Good

The chapter ends with a beautiful picture. When hard things happen, “commit your souls” to God. That means trust Him, like putting your most valuable treasure into the hands of a faithful friend. The God who created the stars is faithful to you.

And while you trust Him, keep doing good. Don't quit being kind because people are unkind. Jesus kept loving to the very end, and He wants us to follow His steps.

“Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”

1 Peter 4:19 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus went through the fire first. He said, “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven” (Matthew 5:11-12). On the cross He prayed, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit” (Luke 23:46), and His Father raised Him. That is the same Father we trust.

LOVE IN ACTION

Think of someone who is going through a hard time or being treated badly because of what they believe. This week, stand with them: sit with them at lunch, send an encouraging message, or pray for them. Also, check your own heart: if you are being criticized, ask if it is for Christ or for something you can change.

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. Why do you think Peter says not to be surprised by trials?
2. What does it mean to share in Christ's sufferings? Why would that bring joy?
3. How can we make sure our suffering is for Christ and not for our own bad choices?
4. What does it mean to “commit your soul” to God while continuing to do good?

Closing prayer

Faithful Creator, we put our lives in Your hands. When trials come, help us not to be surprised or ashamed. Help us to keep doing good and loving others like Jesus did. Thank You that we will share in His glory. Amen.

What we learned

- Trials are not strange; Jesus warned us they would come.
- When we suffer for Christ, we share in His sufferings and will share in His glory.
- We should not be ashamed to be called Christians, and we should keep our lives clean.
- We can trust God, our faithful Creator, and keep doing good.

Memory verse

“Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”

1 Peter 4:19 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK Why do you think Peter says we shouldn't be surprised by hard times?

FEEL How do you feel about being called a Christian, and do you ever feel ashamed?

DO What will you do this week to trust God and keep doing good, even when it's hard?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Don't Be Surprised by the Fire › 2. Wear the Name Proudly, Keep Your Life Clean › 3. Trust Your Faithful Creator and Keep Doing Good › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 12

Standing Firm in the Fire

1 Peter 4:12-19

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 4:16

“Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.”

Big idea

When we suffer because we follow Jesus, we are not alone or forgotten. We share in Christ's sufferings, we will share His glory, and we can entrust ourselves to our faithful Creator as we keep doing good.

Fill in the blanks

1. Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial.
2. Rejoice as you partake of Christ's sufferings.
3. If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed.
4. The Spirit of glory rests upon you.
5. Commit your souls to a faithful Creator.

Think it through

What is a trial you are facing or have faced?

What does it mean to you that God is a faithful Creator?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Stand with someone who is being treated unkindly. Who? _____ How?

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 4:19

“Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Session 13 · The Chief Shepherd Cares for You

1 Peter 5:1-14 (and Whole-Book Review) · *Be humble, cast your cares on Him, resist the enemy, and stand firm in grace*

BIG IDEA

The Chief Shepherd cares for us, so we serve with humility, cast our worries on Him, resist the devil, and stand firm in the true grace of God, loving one another as He loves us.

Time	Segment	What happens
5 min	Welcome & Opener	Use the opener question or activity to connect with the topic.
8 min	Reading & Background	Read the passage aloud; share two or three “Did You Know?” facts.
20 min	Teaching	Three teaching points with the slides; pause for quick questions.
7 min	Discussion	Small-group or whole-group discussion questions.
5 min	Application & Prayer	Love in Action challenge, memory verse, closing prayer, handout.

Key verse

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

1 Peter 5:6-7 (NKJV)

Teacher background notes

For the teacher’s preparation: history, culture, and society behind this passage.

ELDERS AND SHEPHERDS. Peter addresses the church leaders (“elders,” Greek presbyteroi), and humbly calls himself “a fellow elder.” To “shepherd the flock” (poimaino) echoes what Jesus told Peter: “Tend My sheep” (John 21:16). Peter had been restored by Jesus as a shepherd. The word “overseers” (episkopoi) describes the same office. Peter describes the right attitude: willingly (not forced), eagerly (not for dishonest gain), and as examples rather than as bosses. The “crown of glory” (5:4) resembles the wreath given to winners at Greek games, but this crown does not wither.

YOUNGER PEOPLE AND HUMILITY. In 5:5 Peter speaks directly to “you younger people,” who should respect their elders. Then he says all should “be clothed with humility.” The Greek word for “clothe” (egkomboimai) refers to tying on an apron, like a servant’s work apron. Some think Peter was remembering the night Jesus tied on a towel to wash feet (John 13:4-5). The quotation “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” is from Proverbs 3:34.

CASTING CARES. “Casting” is the same word used in Luke 19:35, when the disciples threw their cloaks over the colt for Jesus. It means to throw something on someone else. The word “care” here (merimna) means anxiety. We hand our worries to Jesus because He cares about us (Matthew 6:25-34). Jesus told Peter at the Last Supper about Satan’s intent to sift him (Luke 22:31-32). Peter now speaks from experience.

THE ROARING LION. Lions were common in the Roman world (arena shows). Peter’s readers would immediately sense danger. The devil is real, but he is a defeated enemy, and he is a prowling predator, not an equal to God. The response is not terror but to “be sober, be vigilant” and “resist him, steadfast in the faith.” James 4:7 says “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” Remember that the believer is protected: “He who is in you is

greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

SILVANUS, BABYLON, AND MARK. Silvanus (Silas) is the faithful brother who carried and perhaps helped write the letter. “She who is in Babylon” probably refers to the church in Rome (see Session 1). Mark is John Mark, author of the Gospel of Mark, who tradition says learned much from Peter. Once, Mark had abandoned Paul on a missionary journey (Acts 15:38), but later he was restored and useful (2 Timothy 4:11). Peter calls him “my son.” This is another example of the restoring grace that runs through the letter.

WHOLE-BOOK REVIEW. Allow roughly the last 10 minutes of this session to review the letter: S1 Strangers with a Mission, S2 Living Hope, S3 Be Holy, S4 Love Fervently, S5 Living Stones, S6 Good Neighbors, S7 Jesus' Footsteps, S8 Lasting Beauty, S9 Overcoming Evil with Good, S10 Christ Died Once, S11 Love Covers/Gifts, S12 Standing Firm, S13 Chief Shepherd.

Did you know? (slide facts)

- Peter calls himself “a fellow elder,” the same man Jesus told to “tend My sheep.”
- “Casting” is the word used when the disciples threw their cloaks on the colt for Jesus.
- Mark once left Paul's mission, but he was restored. Grace runs through this letter.

Opener (5 min)

Hand each student a small piece of paper and ask them to write one worry on it. (Keep them private.) Say: Hold on to that worry. At the end of our lesson, we will find out what Peter says to do with it.

Teaching (20 min)

1. Shepherds and Sheep: Lead by Serving

Peter, who once denied Jesus, now tells leaders: shepherd God's flock. Do it willingly, eagerly, and as an example, not by bossing people around. Good leaders in the church (and good leaders in any group) serve, as Jesus did.

Younger people have a part too: respect your leaders. And everyone, young and old, wear humility like an apron. When Jesus washed feet, He showed us the way. The Chief Shepherd is coming, and He will reward faithful service with a crown that never fades.

“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”

1 Peter 5:2-4 (NKJV)

“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.””

1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)

2. Cast Your Cares and Resist the Lion

Now go back to that worry you wrote down. What does Peter say to do? Cast it. Throw it on Jesus. Why? “For He cares for you.” He isn't tired of your problems. He's the Shepherd who knows each sheep's name.

Peter also tells us there is a real enemy, the devil, who prowls like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. He loves to make us feel alone, afraid, and discouraged. But Peter says resist him, firm in the faith. You are not alone. Believers all over the world are going through the same things, and the Shepherd is watching.

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about

like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”

1 Peter 5:6-9 (NKJV)

“And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.””

Luke 22:31-32 (NKJV)

3. The God of All Grace Will Finish the Work

Peter ends his letter with a promise: “May the God of all grace... after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.” Four promises: He will make you complete, set you firmly in place, give you strength, and make you steady. God finishes what He starts.

Peter finishes with a greeting, mentioning his faithful friend Silvanus, and Mark, who had once failed but was restored. Then comes his last blessing: “Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus.” This is a letter full of grace, a letter from a man who needed it, and who learned that love for Jesus means love for His people.

“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”

1 Peter 5:10 (NKJV)

“By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.”

1 Peter 5:12 (NKJV)

“Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.”

1 Peter 5:14 (NKJV)

JESUS CONNECTION

The Chief Shepherd is Jesus. He said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (John 10:11). He prayed for Peter before Peter failed. He restored Peter afterward. And He asked Peter one question again and again: “Do you love Me?” Peter's whole letter is the answer: Yes, Lord, and I will love Your people.

LOVE IN ACTION

Throughout this letter, Peter keeps coming back to love. Choose one thing from the 13 sessions to practice this month: welcome the stranger, honor all people, bless those who hurt you, cover mistakes with love, serve with your gift, or cast your cares on Jesus. Write it down and ask a friend to check in with you.

Discussion questions (7 min)

1. How can a good leader be a shepherd instead of a boss?
2. What does it feel like to carry a worry alone? What does it mean to cast it on Jesus?
3. Why do you think Peter reminds us that we are not alone in our struggles?
4. Looking back over 1 Peter, which lesson has meant the most to you? What will you carry forward?

Closing prayer

Chief Shepherd, thank You for caring for us. We cast our worries on You. Make us humble, strong, and steady. Help us to love one another the way You have loved us, and to stand firm in Your grace until You come. Amen.

What we learned

- Leaders shepherd by serving, and everyone is clothed in humility.
- We can cast every worry on Jesus because He cares for us.
- The devil is real, but we resist him together, firm in the faith.
- The God of all grace will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle us.

Memory verse

“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)

After-session reflection: Think · Feel · Do

THINK What do you think it means to cast your cares on Jesus, and why does Peter say we can do that?

FEEL How do you feel knowing the Chief Shepherd cares about you personally?

DO Which lesson from 1 Peter will you put into practice this month to love people like Jesus?

Slide deck outline

Title › Big idea › Opener question › Our passage › Did you know? › 1. Shepherds and Sheep: Lead by Serving › 2. Cast Your Cares and Resist the Lion › 3. The God of All Grace Will Finish the Work › Jesus connection › Love in action › Discussion › Memory verse › What we learned › Think · Feel · Do

STUDENT HANDOUT · ANSWER KEY VERSION (the blank version is in the handouts folder)

1 PETER YOUTH STUDY · SESSION 13

The Chief Shepherd Cares for You

1 Peter 5:1-14 (and Whole-Book Review)

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE · 1 PETER 5:6-7

“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

Big idea

The Chief Shepherd cares for us, so we serve with humility, cast our worries on Him, resist the devil, and stand firm in the true grace of God, loving one another as He loves us.

Fill in the blanks

1. Shepherd the flock of God among you.
2. Be clothed with humility.
3. Cast all your care upon Him.
4. Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion.
5. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus.

Think it through

What worry will you hand to Jesus today?

Which lesson from 1 Peter will you carry with you?

LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Write one worry on a card, pray it over, and put it somewhere you'll see it. Then pick one lesson from 1 Peter to practice this month: _____

MEMORY VERSE · 1 PETER 5:7

“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” — John 13:34 (NKJV)

Appendix: Memory Verses and Whole-Book Review

Session 1 • Strangers with a Mission

“Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”

1 Peter 1:2 (NKJV)

Session 2 • A Living Hope

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

1 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)

Session 3 • Be Holy, Because He Is

“because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.””

1 Peter 1:16 (NKJV)

Session 4 • Love One Another Fervently

“love one another fervently with a pure heart,”

1 Peter 1:22 (NKJV)

Session 5 • Living Stones, Royal Family

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)

Session 6 • Good Citizens, Good Neighbors

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)

Session 7 • Following Jesus' Footsteps

“because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:”

1 Peter 2:21 (NKJV)

Session 8 • Beauty That Lasts

“rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

1 Peter 3:4 (NKJV)

Session 9 • Overcoming Evil with Good

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;”

1 Peter 3:8 (NKJV)

Session 10 • Christ Died Once for All

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God,”

1 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)

Session 11 • Love Covers, Gifts Serve

“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.””

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV)

Session 12 • Standing Firm in the Fire

“Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.”

1 Peter 4:19 (NKJV)

Session 13 • The Chief Shepherd Cares for You

“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)

Review questions for Session 13

1. Who wrote the letter, and what happened between him and Jesus on the beach?
2. What is our “living hope,” and why is it alive?
3. What does “holy” mean? How does a holy life look in everyday life?
4. What did Peter say about how we should treat one another?
5. Why did Peter call Jesus the Cornerstone, and us living stones?
6. How can we answer unfair treatment the way Jesus did?
7. What does it mean to cast our cares on Jesus?
8. Which lesson will you practice this month?

ABOUT

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