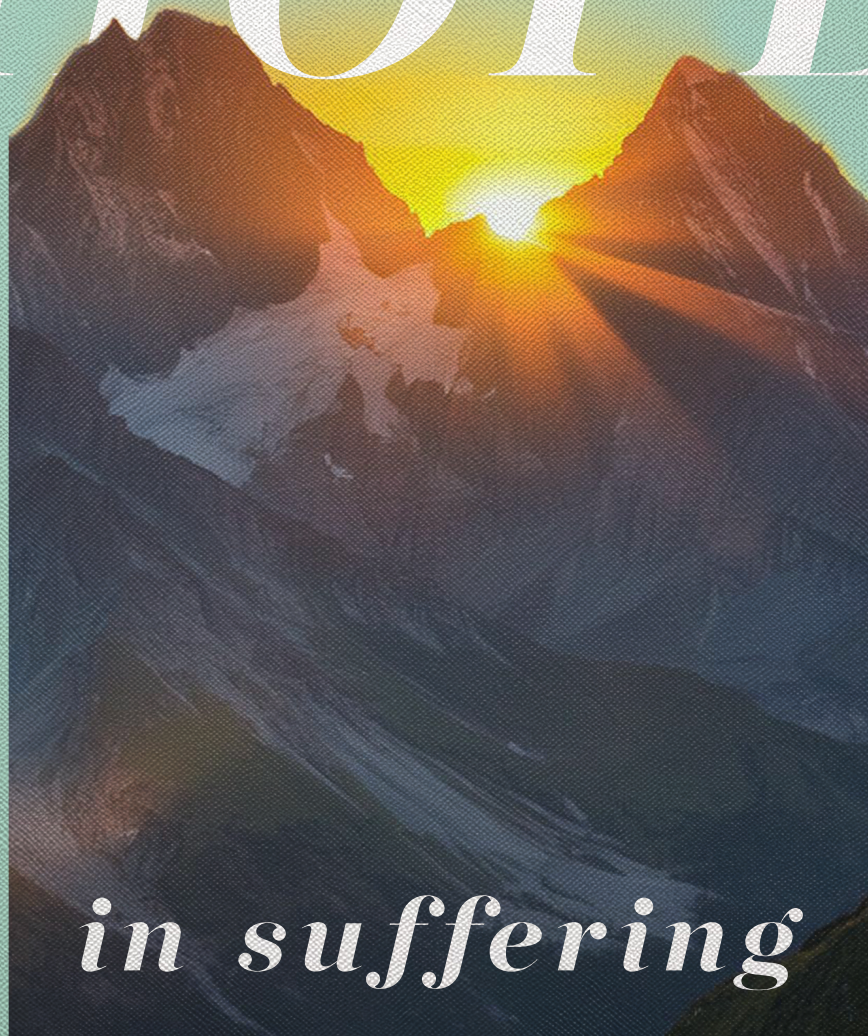


HOPE



in suffering

Study in 1 & 2 Peter

"...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

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Hope in Suffering

“And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.”

~ 1 Peter 5:10

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How to Use This Study Guide

Bible study is not just learning about God; it is about knowing God and growing in your relationship with Him. When you sit down to study, begin with prayer. Before reading the lesson and answering the questions, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His truth to you. You may find it helpful to have a few study aids such as a dictionary, a concordance, and more than one translation of the Bible. You may also find the following online resources helpful:

BibleGateway.com BlueLetterBible.org WebstersDictionary1828.com

Note: The New King James Version (NKJV) was used for this Study Guide, with consideration of the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the Amplified Bible (AMP), and the New Living Translation (NLT).

Each lesson begins with reading through a portion of Scripture. As you answer the questions, keep in mind that *there are no right or wrong answers*. If you do not understand something, or you cannot answer a question, bring it to your group for discussion. This is a benefit of the small group setting.

Near the end of the study questions, there is a "Growing Stronger" section. This is an important and personal part of the study. As you answer the questions in this section, reflect on how you can apply the lesson personally by asking the following questions: What does this mean for my life? Is there something I can start doing? Is there something I need to stop doing?

Each lesson ends with a "Final Thoughts" section. Consider using a journal to write your thoughts and insights as you answer the questions and reflect on the lesson you completed. Your journal is also a good place to write prayers to God in response to what He reveals to you in His Word.

*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,
for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
~ 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

1 Peter 1:1-12... *Hope in Suffering*

The beginning of this epistle reveals the characteristics of salvation. God, motivated by His great mercy, has caused us to be brought from despair to a living hope. Peter's firsthand experience of the risen Christ caused him to be born again into this living hope. He wants us to be firmly convinced that our suffering does not mean that God has abandoned us. As a witness of the resurrection, Peter is able to assure believers of "an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 1:1-12

Re-read verses 1-2

1. How does Peter describe the people he is writing to?

In what ways are you like these believers?

2. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Sanctification

3. Describe the role of each Person of the Trinity in a believer's salvation. (verse 2)

Father

Holy Spirit

Son

Read verses 3-5

4. List the attributes and actions for which Peter praised God.

5. From the following verses, describe your "living hope".

Romans 5:1-2

1 Peter 1:3-5

1 John 3:1-3

6. How does Peter describe your inheritance? (verses 4-5)

Read verses 6-9

7. What is being "tested by fire"?

What will this testing yield?

8. Read 1 Peter 1:7 and James 1:2-4. What is the intended outcome of trials?

9. How does the assurance of your salvation and promise of an eternal inheritance give you hope in the midst of trials?

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

~ Apostle Paul, Romans 8:38-39 NASB

Read verses 10-12

10. What did the Old Testament prophets inquire and search for?

What was revealed to them?

Growing Stronger...

When the Bible mentions suffering, it often reminds us of our inheritance. Our inheritance is, in a word, heaven. It is the sum total of all God has promised us in salvation. Although we enjoy many blessings as children of God here on earth, our true inheritance is reserved for us in heaven. From the following verses, what do you learn about your inheritance?

Psalm 16:5-6

John 10:28-29

Romans 8:17

Ephesians 1:13-14

Final Thoughts...

The prophets “wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when He told them in advance about Christ’s suffering and His great glory afterward” (1 Peter 1:11 NLT). What trials and suffering are you facing? Take a few minutes and meditate on what the suffering of Jesus and His shed blood on the cross has done for you. Write your thoughts in the space below.

Study notes for 1 Peter 1:1-12

1 Peter 1:13-25... *Pursuing Holiness*

Peter opened this portion of his letter with a command for all believers to “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). He encouraged believers to abandon former ways and let go of the things that stumble. Instead, to pursue a life of holiness, devotion to God, and genuine love toward fellow believers.

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 1:13-25

Re-read verses 13-18

1. List the instructions Peter gives believers in verses 13-16.
2. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Holy

In your own words, describe a holy life.

3. What should your focus be as you pursue holiness? (Colossians 1:10)

"It is not great talents God blesses so much as great likeness to Jesus."

~ Robert Murray M'Cheyne

4. What do you learn about the Father in verse 17?

How should this affect the way you live?

5. If you are redeemed, why does how you conduct your daily life make a difference?
(Romans 6:15–17)

Read verses 19-21

6. What vital truths do verses 19-21 reveal about:
Christ

God

Why should these verses move you to pursue holiness?

Read verses 22-25

7. How does having a pure heart affect the way you interact with other believers?
8. Using verses 23-25, describe the Word of God.

Explain the comparison you see between the Word of God and earthly things.

9. Why should you base your conduct on the Word of God?

Growing Stronger...

“So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image.” 2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT

Reflect on the following verses and record the difference between conforming to the desires of your flesh and being holy in all you do.

Romans 6:19

Romans 8:5

Romans 12:1-2

Final Thoughts....

Our Father has commanded us to be holy, just as He is holy. Yet we still may find it difficult to change our ways. Keep in mind, we cannot change ourselves; we can do nothing without Christ. Our comfort comes from knowing that God continues to mold us into His image as we seek His presence. As you come before the Lord this week, prayerfully ask Him to work in and through you, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and transform you into His likeness.

Study notes for 1 Peter 1:13-25

1 Peter 2:1-12... *Building a Spiritual House*

Having established that believers in Jesus have been born again through the Word of God, Peter continued his exhortation to holiness, reminding believers, that we are the living stones of a new temple whose foundation and cornerstone is Jesus Christ. To grow in holiness, you are encouraged to desire "the pure milk of the word" of God and do away with the sinful behaviors that war against your soul.

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 2:1-12

Re-read verses 1-3

1. List the things you are to lay aside.

In what ways can these behaviors hinder your desire for the Word of God?

2. How can consistently feeding and meditating upon Scripture help you to fight against your sin nature? (Psalm 119:11)

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

~ Apostle Paul, Romans 12:2

Read verses 4-6

3. Who are the "living stones"? (verse 5)

Describe the "spiritual house" that God is building with believers.

4. Using a dictionary or online source such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Cornerstone

Who is the "chief cornerstone"? (verse 6)

5. What are some of the sacrifices you are to offer? (Romans 12:1, Hebrews 13:15-16)

Read verses 7-8

6. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Offense

7. Why is Jesus "a rock of offense" to unbelievers? (verse 8, 1 Corinthians 1:23)

Read verses 9-10

8. How are believers described in these verses? (see also Ephesians 2:19-22)

What have believers received?

Read verses 11-12

9. List some of the "fleshly lusts" that war against your soul. (Galatians 5:19-21)

10. What is the result of “having your conduct honorable”? (Matthew 5:16)

Growing Stronger...

Believers are a spiritual house, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s own special people. Therefore, your conduct and good works should reflect godly attributes. God’s Word is the best guidebook you have to assist you in this pursuit. What further instructions for holy living do you glean from the following verses?

Psalms 119:9

Ephesians 4:20-24

Colossians 3:12-13

Hebrews 12:14

Final Thoughts...

The temple of Solomon’s day must have been a spectacular sight. God, however, is building an even more splendid temple out of living stones, believers who are no longer dead in their trespasses and sins, but alive in Jesus. Take a few moments to meditate on the privilege you have as a believer in Jesus, to be a part of this beautiful temple of God and thank Him for calling you out of your darkness and into His marvelous light. Ask Him to give you courage to proclaim His praises for the mercy He has shown you.

Study notes for 1 Peter 2:1-12

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1 Peter 2:13-25... *Christ-like Submission*

Peter gives clear instruction regarding the Christian's relationship with government and employment. Citizens are to submit to the government and workers are to submit to those in authority. Human governments are instituted by God (Romans 13:1-4). It is for an employee's own good to submit to their employer, otherwise they would not have employment. However, it is much more important for a Christian to submit to authority because their testimony depends on it.

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 2:13-25

Re-read verses 13-17

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Submit
2. How extensive does Peter say your submission to authority must be?
3. What does "for the Lord's sake" mean?

"A man is not far from the gates of heaven when he is fully submissive to the Lord's will."
~ Charles Spurgeon

4. Explain the purpose of government.

5. Why does doing good “silence the ignorance of foolish men”? (Titus 2:7-8, 1 Peter 2:12)

6. List the four directives in verse 17 and explain their meaning.

Read verses 18-25

7. When is it commendable to endure suffering?

8. List what Peter said about Jesus in verses 21-24.

21

22

23

24

9. What are the two titles of Jesus in verse 25?

How do these attributes help you suffer patiently?

Growing Stronger...

Submission to lawful authority does not nullify Christian liberty; we are free in Christ. But Christian freedom always coincides with Christian responsibility and must never be used as an excuse for sin. We enjoy true freedom when we obey God and live as His servants. Read the following verses and comment on your freedom and responsibility in Christ.

Romans 6:22

1 Corinthians 8:9

1 Corinthians 10:23

Galatians 5:13

Final Thoughts...

Submission to authority is supremely Christ-like. What people or institutions has God placed over you? Do you struggle with submitting to any of these? If so, which ones? How can you follow Jesus' example the next time you are tempted to rebel against those in authority over you? Write your answer to this last question in the space below.

1 Peter 3:1-12... *Submission in the Home*

Peter expands the idea of submission to the Christian home. He commands wives to “be submissive” to their own husbands. Likewise, husbands should be considerate of their wives, treating them with honor and respect. Peter makes it clear that husbands and wives have a responsibility to bless and serve one another.

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 3:1-12

Re-read verses 1-2

1. What is Peter commanding wives to do?
2. Read verses 1-2 again in the Amplified Bible and record what they reveal to you about submission.
3. How might a believing wife win her unbelieving husband to Christ?

Read verses 3-7

4. Using the following verses, list some ways to cultivate inner beauty:

1 Samuel 16:7

Proverbs 31:26

Proverbs 31:30

Why is inner beauty precious to God? (2 Corinthians 4:16-17)

*"The fact that I am a woman doesn't make me a different kind of Christian.
But the fact that I am a Christian makes me a different kind of woman."*

~ Elisabeth Elliot

5. What instructions are given to husbands in verse 7? (Ephesians 5:28)

6. What is meant by "heirs together"? (Romans 8:16-17)

7. Write the warning given to husbands in 1 Peter 3:7.

Read verses 8-12

8. Why is it important to "be of one mind"? (Romans 15:5-6)

9. How are believers in Christ to treat one another?

What are believers *not* to do?

10. If you "love life" and want to "see good days", what should you do? (verses 10-11)

What is the reward for doing these things?

Growing Stronger...

The holy lives God desires for His children can be further developed within the bond of marriage, but this process is not easy. It requires dedication, forgiveness, submission (to God and to each other), and continued faithfulness through good times and through the trials of life. So, how can we use the difficulties and joys of marriage to draw closer to God? Consider the following verses and record what they reveal to you.

Mark 10:9

Romans 14:19

1 Corinthians 13:4

1 Corinthians 16:14

Ephesians 4:1-3

Colossians 3:13

Final Thoughts....

"...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

Gentleness is the opposite of harshness and self-interest. It comes from trusting in God's goodness and His control over our every circumstance. The gentle woman is at peace because she is not focused on herself at all. Meditate on how you can foster gentleness.

This week, as you come before the Lord, ask Him to reveal areas of un-submissiveness and then seek His forgiveness. Ask Him to work in your heart to develop a "gentle and quiet spirit" and then practice gentleness.

1 Peter 3:13-22... *Suffering for Doing Good*

Peter returns to the subject of suffering and encourages believers to not lose heart when they suffer for righteousness' sake. Not only is there a blessing waiting for us on the other side of our trials, but when we suffer unjustly with a good conscience, we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus and shining His light into the darkness of our world.

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 3:13-22

Re-read verses 13-17

1. Use the following Scriptures to answer Peter's question in verse 13.

Psalm 118:6

Proverbs 16:7

2. What should your attitude be when answering an unbeliever's questions about your faith and the hope that you have in Jesus? (verse 15)
3. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:
Conscience

According to the following verses, what characteristics make up a good conscience?

Acts 24:16

1 John 1:7

1 John 1:9

*"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience,
but shouts in our pain. It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."*

~ C.S. Lewis

Read verses 18-22

4. Why was Jesus willing to suffer a humiliating and unjust death on the cross? (verse 18, Colossians 1:21-22)

5. How many people in the world were saved in the days of Noah?

Do you ever feel outnumbered as a Christian living in this world?

Where can you find encouragement when you feel this way?

6. Where did Jesus go after His resurrection? (verse 22, Ephesians 1:20)

7. List what has been made subject to Jesus? (Philippians 2:9-11)

What does this mean for you? (Romans 8:38-39)

Growing Stronger...

Noah was a godly man who stood alone and preached repentance during a very dark time in world history. He had no converts other than his family. By the world's standard, Noah was a failure. But God measured Noah's success by his faithfulness and obedience and delivered his family into a changed world. As you faithfully obey God, you become a new creation. Read the following verses and record some additional changes you will experience.

Romans 6:4-6

2 Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 2:20

Ephesians 4:22-24

Final Thoughts...

The dark days that are approaching will provide many opportunities to be a witness, shine the light of Jesus, and share the good news of salvation to the world. Are you looking for those opportunities? Don't allow the devil to derail you with questions about fairness. Nothing that happened to Jesus was fair, but the reward He received from His Father was worth every minute of cruelty. You have that same reward waiting for you. Take a few moments and ask God to strengthen your heart and give you courage to face the present and coming darkness with hope and resolution.

1 Peter 4:1-11... *Christlikeness in Suffering*

In the previous chapters, Peter highlighted Christ's suffering to encourage us in our own suffering, especially the persecution for our faith. Now he encourages us to continue in godliness while suffering. In order to maintain godliness while enduring suffering, it is necessary to have a Christlike attitude while living according to God's will, knowing that we will live in His presence forever.

Prayerfully Read 1 Peter 4:1-11

Re-read verses 1-2

1. In what way are you to "arm yourself" as you face suffering?

Using the following verses, describe how you can do this.

Romans 12:2

2 Corinthians 10:5

2. What should you be living for? (verse 2, Matthew 6:10)

"Suffering is unbearable if you aren't certain that God is for and with you."

~ Timothy Keller

Read verses 3-6

3. Using the following verses, explain why unbelievers indulge in the behaviors described in verse 3.

Romans 1:28-30

Ephesians 4:17-19

How do they react to you when you do not join them? (1 Peter 4:4)

What perspective did Peter give in verse 5 that encourages you in these situations?

4. How can the following verses help you to “live according to God in the spirit”?

Romans 8:13

Galatians 5:24-25

Read verses 7-11

5. Think carefully about Peter’s warning in verse 7. Describe the mindset and action this is intended to produce in you according to verses 7-11.

7

8

9

10

11

6. Read the following verses and describe how you can have “fervent love” for others.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

James 5:19-20

Growing Stronger...

“Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.” 1 Peter 4:9

One way to demonstrate love to the Body of Christ is by practicing hospitality ungrudgingly. This ministry is especially needed during times of persecution when food supplies might be running low and when those who harbor Christians are subject to arrest and imprisonment, if not death itself. Hospitality is a tremendous privilege and joy. It is not so much about entertaining guests as it is having close fellowship with others.

Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Hospitality

Comment on what you learn from the following verses about hospitality.

Matthew 10:41

Matthew 25:40

Luke 14:12

Hebrews 13:2

Final Thoughts...

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 1 Peter 4:10

Each believer has received gifts from the Lord; some special function or ministry to perform as a member of the Body of Christ. These gifts are not to be used for selfish gain but for His glory and for the good of others. God’s grace to us should not end with us. We are intended to be vessels through whom God’s blessings can be poured out to others. This is especially important in times of suffering. Review your answers to questions 5 and 6. What areas do you need to grow in? What practical steps will you take to have the mind of Christ in those areas? Write your response in the space below.

1 Peter 4:12-19... *Rejoice in Suffering*

Peter clarified that blessing comes from suffering for doing what is good and righteous rather than for doing what is wrong. Sometimes suffering is a consequence of sin and well deserved; at other times it is unfair and unexpected. You should not be ashamed when you find yourself suffering as a result of following Jesus. Instead, rejoice that God considers you worthy to suffer for Him just as Jesus suffered for you. Suffering provides an opportunity to draw upon God's great power. The power of the Holy Spirit is available to all believers and will carry you through every trial.

Prayerfully read 1 Peter 4:12-19

Re-read verses 12-16

1. Why should you not be surprised by the trials that come in life? (John 15:18-21)

2. Using the following verses, list the ways you can rejoice as you share in "Christ's sufferings".

Matthew 5:11-12

Romans 5:3

2 Corinthians 12:10

1 Peter 4:13

3. When you are "reproached for the name of Christ," how does God respond? (verse 14)

4. What should your attitude be when you suffer for Christ? (verse 16, Acts 5:41)

*"It is not the trials in your life that develop or destroy you,
but rather your response to those hardships."*

~ Charles Stanley

Read verses 17-19

5. Where does judgment begin?

What type of judgment do believers receive? (1 Corinthians 11:28-32, 2 Corinthians 5:10)

What happens to unbelievers? (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)

6. What does verse 19 reveal about God?

In practical terms, how can you trust God through difficult circumstances?

Growing Stronger...

“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

Suffering will never be easy to endure, but that is exactly the point. You need God the most in the midst of suffering and it is there that He freely gives you Himself so that you may be truly blessed. From the following verses, what do you learn about God’s promises as you endure suffering?

Joshua 1:9

Psalm 9:9-10

Psalm 32:7-8

Philippians 4:6-7

Final Thoughts...

Suffering is not only normal, it is also a cause for rejoicing. It is often hard to understand how that fits into our modern life. As you bow before Him this week, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you what it truly means to rejoice in suffering. If you are being mistreated for the name of Jesus, ask God to help you see it as a blessing and give you deep joy that you are sharing in the sufferings of Christ.

1 Peter 5:1-14... *Standing in Grace*

Peter concluded his letter with instructions and encouragement for the believers, giving them hope as they faced suffering. Elders are to shepherd their flocks sacrificially, as servants. Believers are exhorted to clothe themselves with humility as they submit to one another. Christians are reminded that the devil is a strong, relentless enemy but we can gain victory over him by resisting, enduring, and standing in the true grace of God.

Prayerfully Read 1 Peter 5:1-14

Re-read verses 1-4

1. List the characteristics of a faithful spiritual shepherd.

Whose flock are they shepherding? (Acts 20:28)

What reward will they receive for leading well?

Read verses 5-7

2. List the instructions given to those who follow. (verse 5, Hebrews 13:17)

What does it mean to be "clothed with humility"? (Philippians 2:3-8)

3. According to the following verses, why does God "resist the proud"?

Proverbs 6:16-17

Proverbs 8:13

1 John 2:16

4. What reward will the humble receive? (1 Peter 5:5-6, James 4:10)

"Pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor."

~ Proverbs 29:23 NLT

5. Why should you cast "all your care upon Him"?

Matthew 6:31-34

Philippians 4:6-7

1 Peter 5:7

Is there any care, worry, anxiety, or concern you need to cast (throw) on God today?
Explain your answer.

Read verses 8-9

6. Who is "your adversary" and how is he described?

What can you do to guard against him?

Ephesians 6:11

James 4:7

1 Peter 5:8-9

Read verses 10-14

7. What was Peter's expressed desire for suffering believers? (verse 10)

Growing Stronger...

Peter returned to his theme of suffering as he concluded this epistle. He encouraged believers to be humble, to submit to elders and one another, to stand firm in fiery trials, and reminded them that they were not alone. Peter prayed for the church, that their suffering would be short, knowing that eternal glory is the believer's reward. Today, many believers throughout the world are also suffering. All who wholeheartedly follow Jesus will face trials.

Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Perfect

Establish

Strengthen

Settle

How do these things give you hope when facing fiery trials? (Romans 5:3-4, 1 Peter 1:6-7)

Final Thoughts...

"Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen."
1 Peter 5:14

Peter began and ended his letter with the blessing of peace. It may seem counterintuitive to wish peace on people facing suffering and trials, but Peter was a first-hand witness to the peace that Jesus can bring in the midst of a raging storm. He knew that if you humbly submit to God's will as you endure suffering, your hope will not disappoint. As you finish this study, ask God to help you to hold on to hope when you face suffering and trials. Trust that He will never leave you nor forsake you. Remind yourself of the beautiful promise of Jesus in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Study notes for 1 Peter 5:1-14

2 Peter 1:1-11... *Be Diligent*

Second Peter is the swan song of the apostle. He warned of false teachers, the coming apostasy, and the storm of persecution that would come upon them. There is only one defense, and that is through the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Your faith must be coupled with *knowing* Jesus. And the only way to truly know Jesus, is through the Word of God. Believers must diligently pursue "the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord".

Prayerfully read 2 Peter 1:1-11

Re-read verses 1-4

1. Using a dictionary or online source, such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Bondservant

Apostle

What do these descriptions tell you about Peter?

2. What have the recipients of this letter obtained?

How did they obtain it?

Are you a recipient of this faith? If not, why not?

3. Using the following verses, list the blessings of "the knowledge of Him who called" you.

Jeremiah 9:23-24

John 17:3

2 Peter 1:3-4

4. According to the following verses, how can you be a “partaker of the divine nature”?

2 Corinthians 3:18

Ephesians 4:22-24

1 John 3:2

"To be a partaker of the divine nature means that the characteristics of God's nature become my own through His redemptive work in me. ~ Anonymous

5. What have you escaped? (2 Peter 1:4)

Read verses 5-11

6. List the things you are to be diligent to “add to your faith”.

“If these things are yours and abound” what will the result be?

Describe those who lack these virtues.

7. What are you to “be even more diligent” about?
8. From the following verses, what do you learn about “your call and election”?

Romans 8:28

Romans 11:29

Ephesians 4:1

2 Timothy 1:9

9. As a child of God, what will be abundantly supplied to you? (2 Peter 1:11, 2 Timothy 4:18)

Growing Stronger...

"For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:8

God has given you everything you need to grow and develop a passionate, focused, and diligent life. Using a dictionary or online source such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define the following:

Faith

Virtue

Knowledge

Self-control

Perseverance

Godliness

Brotherly kindness

Love

Pray and ask the Lord to help you grow in each one of these areas.

Final Thoughts...

"...His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue..." 2 Peter 1:3

Living the Christian life does not depend on one's own strength and resources. Your faith is a precious gift imparted "by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:1). Your election and calling are sure. God will empower you to grow as you diligently seek Him through His Word. God's Word is complete. You do not need any more information or new revelation; you only need to open your Bible and diligently seek to know Jesus. In the space below, write a prayer thanking God for His Word and ask Him to speak to you personally each time you read your Bible.

2 Peter 1:12-21... *Remembering the Truth*

In verses 1-11 of this epistle, Peter laid out the essentials of a fruitful Christian life. Reflecting on those verses, he reminded believers that making every effort to perfect our faith is the pattern we ought to follow throughout our life. Peter then pointed out that Scripture is reliable since it came directly from God, by the Holy Spirit. We are assured that we can put our confidence in Jesus, in His Word, and know the truth.

Prayerfully read 2 Peter 1:12-21

Re-read verses 12-15

1. What word/theme is repeated in these verses?
2. What qualities was Peter reminding believers of? (2 Peter 1:5-7)

Why does Peter feel such urgency in what he writes?

3. What do the following verses show you about reminders and remembering?

Deuteronomy 6:12-14

Psalm 77:10-11

John 14:26

4. Peter knows that he must soon "put off his tent". What did Jesus tell Peter in John 21:18-19?

Read verses 16-21

5. How does Mark 9:2-8 confirm that Peter and the other apostles were not following “cunningly devised fables” in what they taught?

*"If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples,
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*
~ John 8:31-32 ESV

What was Peter an eyewitness of? (2 Peter 1:16)

6. Read the following verses. What do the prophecies point to?

Numbers 24:17

Luke 1:78-79

2 Corinthians 4:6

Revelation 22:16

7. What should you know first about the “prophecy of the Scriptures”? (2 Peter 1:20, 1 Corinthians 2:13)
8. How did God reveal His Word to the writers of Scripture? (2 Peter 1:21, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Growing Stronger...

"...for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:21

The Bible contains a wide range of topics, from poetry and parables to history and prophecy. Although written by numerous authors with a variety of personalities and styles, it was the Holy Spirit working in each author that resulted in the infallible Word of God. The reliability of the Scriptures, however, is often challenged. How can you respond to skeptics who assert that the Bible is not much more than cleverly invented stories? From the following verses, record what you learn about the reliability of the Scriptures.

Psalm 12:6-7

Isaiah 40:8

John 17:17

1 Thessalonians 2:13

Hebrews 4:12

If someone asked you why you believe the Bible is true, what would you say?

Final Thoughts...

"Therefore, I will always remind you about these things—even though you already know them and are standing firm in the truth you have been taught." 2 Peter 1:12 NLT

To stand firm means to be steady and sure. You are to stand firm in your faith. Your feet are to be planted on the firm foundation of Scripture, not faltering, indecisive, nor easily swayed. God's Word offers you encouragement, guidance, and strength, but it is all too easy to forget the verses when you need them the most. One simple, yet powerful way to remember Scripture is to write it down. Just like writing a shopping list helps you remember what is important, writing out truth from Scripture helps you to inscribe God's words deeply into your mind and heart. As the Holy Spirit brings them to life, the verses come to mind more readily. This week, as you read your Bible, commit to writing down one verse each day. Recite the verse and pray as you write. Ask God to help you remember the verse and see the difference it makes in your day.

2 Peter 2:1-22... *Beware of False Teachers*

In his first letter, Peter warned the early church about persecution from those outside the faith. In this second letter, Peter alerted the church that they must also be on guard against enemies from within. He was concerned about the moral evil that had crept into the church. False teachers had begun an insidious campaign to turn the hearts of true believers to destructive doctrines. These imposters looked and acted like followers of Jesus but used their knowledge of the gospel to strategically deceive and destroy unstable souls.

Prayerfully read 2 Peter 2:1-22

Re-read verses 1-3

1. Who did Peter say will be among us? (verse 1, Matthew 7:15)

What will they do? (see also Jude 1:4)

2. According to 2 Peter 2:2, what will be the result of their teaching?

3. Describe their motivation for leading people astray. (verse 3, Jude 1:11)

How will they accomplish this?

What is ultimately promised to false teachers?

Read verses 4-11

4. List the three Old Testament examples Peter used of God's judgment on those who lived in defiant disobedience to Him.

5. According to verse 9, what will God do for the "godly"?

What will happen to the "unjust"?

6. How are the ungodly described? (verse 10, Jude 1:8)

Read verses 12-16

7. Describe the false teachers and their sins.

How can you avoid being enticed by them? (Psalm 119:10-11)

"The teaching of a false prophet cannot withstand scrutiny under the divine light of Scripture." ~ John MacArthur

8. Whose "way" are the false teachers following? (2 Peter 2:15)

What was Balaam's motivation? (1 Timothy 6:10)

Read verses 17-22

9. What are the false teachers compared to in verse 17?

According to John 4:13-14, what does Jesus offer?

10. How do false teachers "speak" their messages? (2 Peter 2:18, Jude 1:16)

Who are they trying to "allure"?

11. What do false teachers promise? (2 Peter 2:19)

According to the following verses, where is true liberty found?

John 8:31-32

Romans 8:2

Galatians 5:1

12. Using a dictionary or online source such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define the following:

Pollution

Entangled

What is the result of true believers becoming “entangled” again in the pollutions of the world?

Growing Stronger...

This chapter ends with a disturbing word picture. False teachers are like dogs who have returned to their own vomit and pigs wallowing in the mire. They are also referred to as brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed. Peter used these unflattering pictures to disgust his readers and motivate them to back away from those who peddled destructive doctrines. In contrast, Jesus portrayed Himself as the Good Shepherd and His followers as sheep. Sheep need to stay close to their shepherd or they will lose their way. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about sheep and their shepherd.

Psalms 23:1-4

Psalms 100:3

John 10:14-16

John 10:27-28

Final Thoughts...

Peter’s letter is very applicable to the world today. Lies, deception, misinformation, and manipulation surround us and have infiltrated many religious institutions. Like Noah and Lot, we can feel isolated and alone as we try to discover and hold onto truth in a warped and confused world. Peter gives us hope by reminding us that the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment. Don’t be discouraged. Truth is found in Jesus; following Him leads to deliverance and freedom. You have everything you need to make your call and election sure. Follow closely after Jesus, be filled with the Holy Spirit, know the Word of God, test everything you hear by it, and be clothed with humility and the whole armor of God. The more you know the truth of Jesus, the easier it will be to recognize and resist the lies of the devil.

2 Peter 3:1-9... *The Day Will Come!*

Peter addressed his readers as “beloved” four times in the final chapter of this book. With great compassion, he reminded believers that Jesus Christ is sure to return. Raising questions about Jesus’ return was one of the ways false teachers were seeking to undermine the faith of believers. There will be a final judgment for sin, so believers are encouraged to remember all they have been taught from God’s Word and to wait patiently for His coming.

Prayerfully read 2 Peter 3:1-9

Re-read verses 1-4

1. What was Peter referring to specifically when he wrote, “the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior”? (Acts 26:22-23)

Why is it important to “be mindful” of their words?

2. Who “will come in the last days”?

What will they be doing? (2 Peter 3:3, Jude 1:16)

3. Use the following verses to describe scoffers.

Proverbs 14:6

Proverbs 21:24

Proverbs 22:10

4. What do the scoffers say? (2 Peter 3:4)

Read verses 5-9

5. What did Peter remind his readers once happened to this world? (verse 6)

6. How will God judge the world in “the day of judgment”?

“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

~ Luke 12:40

7. Using a dictionary or online source such as WebstersDictionary1828.com, define:

Perdition

Longsuffering

8. How is God’s perspective of time different than yours?

9. Why is God “longsuffering toward us”? (verse 9, Ezekiel 33:11)

Growing Stronger...

“They will say, ‘What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again?’” 2 Peter 3:4 NLT

The New Testament clearly teaches that Jesus will return. His second coming will be physical and personal, just as His first coming, resurrection, and ascension were. The kingdom of God will be fully established at Christ’s return. How is Jesus Christ’s return described in the following verses?

Matthew 24:42-44

Luke 21:25-27

Revelation 19:11-16

What hope do you find in these verses?

Final Thoughts...

“I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles.” 2 Peter 3:2 NLT

The Bible is the only safeguard against false teachers and scoffers. It is important for you to remember the prophecies of the “holy prophets” found in the Old Testament. It is equally important to remember the teaching of our Lord Jesus, as conveyed through the apostles in the New Testament. Peter wanted his readers to recognize that we are in a spiritual battle that can only be won by reading, believing, and walking in the truth of the Bible. It can be as simple as reading a chapter of your Bible every day. Try reading Proverbs, the gospel of John, or another book of the Bible. Bible reading plans are also available online at BibleGateway.com and BlueLetterBible.org. Prayerfully choose a plan for daily Bible reading. In the space below, write how the Lord is leading you. Make a prayerful commitment to read your Bible every day and stand strong in the battle!

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

2 Peter 3:10-18... *Living in the Last Days*

As Peter ended his final epistle, he reminded believers that the day of judgment is coming; this world and all it holds dear is going to burn. God will create the new heavens and a new earth. Knowing this should motivate you to live a godly life. Do you want to live for everything that will eventually be destroyed, or live in holiness as you look to the inheritance awarded you in the new heavens and earth?

Prayerfully read 2 Peter 3:10-18

Re-read verses 10-13

1. Describe the "Day of the Lord" according to the following Scriptures.

Isaiah 2:11

Joel 2:10-11

Malachi 4:1

2 Peter 3:10

2. How then should you live while waiting for "these things" to happen?

"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to reward each one as his work deserves." ~ Jesus Christ, Revelation 22:12 NASB

3. According to the following verses, describe what will happen:

2 Peter 3:12

2 Peter 3:13

4. What changes might you need to make to live more in line with the future reality of the "new heavens and a new earth"?

Read verses 14-18

5. As you look "forward to these things", what are you to be "diligent" about?
6. In what way is the "longsuffering of our Lord" considered salvation? (2 Peter 3:9)

How does God's patience give you a mission in our world today?

7. How did Peter refer to Paul?

What did Peter say about the things Paul had written?

If a Bible passage is hard to understand, what should you do?

8. According to 2 Peter 3:17-18, what are you to do?

How do you prevent falling "from your own steadfastness"? (Acts 17:11)

Growing Stronger...

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:18

Spiritual growth comes from consistently maturing in grace and in the knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ. Growing in God's grace is not collecting of facts and information about Jesus. It is a daily transformation. You become more like Christ as you obey God's Word and submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit, who is conforming you into His likeness as you die to self and live for Christ. Reflect on the following verses and record what you discover about grace and knowledge.

Grace

John 1:16–17

Ephesians 2:8–9

Hebrews 4:16

Knowledge

Proverbs 2:2-5

Colossians 1:9-10

2 Peter 1:3

In practical terms, what can you do to “grow in the grace and knowledge” of God?

Final Thoughts....

“Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.” 2 Peter 3:14

God has made you holy through faith in Christ. If you are in Christ, your sins are fully paid for by the blood of Jesus; you are spotless, blameless, and at peace with God. Eternal salvation is not something you work for or earn. As a Christian, with God's power you are able to root out the sin in your life and fully participate in a peaceful relationship with God. Take some time to prayerfully ask the Lord to help you diligently seek ways to please Him.

~ Friends, Prayer Requests... ~

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

~ Hebrews 13:8