

Progressing Together
BIBLE 201



Bible Study Methods

1 PETER



Study Leader's Guide

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Introduction to BIBL 201 Bible Study Methods

In order to grow in the Christian life and be an effective witness for the Lord we need to know His Word and apply it to our life. This course is designed to equip you with tools that will enable you to perform dynamic Bible study, an approach to studying the Bible that leads you to discovering God's truth and making it real in your life.

As you read this course, keep the following objectives in mind:

1. State the two purposes for studying the Bible found in 2 Timothy 3:14-17.
2. Describe the general principles of dynamic Bible study.
3. Identify the key characteristics of each type of Bible study tool.
4. What are the four Bible study methods that will be used to study 1 Peter?

Introduction

It is important for Christians to know how to study the Bible on their own. In 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Paul gives us two purposes why we should know the Scriptures.

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work."

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Syllabus for BIBL201 - Bible Study Methods Certificate Level

Course objectives

To prepare leaders of new discipleship groups and church plants to “rightly divide the word of truth” through simple and practical tools of Biblical interpretation (hermeneutics).

Course description

This course explores several approaches to Bible study, including analysis of the text, book study, study of a topic, and character study in a simple overview of hermeneutics (Biblical interpretation). The course introduces to students the principles of observation, interpretation and application by means of a study of 1 Peter. Students are then expected to apply those principles in a study of Philemon.

Learning Outcomes

Contents: *By the end of the course, the student will be able:*

- To present at least seven of the nine general principles of dynamic Bible study.
- To explain the four Bible study methods used to study 1 Peter in this course.
- To explain general principles for interpreting a specific passage of Scripture.

Character: *By the end of the course, the student will demonstrate:*

- Sensitivity to the dangers of misinterpreting scripture, or using it in ways that justify one’s own position in contradiction to the original context and meaning of a passage.
- An appreciation for applying the scripture in practical ways, rather than merely studying for the sake of “head knowledge.”
- A thirst for knowledge of God’s Word “as the deer pants after water in a dry and thirsty land.”

Competency: *By the end of the course, the student will be able:*

- To take into consideration the biblical, historical, cultural, and linguistic context of a passage when facilitating a Bible study.
- To use the following Bible study tools: concordance, Bible dictionary, cross references, commentaries, and Bible atlas.
- To model how to identify an author’s purpose in writing by explaining the purpose of 1 Peter.
- To apply the message of a passage of Scripture to his/her own context and time period.
- To find the main idea of a given biblical text.
- To apply thematic study of scripture to a specific concept.

Course requirements

Certificate Level

- To demonstrate knowledge of course material through
 - answering questions at the end of each section
 - completion of the final exam
- To attend 18 of 20 instructor-led sessions (27 contact hours minimum)

- To participate in discussions by listening, contributing as appropriate, and responding when asked a specific question
- To lead a model study of a portion of 1st Peter.
- To role play the misuse and misinterpretation of scripture in application to a particular theme.
- To practice the methods being learned by studying Paul's letter to Philemon, including observation, interpretation, and application.
- To carry out a study of a specific theme in Scripture which the student chooses

Evaluation methodology and scale

Student performance and mastery will be assessed according to the following scale:

- 20% on student attendance, participation, and attitude during discussions
- 20% on completion of reading and preparation of questions for the 9 lessons of the course
- 30% on homework assignments (required to validate the Certificate of preparation to Christian service) including:
 - 10% on leading a bible study session using the 3 inductive study steps
 - 10% on the analytical study of the book of Philemon
 - 10% on the theme study
 - The student may choose to replace one of these 3 assignments by preparing and presenting a skit which illustrates one of the bible interpretation principles
- 30% on the final written, or oral, exam.

The evaluation scale is as follows

- passing grade - 70-79%
- good grade – 80-89%
- excellent grade – 90-100%

Course schedule

To be announced.

Credits earnable

- 2 hours of credit towards a Certificate in Christian Studies

Prerequisites

(Completion of Progressing Together level 1, or equivalent)

Textbook and related materials

- Required - Progressing Together Manual for –
- Additional readings may be required at the instructor's discretion
- Recommended - A concordance, Bible dictionary, Bible commentaries, and a Bible atlas

Course methodology

The student will work inductively, reading texts, answering questions concerning knowledge, application and analysis, and drawing conclusions which will be applicable to local context. After answering the questions in each lesson, students will gather to discuss answers and practical application. When possible, the course leader will give additional talks to reinforce what the students are learning through the lessons.

Policies

- Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated, since they are deemed contrary to Christian teaching and academic integrity.
- Absences in excess of 3 class hours will lead to a reduced grade; no student missing more than 6 class hours will receive credit for the course. Students who show little or no interest in completing course work will first be warned, then asked to leave the course if they do not change their conduct.

Bibliography

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Lesson 1: Introduction to the basics of Bible Study Methods

Introducing the Inductive Method: Observation

A. Introduction

The Christian faith is based upon the Bible which contains the thoughts, plans, words and actions of God. The Bible answers questions that we may have such as: Who is God? What is His purpose for my life? Where is history going? These are just some of the questions that the Bible answers. However, in order to fully benefit from it, we must learn how to understand what God says to His people and put it into practice.

In order to encourage this understanding, God both invites and commands His people to study His Word. Those who do not make an effort to know what the Bible says neglect their primary means of spiritual nourishment and distance themselves from Him. One very powerful example of the relationship between the Bible and the life of God's people is found in Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 5-10.

"And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I (Moses) am teaching you to perform... You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you... See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me... So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'... For... what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? ... Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when the Lord said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear my words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'"

The Apostle Paul adds one more element to the purpose of your study of God's word, when he says to Timothy, *"the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a clean conscience and a sincere faith."* (1 Timothy 1:5) In other words, the purpose of Bible study is not just more knowledge, but a transformed life; distinguished by a pure heart (for God), a clear conscience (before God), and a sincere faith (in God).

The purpose of this course is to teach a basic method of Bible study and introduce a number of practical tools designed to help you know and obey God's word and thus benefit from all of Scripture which, *"is inspired of God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man (and woman) of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work"*. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17

B. Knowing what the Bible is and its importance.

1. Knowing what the Bible is.

a. Read the following passages and note what the Bible says about itself.

i. 2 Timothy 3:16 – All of scripture comes from God and is useful for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness.

ii. Psalm 119:160 – The totality of God's word is truth and everyone of God's commands is everlasting.

iii. Isaiah 55:10, 11 – God's word accomplishes what God sends it to do.

b. From these passages, summarize what the Bible is in your own words.

Open answer – example: The Bible is a collection of the thoughts, instructions and plans of God which are true, everlasting, profitable for shaping our spiritual life and which will accomplish what He intends.

2. The nature of the Bible tells us how to interpret it.

- The Bible is the only guide to know God and his will for mankind. This is one of the main foundations of the Protestant Reform. **Sola Scriptura.**
 - **1st Principle : the Bible interprets the Bible** : in order to make sure that we correctly understand a Bible text, we need to compare it with other Bible passages that speak of the same subject. (Acts 17.11 ; 2 Peter 3.15-16)
- The Bible is accessible : every believer in Christ has got the Holy Spirit guiding him and helping him to understand what the Bible says. The priesthood of every Christian is also one of the main foundations of the Reform. (1 Peter 2.9 ; 1 John 2.26-27)
 - **2nd principle : Faith and personal conviction** : every Christian is responsible before God for understanding the Bible the best he can and to act according to his beliefs. (Romans 14.12-14, 22-23b ; Ephesians 4.11-16)
- The Bible has only got one author : God. The entire Bible is inspired by good and useful to the believer. (2 Peter 1.21 ; 2 Tim 3.16-17)

- **3rd principle : The law of non-contradiction.** God's message cannot mean the opposite of what is said elsewhere in the Bible that has the same theme or a similar context (Psalm 119.89-90,86 ; Isaiah 55.11 ; Jeremiah 23.23-29 ; 26.16-20 ; 1 Kings 13. 14-24)

There are stories that show how important it is to God that we respect this principle :

1 Kings 13.13-24 where a man of God was killed by a lion during Jeroboam's reign

Jeremiah 26.16-20 where Jeremiah is declared innocent thanks to the citations of previous prophets

Jeremiah 28.6-9 where Jeremiah rebukes Hananiah who preaches contradictory things

Other verses of the New Testament that put the stress on the faithfulness and the unity of the message of the scriptures : Romans 3.3-4 ; Romans 9.6 ; Acts 10.43

Warnings against those who lie in the name of God : Jeremiah 23.23-29 ; 2 Corinthians 2.17 ; Apocalypse 22.18-19

- The Bible is a historic book : God reveals himself progressively throughout history.

- **Principle 4 : The importance of the context** : it is extremely important to verify the message of a Bible text by looking at its literary, historical, geographical and theological context. (2 Peter 3.15-16 ; Luc 5.33-39 ; Mathew 19.7-8)

In 2 Peter 3 there is a literary and theological context : some people twisted Paul's message ; In Luc 5 there is a historical context : we need new 'skins', because Jesus begins a new era in the revelation of God to his people.

Matthew 19 is theological and historical, the goal of the laws concerning divorce was misunderstood.

- **Principle 5 : Progressive revelation** : the most recent Bible passages have a more complete and clear revelation, Jesus-Christ being the supreme revelation.
- The Bible is centered on Jesus : the whole Bible reveals Jesus Christ.
- **Principle 6 : Jesus Christ is the center.** We can find the plan of redemption accomplished by Jesus-Christ in all the books of the Bible (Acts 10.23-42 ; Luc 14.25-27 ; John 5.39)
- The Bible is a human book : God reveals his message through a prophet.
- **Principle 7 :** The message that the author wanted to communicate to his first audience is the main message to remember in any interpretation. (Amos 3.7 ; John 16.13-14 ; 2 Peter 1.19-21 ; 1 Corinthians 14.37)

The Bible teaches us that God doesn't go past the intelligence of his prophets to communicate directly to his people. He teaches the prophet first and then helps him to communicate the message according to what He wants and without any mistakes. We shall observe this theme more closely during the DOCT 202 « The revelation and the inspiration » course.

It is very important to know these Bible interpretation principles. By studying the lessons of this course that introduces us to Bible study methods, we will be able to dig deeper and to put these principles into practice.

C. The Bible, God's Word, is important in the life of the Believer.

1. Read the following verses. What is the role of the Bible in the life of the Believer?

a. Romans 10:17 – *The Word enables the believer to have Faith.*

b. Hebrews 4:12 – *The Word acts as a divine "filter" to examine the thoughts, words, and intentions of the believer.*

c. 1 Peter 2:2 – *The Word enables the believer to grow with regard to his salvation.*

2. Psalm 119, is the only chapter in the Bible in which each verse makes reference to an aspect of God's Word. After reading Psalm 119:1-9, complete the table. *The first verse is given as an example.*

Verse	Effect of God's Word on the life of the Believer
1	<i>The one who "walks" in the law of the Lord (obeys the law of the Lord) will be blessed</i>
2	<i>Those who observe (obey) His testimonies and seek him with all their heart will be blessed</i>
3	<i>Those who walk in His ways do no unrighteousness</i>
4	<i>God's precepts have been given for the believer to obey</i>
5	<i>God's statutes are the goal of the believer's ways (life)</i>
6	<i>God's commandments will not discourage or bring shame to the believer</i>
7	<i>Learning God's righteous judgments results in thanksgiving to God</i>
8	<i>Keeping (obeying) the statutes of God prevents the believer from being forsaken by God</i>
9	<i>Keeping (obeying) the Word of God helps a young believer stay pure</i>

3. From the verses you have studied in **Section B**, summarize what you understand to be the importance of the Bible to the life of the believer.

Open answer – example: The Bible provides instruction and direction to the believer so that he knows how to live. Obedience to the Bible also brings blessing and enables the believer to live a pure life. Finally, living according to the Bible results in honour (in place of shame) to the believer and thanksgiving to God.

D. Studying the Bible using the Inductive Method

Now that you have seen what the Bible says about itself and its importance to the life of the believer, you need to learn how to understand what the Bible says so that you can obey it. To do so, you must learn to study the Bible. Studying a normal book is a relatively simple thing. Studying a piece of literature written long ago in a language which is not one's own is more difficult. In order to understand what the biblical writers originally meant and derive valid applications for your life, a systematic Bible study method based upon three steps is provided. These steps include:

1. Observation – what is in the text
2. Interpretation – what the text means and what other biblical texts say about this
3. Application – how this text applies to my life

E. Observation

Observation is the exercise of observing and noting what you “see”. Whether you are observing the weather, a herd of sheep, or a child playing in the sand, what you learn about the subject depends upon how much and how well you observe. Questions such as “who”, “what”, “why”, “where”, “when” and “how” are ones that you can ask to help you observe. When it comes to understanding the meaning of something (interpretation), what you can interpret and understand is directly related to your ability to accurately and thoroughly observe. Like a house built on a weak foundation, if your observation is poor, your interpretation will be poor as well.

1. Take 3 minutes to ask the questions, “who”, “what”, “why”, etc., and write down all that you observe about the leader of this course.

Open answer

2. Take turns telling your group what you observed. Circle from your own list the things that others saw with you. Write down things that others saw that you didn't.

Open answer

An effective observer of the Bible is interested in “seeing” and noting the facts, the relationships, the terms, and questions that the writer has used in a given verse, paragraph, story, chapter or book to communicate his message. Because the Bible is the Word of God, and all the words are from God, nothing in any verse is unimportant.

3. When observing a text, the type of observation questions you ask yourself depend often on the type of literature you are studying. In the case of a narrative, such as the book of Acts, the major questions concern the principal actors and the action involved. Copy down Acts 1:8 from your Bible in the space below.

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the Earth.”

4. The following questions are therefore examples of what you can ask but not every question necessarily has an answer. The point is to learn to ask any and all questions that will help you “see” what is there. To which of the following questions can you find an answer?

a. Who is speaking?

Jesus

b. To whom is he speaking?

To His disciples

c. What is going to happen?

The Holy Spirit is going to come upon the disciples

d. When did it happen or is it going to happen?

It is not sure from the verse or surrounding verses, but it seems that Jesus is suggesting that it is going to happen soon.

e. What places are mentioned?

Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the remotest part of the earth

f. What terms seem to be important or hard to understand?

Open answer: examples include: power, witnesses, come upon you, Samaria, remotest part of the earth

g. What promises to depend on, commands to obey, or prayers to pray are given?

*The disciples WILL receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them
The disciples WILL be witnesses of Jesus to various places*

5. In one sentence, what would you say is the overall message of Acts 1:8?

The disciples will receive the Holy Spirit which will give them power to be witnesses of Jesus to the World.

Lesson 2: Introduction to the Inductive Method Part II

Interpretation and Application

A. Interpretation

Interpretation is the exercise of determining what something means. Whether reading a street sign or listening to a song on the radio, your mind is always seeking to interpret what it sees and hears. Interpretation is the practice of giving good answers to your questions of observation.

Step 1.

When you interpret the Bible you are first seeking to understand what the writer meant when he wrote from within his cultural and historical setting, to his selected readers. Just as good observation is the key to good interpretation, so good interpretation will be the key to good personal application. We are particularly interested to discern what the writer wants to teach about:

God : His glorious nature, His character, His will and plan.

The Creation: the world, its origin, nature and destiny; the created beings

Mankind: his nature, his heart motivation, his relationships to God, others, and the world

Specific understandings, attitudes or behaviors (action) addressed that need to change in his readers

Before you can determine an application of a given verse to your life, you need to understand what the writer meant to say when he wrote it. In order to do this you must keep in mind that there are several obstacles to overcome.

These are:

- i. Language – the Bible was written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic.
- ii. Culture – the Bible was written from and to people in cultures different from your own. Even if your roots are in the Middle East, few live today as they did 2000 years ago.
- iii. Literature – the Bible is composed of narrative, parables, letters, laws, songs, poems, and Gospels. Accurate interpretation demands an understanding of how words are used differently in these different forms of literature.
- iv. Communication – the Bible was written to communicate a message. Communication involves the sender, the message, the means of sending the message, the recipient of the message, and what the recipient understood of the message. With so many things involved, it is easy to see how accurate communication can be difficult.
- v. Time – the Bible was written long ago and much has changed from when the Biblical writers composed their texts.

1. Do you remember what type of literature the book of Acts is? Look at the list above given in item iii if you don't remember, and decide for yourself which you think it is.

The book of Acts is a historical narrative.

2. Why do you think the apostles to whom Jesus was speaking at the time would have had no difficulty understanding why he mentioned Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria?

Open answer – example: These places were part of their world. Jerusalem was a major city, Judea was a major region from which many of them had come. Samaria was known for its historical and religious differences with the rest of the Jewish world.

3. Why is it harder for us in the 21st Century to understand Jesus' reference to these places?

Open answer – example: apart from Jerusalem, the other place names have changed and they no longer have a place in our current world. Also, most of us don't live in that region and so we unfamiliar with the historical, political and religious events and people of that region.

Step 2.

Now it is time put together the information that you collected in the observation stage and to seek answers to the questions that you raised. The following exercises are typical of the things that will be necessary when working towards the understanding of a passage of the Bible

- a. Give a definition of the following terms found in Acts 1:8.
 - i. power : force or authority over someone or something

Fr: puissance: situation, état d'une personne, d'un groupe qui peut beaucoup, qui a une grande action sur les personnes, les choses. Caractère de ce qui peut beaucoup, de ce qui produit de grands effets.

- ii. witnesses : someone who tells what he has seen or heard

Fr: témoin: Personne qui certifie ou peut certifier quelque chose; qui peut en témoigner. Personne en présence de qui s'est accompli un fait et qui est appelé à l'attester en justice.

b. Now look in the dictionary in the appendix for the words underlined. How do these definitions differ from the ones you have given?

Open answer

i. power:

ii. witnesses:

4. 1. Acts 1:8 also includes the phrase, “when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” Read Acts 2:1-4 and Acts 4:31 and describe what this phrase means in Acts 1:8.

The Holy Spirit will in a supernatural way, at a certain point in time, begin to exercise His influence in the life of the believers (disciples) enabling them to speak with boldness the things of God; in particular those things related to the life and work of Jesus.

Note to group leader: Take whatever time is necessary to help the students understand that Jesus is not saying that the Holy Spirit will give them the gift of speaking in tongues in this verse.

5. In Acts 1:8, the writer makes a number of geographical references: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth.

a. How do these places relate to each other geographically? (refer to the map in the appendix)

Jerusalem is a city located in the region of Judea. Samaria is a region located to the north of Judea.

b. What could be the reason that the writer of Acts listed these places here when he was talking about evangelism?

The places represent a progression from near (Jerusalem), to further (Judea), to yet further (Samaria), and to the ends of the Earth that Jesus wants the Gospel to be taken.

c. What does the writer mean by “the uttermost parts of the Earth” when talking about evangelism?

The furthest, most remote places where someone lives who needs to hear the Gospel.

6. Using the Bible Dictionary (provided in the appendix) look up the word “Samaria” and read the explanation given. Read 2 Kings 17: 24; 27-33.

a. What is the significance of Samaria in the history of the Jews?

Samaria was the capitol of the Northern Kingdom (10 of the 12 tribes of Israel) throughout most of Israel's history before its deportation and exile. The city was full of idols and many of its kings encouraged idolatry. In 722/721 B.C., the Assyrian King deported many Israelites and imported men from Babylon, etc., to live in the city, intermarry with the people and dilute the race, culture, religion and traditions of the people.

b. Why do you think that Samaria is included in this list of places to which the disciples will be witnesses?

Jesus wants the message of the Gospel to be taken to those who are "far away" from Him not only geographically but also spiritually.

7. With what you have learned so far, write in your own words a summary of the writer's meaning of Acts 1:8. This is your interpretation of this verse. (Note: the meaning of a verse is often longer than the verse itself).

Open answer – example: God will send His Holy Spirit upon His people in order to give them spiritual power to be witnesses of Jesus' life and work to people near and far.

Step 3.

Once you have decided on a certain interpretation of a verse or text of Scripture, the next step is to verify that this meaning fits with the meaning of the rest of the paragraph, chapter, and book of the Bible in which the text is found. This practice of "validation" is what keeps your interpretation from being disconnected from the rest of Scripture and confirms that you have made sense of the historical, theological, cultural, and linguistic information in a passage in a way that leads to an appropriate interpretation. Only when the validation of the interpretation of a passage is complete can you move on to application, answering the question, "How does this passage apply to me?"

The first thing to do is to check the meaning of the passage in light of the "context"? Context is that which comes before and that which comes after a given passage – whether it is a verse, paragraph, or story of the Bible. The context can be literary (the surrounding paragraph, section or book of the Bible), historical (when in time), cultural (e.g. Jews or non-Jews), geographical (e.g. Egypt, Israel, Rome), or theological (relating to God). Taking a verse and trying to interpret it without taking into consideration the context is dangerous because it limits the possible understanding of a verse, or worse, completely distorts the meaning. In order to validate your interpretation of a given text, it is wise to carefully think through each aspect of context. To do so, it is helpful to make use of a Bible with chain references noted in the margin.

Principle 4: The importance of the context (Reminder)

Verify the message of a Bible text by looking at it's literary, historical, geographical and theological context.

2 Peter 3.15-16 ; Luc 5.33-39 ; Matthew 19.7-8

Refer to the note to the leader following principle number 4 in section B2 above.

8. Read Luke 24:33-53. These verses provide the literary and historical context for Jesus words in Acts 1:8. From these passages, answer the following questions:

a. (literary/historical context) What significant event in the life of the disciples has just taken place?

Jesus has just been crucified and raised from the dead.

b. (historical/cultural context) How would you describe the feelings of the disciples at the end of Luke 24?

Amazed, joyful, stirred up...

c. Why do you think they are feeling this way?

Open answer – example: They have just seen and spoken with Jesus, their friend and mentor, that they saw beaten and crucified just days earlier, walking around in a glorified state – clearly master of life and death. This has confirmed their faith and gives them courage and hope for their future.

d. (theological context) Read Acts 2:1-4. How is this related to what Jesus said would happen in Acts 1:8?

The loud, physically evident arrival of the Holy Spirit and the resultant power of the disciples to speak of the things of God is the exact fulfillment of what Jesus said would happen.

e. (theological context) Read Acts 2:14-17.

i. Who is speaking?

Peter

ii. Who does he quote from the Old Testament?

He quotes the prophet Joel.

The text quoted is found in Joel 2.28-32. You can ask the students how they would find the reference themselves, and explain to them how to use the references in a study Bible.

iii. How does this Old Testament quote explain what has happened in Acts 2:1-4?

Joel prophesied that God would pour out His Spirit upon all mankind and that as a result sons and daughters would prophecy, men young and old will see visions and dreams, etc. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit enabling those disciples present to speak in other languages the things of God fulfill in part the prophecy of Joel. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit coupled with the miraculous event of speaking other languages, are an indication that the “last days” of God’s plan have come.

The next thing to do is to compare the verse you are studying with other verses that speak of the same thing. One of the key principles of biblical interpretation is the principle of **the non-contradiction of Scripture**. Simply put, this principle states that God has not said one thing at one time and an opposite thing later on which completely denies what He said earlier. This helpful principle enables you to find other verses which support and contribute to a given interpretation. To do so, you can use a Bible concordance or a Bible Dictionary (see appendix for a description of each).

Principle 3: The law of non-contradiction. (Reminder)

God’s message cannot mean the opposite of what is said elsewhere in the Bible that has the same theme or a similar context.

Psalms 119:89-90 ; Isaiah 55:11 ; Jeremiah 23:23-29 ; 26:16-20 ; 1 Kings 13:14-24

Refer to the note to the leader following principle number 3 in section B2 above.

9. Using the Bible Concordance (provided in the appendix), look up the word “witness” from Acts 1:8.

a. List other verse references in which this word is used in the book of Acts.

Open answer – examples include:

Acts 1:22; 2:32; 5: 32; 7:58; 10:41; 13:31; 22:5, 15, 20; 26:16

b. Note 2 of those references below, and summarize the meaning of the word “witness” from the verse.

Acts 1:22 – in selecting a new disciple to take the place of Judas Iscariot, the remaining disciples wanted someone who could stand with the 11 as a “witness” of Jesus’ resurrection – in other words someone who had been there when it happened (probably present at the crucifixion and also had seen the empty tomb). So, “witness” – someone who has firsthand knowledge and experience of something; someone who was “there” when something happened or when something was said.

7:58 – at the stoning of Stephen, some of the crowd who had heard the testimony of Stephen, laid aside their robes and took up stones to kill him and therefore his testimony. So, “witnesses” – someone who participated in an event.

c. Compare the meaning of the word “witness” as used elsewhere in Acts with your understanding of the word from Acts 1:8. How are they the same or different?

The word “witnesses” elsewhere in Acts speaks of those who had firsthand evidence or experience with the life – and in particular - the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. But in many of these verses the idea of being a “witness” is passive and not active. When Jesus, in Acts 1:8, calls the disciples to be witnesses of Him to Jerusalem, etc., the idea is that of testifying and speaking about what they know and have seen and experienced. The idea in Acts 1:8 is that of action – be my witnesses by taking what you have seen and experienced of me and telling others who have not seen and experienced what you have.

10. The theme of Acts 1:8 is evangelism. Look up the verses given below and complete the table.

Phrase	Passage	Similarities to Acts 1:8
“Make disciples of all nations”	Matthew 28:18-20	<i>Includes people from all over the earth</i>
“Preach the Gospel to all creation”	Mark 16:15	<i>Emphasizes the act of proclaiming – “witnessing” to people from all over the earth</i>

The last thing in the validation process is to check your interpretation against a commentary (if you have access to one).

11. Read the section from the commentary provided in the appendix at the end of the course concerning Acts 1:8. How does the commentary agree or disagree with your interpretation of Acts 1:8?

Once you have checked the important terms and the theological conclusions, identified other biblical passages that deal with similar terms or themes, and have consulted a commentary (if possible), you should review and revise your interpretation of the biblical text in accordance with what you have learned. Once this is complete, it is time to move on to the application phase.

12. If necessary, based upon the results of the validation process, rewrite your summary interpretation of Acts 1:8.

God will send His Holy Spirit upon His people in order to give them supernatural power to be witnesses of Jesus’ life and work to people near and far.

B. Application

Application is the exercise of answering the question, “How does this text apply to me?” It is important to remember that only after the observation and interpretation steps of Bible study are complete can a faithful and accurate attempt be made to apply it.

The basic issue in determining an appropriate application is answering the question, “What am I supposed to do with what I have learned?” The key is action, response, movement, change. That is why the Bible was written. As we said in the introduction to this lesson, the purpose of Bible study is not just more knowledge, but using that knowledge to transform your life; distinguished by a pure heart (for God), a clear conscience (before God), and a sincere faith (in God).

To help determine how to apply a passage to your life, a series of eleven questions can be asked. Be aware that this list of questions is not all that could be asked and that you may not be able to answer each question from the passage you are studying. The questions are simply given as a guide to help you develop your ability to ask good questions.

1. Is there an example for me to follow or not to follow?
2. Is there a sin for me to avoid?
3. Is there a promise for me to claim?
4. Is there a prayer for me to pray?
5. Is there a command for me to obey?
6. Is there a condition for me to meet?
7. Is there a verse for me to memorize?
8. Is there an error (doctrinal/theological) for me to avoid?
9. Is there a challenge for me to face?
10. Is there something that helps me cope with a situation that I am going through?
11. Is there anything that I need to share and pass on to others a) in my family, b) in my church fellowship, c) in my relationships or contacts with unbelievers?

1. Rewrite your summary interpretation of Acts 1:8 below.

God will send His Holy Spirit upon His people in order to give them supernatural power to be witnesses of Jesus' life and work to people near and far.

2. Which of the ten application questions above “fit” with your interpretation? In other words, does your interpretation speak about an example to follow, a sin to avoid, a promise to claim, etc. List the ones that can be answered below.

An example for me to follow – be a witness

A command for me to obey – be a witness

A challenge for me to face – be a witness

A promise for me to claim – the Holy Spirit gives me power

Possibility of other answers as well...

3. Choosing one of the ten application questions that fit with your interpretation of Acts 1:8, complete the table and write out a personal application of what you will “do” as a result of your study of Acts 1:8. *An example has been provided.*

Question	Answer	Application
<i>Is there an error for me to avoid?</i>	<i>The Gospel is for ALL the World, not just for some</i>	<i>I will practice telling everyone, regardless of their race or ethnic origin, about Jesus.</i>
<i>Is there an example for me to follow</i>	<i>Be a witness of Jesus like the disciples</i>	<i>I will pray for and look for opportunities to be a witness of Jesus to someone this week.</i>

The most difficult part of the application process is not determining what is to be done, but doing it. In order to be a true doer of the word, you need to adopt three good habits. We will look at these habits in Lesson 5.

Appendix

Definition of Key and Difficult terms

Believer: an individual who by faith has put his/her trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his/her sins (not simply someone who has an intellectual acceptance that God exists).

Power: ability or capacity to do something; physical force or strength; control and influence over other people; political influence and control; the authority to act or do something according to a law or rule; a faculty or skill. God, as portrayed in the Bible, has unlimited power to alter the course of the natural world (do miracles), to direct people's lives, and to determine the course of history. He sometimes works through human beings as agents of physical or spiritual power, as well as exercising delegated authority.

Samaria: originally the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel from the time of Omri (885 BC). Later the whole region became known by this name. The Assyrians destroyed the city in 721 BC and took most of the northern Israelites into captivity. Those who remained intermarried with people from other nations who were resettled in the area by the Assyrians. This meant that the majority of the inhabitants of the region, called Samaritans, were no longer pure descendants of Jacob (Israel). The enmity between the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel was perpetuated and worsened because the Jew who returned from captivity in Babylon in 539 BC would have nothing to do with the Samaritans because of their mixed bloodline. The Samaritans developed their own place and system of worship, in competition with the Jews whose worship centered around the temple in Jerusalem (see John 4:1-26). This situation continued into the New Testament period.

Theology: the study of God. When we speak of "theological terms" or of "theological concepts" we mean terms and concepts which refer to or explain God's relationship to His creation (including mankind).

Witness: a person or thing which affirms the truth of a past event, oath, or agreement. People, monuments, and even elements of nature, such as the soil, were invoked as witnesses in the Old Testament. Cases being tried by a judge required at least two witnesses before a sentence could be pronounced. The word "martyr" comes from the same word as "witness" in New Testament Greek. The person who was willing to go even unto death for the sake of Christ was clearly confirming by his or her blood the truth of the gospel message, becoming thereby a witness, or "martyr".

Explanation of Bible Study Tools

4. Bible Dictionary – a reference tool which gives the meaning and explanation of common terms, geographical locations, significant people, and theological concepts found in the Bible.

5. Bible Concordance – a reference tool which provides an index of verses in which a given word is found.

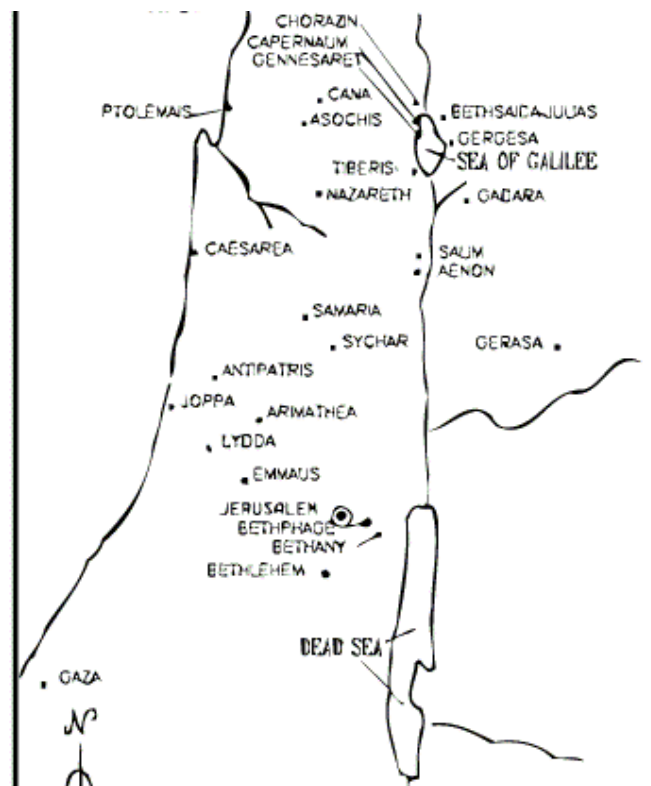
6. Bible Atlas – a reference tool which provides geographical maps and historical charts of biblical places, events and peoples.

7. Chain reference – an indication of other (key) verses which use the same word.

8. Commentary – a reference tool which provides an explanation of words, verses, or passages of Scripture.

Despite these challenges, accurate interpretation of the Bible is possible without needing to depend upon experts. Faithful practice of observing the text and seeking the answers to the questions raised will bear much fruit. As the exercise of interpreting a given biblical text begins, the wise student of the Bible will be careful not to develop bad habits which include:

- a. *misreading the text* – skipping or neglecting words or phrases in order to focus on one aspect of a verse or paragraph
- b. *distorting the text* – making a verse say what you want it to say to make your point
- c. *contradicting the text* – using a verse to justify wrong behaviour or bad theology
- d. *subjectivism* – letting feelings dictate the meaning of a verse
- e. *relativism* – finding new meanings in the verses of scripture as time goes by
- f. *mysticism* – seeing a mystical or hidden/coded truth behind the plain words of Scripture
- g. *overconfidence* – having an attitude that says, “I know all there is to know about this verse.” Wise is the student of the Bible who understands the meaning of the verse that says, “Pride goes before a fall.”



Judea

Lesson 3: Observation and Interpretation

A. Observation – What do I see?

Introduction

As you learned in Lesson 1, the first step in Bible study is observation – the exercise of answering the question, “What do I see?” When observing a biblical passage, the objective is to ask as many questions as possible in order to identify as much as possible. We said in lesson 1, that the Bible is made up of many different types of literature (letters, history, poems, prophecies, etc.). The type of observation questions you ask yourself depend often on the type of literature you are studying. In the case of a narrative, such as the book of Acts, the major questions concern the principal actors and the action involved. In this lesson we are going to observe a chapter in an epistle (letter), dealing therefore not so much with action as with doctrine (teaching). The type of questions you ask may include some of those used for a narrative, but perhaps other questions are more appropriate. Basically, with this type of literature we want to ask questions that will lead us to discover what the writer is teaching. There is no complete list of questions to ask. It is wise therefore to work hard at asking lots of questions in order to mine the maximum amount of spiritual gold from each verse. With practice you will become an expert at asking good questions.

Principle 7 : Respect the author’s intention (Reminder)

The message that the author wanted to communicate to his first audience is the main message to remember in any interpretation. It can be discerned by asking certain questions. Amos 3.7 ; John 16.13-14 ; 2 Peter 1.19-21 ; 1 Corinthians 14.37

Refer to the note to the leader following principle number 7 in section B2 of lesson 1.

Exercises

In lesson 1, we observed a verse. In this lesson, we will expand our horizons and look at a passage from 1 Peter.

1. Read 1 Peter 1:1-5 and answer the following observation questions.

a. Who is speaking?

Peter

b. What is the role given to him by Jesus?

He is an apostle of Jesus Christ

c. To whom are these verses addressed – Christians, or non-Christians?

Peter is writing to Christians.

d. What indications given in the passage lead you to your answer in question c?

In verse 1 he refers to his readers as “foreigners/exiles/strangers/sojourners” in this world and those who are “chosen”. In verse 3 he refers to “us” as those who have been “born again to a living hope”. In verse 5, he adds that the “us” are those who are being protected by God for their final salvation.

Other answers are possible, as long as they are related directly to what is in verses 1-5.

e. What has God done for them in v1-2 ?

He has chosen them according to His foreknowledge of God the Father.

He has sanctified them/made them holy through the Holy Spirit

f. What was God's purpose in doing those things (v2)?

That they might be an obedient people

That they be purified by the sprinkling of Christ's blood

Note that Peter uses 2 terms in this section which would be rich in meaning for Jewish believers in Christ and those familiar with the Old Testament: they were described as "exiles scattered" and those "sprinkled" with Christ's blood. This is worth exploring further in phase 2!

2. Focusing now on verses 3-5,

a. What seem to be the key terms?

Open answer – examples include:

Blessed, mercy, born again, living hope, inheritance, through faith, protected, salvation, last days.

b. Which terms are difficult to understand? (If available, read 1 Peter 1:3-5 in a different translation of the Bible. What differences do you find between the different translations?)

Open answer – examples include:

Mercy—kindness--pity

living hope – lively hope

, in the "last time—last days—end of time—end of this era"

c. Which ideas are emphasized because the writer uses different words to explain his idea in different ways?

Open answer – examples include:

living hope-- inheritance--salvation,

imperishable--undefiled--will not fade away

kept—reserved

d. Based upon 1 Peter 1:3-5, check the box(es) which you think contain(s) the correct answer(s) from the list below. Is the writer...

- ☐ making a statement ✓
- ☐ asking a question
- ☐ correcting a doctrinal/theological error
- ☐ telling a story
- ☐ quoting a poem/saying/psalm
- ☐ speaking prophetically? ✓

e. What do these verses say about God?

God is to be praised because he has caused us to be born again.

God is exceedingly good and merciful. He has exercised great mercy toward us (not giving us what we deserve).

God has saved us to a living hope of obtaining an inheritance that He is reserving in Heaven for us.

God protects us by His power so that we obtain what He has prepared for us.

3. Now take some time to read all of chapter 1 of 1 Peter to get a feel for the literary context.

a. What do you think is the overall theme of chapter 1?

The theme of chapter 1 is the marvelous salvation that has come from God to us and which enables and motivates us to live lives worthy of it in holiness (with regard to God and His word) and love (with regard to others).

b. How do verses 3-5 support the theme of chapter 1?

Verses 3-5 introduce and explain briefly the divine origin and the future glory of our salvation.

c. Do you have any personal observation questions concerning verses 3-5 because of what you see in the rest of chapter 1?

Open answer

Ex. Verses 23-25 conclude the chapter in a similar way to the opening v3-4 with reference to the new birth and its enduring and powerful nature (only this time as a divine seed planted in the believer). --How do these two passages complement, reinforce and explain each other?

--How do they relate to the rest of the themes in the chapter?

Also, how do the verses in between these passages display the glory and privilege of the living hope/inheritance/salvation the believer has received? (v6-9, 21-22)

What do we learn about the kind of 'faith' (v5) this assurance produces in the life of the believer in v10-12 and 18-20)?

d. What would you say is the basic theme of 1 Peter 1:3-5?

The future glory of our salvation.

4. Now observe verse 3.

a. Peter begins this passage with “blessed be” (or “praise be”, according to your translation of the Bible). What does this tell you about the tone (i.e. hopeful, discouraged, unsure, etc.) of the passage?

Peter is hopeful, joyful, and full of energy.

b. What does Peter say that God has done for us?

God has caused us to be born again.

c. For what purpose has God done this for us?

God did this so that we could obtain an eternal inheritance.

d. How has He accomplished this for us?

He accomplished this for us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

e. What does Peter say is the proof of our being born again?

Peter says that our proof is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

5. Now observe verse 4.

a. In verse 4, Peter mentions an inheritance. What terms does he use to describe it?

Peter says that our inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away.

b. Where is this inheritance being kept?

Our inheritance is being kept in Heaven.

6. Now observe verse 5.

a. How does Peter describe the believer in verse 5?

*Believers are protected by the power of God through faith.
They are assured of a salvation which will only be fully appreciated at the end of this age.*

b. What does Peter say that God is doing for us here?

God is protecting us by His power and has laid away a great inheritance for us.

c. What is the purpose or the end result of what God is doing for us here in verse 5?

The end result is that the believers will receive their complete(d) salvation.

d. When will all this be revealed?

Peter says that it will be revealed, "in the last time."

Conclusion

Once you have finished observing the verse or passage you should have a good feel for the overall theme or message, who is involved (the writer and the readers as well as the people that figure in the message), and the important aspects of the writer's message (i.e. places, events, facts, theological terms, etc.) The exercise of observation should also give you a list of words and ideas that need further study – which we will deal with in the interpretation phase of Bible study. List here the words and ideas found in this passage that you think need further study.

Open Answer

Example: Who are the recipients? Where are they? What do we know about these places? What was happening during this time period ? What hardships were they facing ? v. 6-8

*Key words : apostles, strangers, dispersed, holiness, heritage, chosen.
Furthermore: regenerated, hope, in the heavens, faith, in the last time.*

B. Interpretation – Part I

Introduction

As you learned in lesson 1, once you have completed observing the text, asking all the questions you can, it is now time to move on to interpretation – seeking to answer the question, “What does it mean?” The purpose of the exercise of interpretation is to discover what the writer of the text meant to communicate to his original readers back when he wrote it. For it is only once you have understood what the writer meant that you can attempt to move on to applying the text to your life. In the next two lessons we will learn how to move from observation to interpretation of our chosen text 1 Peter 1:1-5.

Exercises

In lesson 1 you also learned that interpretation is the result of answering the questions that you raised in observation. In interpretation, you define the terms that are important, look up words that are difficult, and discover what impact the references to a given place, person, or event had on the original readers.

1. The first thing to do is to define the terms that seem to be important or hard to understand. Using the Dictionary in the appendix, look up the following words and give a brief summary of their meaning.

a. Mercy:

Compassion shown to an offender

b. Hope:

To desire with expectation

c. Inheritance :

The acquisition of a possession, condition or trait from past generations.

d. Salvation:

The saving of man from the power and effects of sin

2. As you have discovered from the dictionary, the word “salvation” has several meanings. The key to knowing which meaning best fits the word in a given verse is the “context”, that is to say, the literary, theological, historical and cultural information that surrounds the word. One rule of interpretation says that **when trying to find the meaning of a word, first try to find other uses of the word in the same chapter, book, or used elsewhere by the same writer**. Uses of the same word that occur “near” to each other often share the same or similar meanings. However, it is not always possible to find other uses of the word elsewhere in the passage or book you are studying or even by the same writer. In this case, look for occurrences of the word in the same testament (Old Testament or New Testament) from which your text of study comes.

Principle 8 : The proximity rule

To check the meaning of a word in a biblical text, we can compare the use of that same word in other biblical texts. The texts that are closest in proximity (the same paragraph, chapter, book, or author) are to be considered before those that are more distant (written by other authors, other time periods or testaments).

You can ask the learners to show how this principle is based on the previous one (number 7). Indeed, this principle allows us to discern the intent of the author by using a specific word. In the same way, according to the first principle, we compare the definition of the word to its use in the Bible rather than elsewhere.

a. Read the following verses that were found using a concordance (in the New Testament) and complete the table by summarizing what salvation refers to in the verse, and if it refers to a past event, a future event, or an event already begun but which will be completed later. *The first answer has been given as an example.*

Verse	Salvation in this verse refers to...
Acts 4:12	<i>Being saved – a past event</i>
Romans 13:11	<i>The final deliverance of the believer – a future event</i>
1 Peter 1:9	<i>The completion of the faith of the believer – an event already begun which will be completed later</i>
Hebrews 9:28	<i>The final “relief” that Jesus will bring – a future event</i>

b. In 1 Peter 1:3-5, when Peter refers to salvation, is he speaking of a past event, a future event, or an event already begun which will be completed later?

An event already begun which will be completed later

c. What from this passage tells you that?

In verse 3, he says that God “caused us to be born again”, a reference to a past or completed event. In verse 4, he speaks of an inheritance which is reserved in Heaven – suggesting that it is not yet possessed. In verse 5 he speaks of the salvation which will be revealed in the last time. A future tense of the verb “will” here suggests that it has not yet happened and is therefore a future event.

d. Based upon what you have learned from your research on the word “salvation,” write a definition of the word that fits with the sense of what Peter is saying in verses 3-5.

Salvation, from 1 Peter 1:3-5, refers to the completion of the work begun by God in the life of the believer which will include the obtaining of an inheritance that God is preparing and preserving for him.

3. Another key word in this passage is the word, “inheritance”. As you can see in the Bible dictionary, the word can refer to an earthly inheritance that is passed down from father to son (or daughter), or it can refer to a spiritual inheritance that God has prepared and keeps for His children.

a. Next we can search a concordance to find where the word “inheritance” occurs elsewhere in the Bible to further construct a Biblical definition of the term. Since 1Pe 1:4 is the only time Peter uses this word, we will choose verses in the New Testament. Read each passage and complete the table according to the example provided.

Verse	Things that are included in our inheritance
Colossians 1:12-13	<i>The Kingdom of God’s Son</i>
Colossians 3:23-24	<i>Rewards for our work done for Christ</i>
Revelation 21:1-7	<i>New heavens and earth, a splendid city with God present and reigning on the throne among His people, bringing comfort (no tears!), peace, satisfaction, life eternal, everything made new</i>

b. What is included in the believer’s inheritance according to these verses?

The inheritance of the believer that he is waiting for includes the Kingdom of God, the rewards of the work done for Christ and the comfort, peace, satisfaction, eternal life, and complete newness for the believer to enjoy.

c. Now let us look at what Peter himself says about the believer’s inheritance.

i. We already noted in our observation of verses 3-5 that “inheritance” is a key term and much is said about it. In your own words, write what these verses teach us about our inheritance.

-Peter insists on the certainty and the eternal and unchanging quality of the inheritance

-God has set it apart especially for us.

-It is used in parallel with ‘salvation’ and ‘living hope’ as synonyms or similar ideas

-It is the reason for an intense and vibrant hope that sustains the believer in this world

-It is now largely unseen but will be revealed in the last time with our future salvation

ii. Now we can look for clues from other verses in Peter’s letter that describe what Peter means by inheritance, although he does not use the term. For each verse below write what it tells us about the believer’s inheritance.

Passage	What Peter teaches us about the believer’s inheritance in each passage
1 Pe 1:7	<i>The believer will receive glory and honor when Christ is revealed</i>
1 Pe 2:9-11	<i>He is a royal priest and citizen of a holy nation—not belonging to this present world, God’s very own to dwell in holiness and glorious light</i>
1 Pe 4:13	<i>Christ’s glory will be revealed and then the believer’s joy will be full</i>

1 Pe 5:1	<i>He will participate in Christ's glory to be revealed</i>
1 Pe 5:10	<i>He is called to participate in Christ's eternal glory</i>
2 Pe 3:12-13	<i>The Day of God will burn up this present world and replace it with a new heaven and earth where righteousness will dwell.</i>

d. Based upon what you have discovered, write a summary of what you conclude Peter meant by "inheritance" in 1 Peter 1:3-5.

Access to the new earth and all that God has stored up for us there, where God reigns among the redeemed forever. We will be transformed into His glorious likeness, holy, righteous and shining as light itself. We await the unveiling of our glorious homeland when Christ returns in glory in the last day and this world is destroyed by fire. Meanwhile we rejoice in hope and prepare ourselves in living holy lives in this world.

4. Peter makes a comment in verse 5 that the believer is "protected by the power of God through faith". What does this mean? Below are a series of questions that need to be answered in order to understand what Peter meant when he wrote this phrase.

a. First, let's take a look at the context. Read 1 Peter 1:6-9. What does Peter say in these verses that helps you understand what the believers he was writing to were experiencing?

The believers were experiencing persecution for their faith. The persecution must have been fairly severe because Peter refers to the people as distressed and he compares the trails they were enduring to gold passing through fire (in order to purify it).

b. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19 and 5:10. In these verses, Peter gives more details as to what the believers were living through. It appears obvious that when he talked of God's protection, it was not from persecution and hardship. What does Peter suggest God's protection includes?

God's protection was apparently concerned with their faith or perhaps their soul being preserved – a reference to their ultimate salvation.

If you'd like to **Go deeper**, do sub-question 'c' below; otherwise go directly to sub-question 'd'.

c. Let's take a look at what Peter means by "the power of God". Read the following passages and give a brief summary of what God did. *An example is given.*

Genesis 1:1-5 *Created the heavens and the Earth*

i. Exodus 14:21-31 *Divided the red Sea and led Israel through to safety while destroying the pursuing Egyptian army.*

ii. Luke 5:17-26 *Healed the paralytic whose friends had brought him to where Jesus was teaching.*

iii. Luke 24:1-8 *Rose from the dead after being crucified.*

d. (With these things in mind,) how would you describe the “power of God”?

Open answer – example: The power of God is the unlimited capacity of God to create, manage, restore, and give life as He pleases to accomplish His will.

e. Now let’s take a look at what Peter means by “faith”. Using a Bible dictionary, look up the word “faith” and summarize its meaning.

Faith:

There are various definitions and uses of the word:

-Belief, trust, and loyalty to a person or thing, as to God

-Faith can also mean assent: the persuasion of the mind that a certain statement is true.

-It can refer to the teaching of the Gospel: the essential message of salvation (or more widely the teaching of the Scriptures) revealed by the apostles that the believer must accept for salvation.

f. In keeping with the “law of context” let’s look at other verses in which Peter uses faith to see if we gain any insight. In fact we don’t need to look very far. Immediately after mentioning faith in v5 Peter begins to explain the word further in v6-9, mentioning the root word (*pistos* faith or *pisteo* to believe) 3 times.

i. Define what faith is in this passage:

Faith means confidence in God and His word even though one does not see Him or experience the present benefit of obeying His word. In v9 faith could also refer to the totality of one’s spiritual commitment and convictions.

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ii. Explain how the author shows that faith protects the believer through hardship and trial:

Faith strengthens the believer to the point of being willing to suffer hardship or loss joyfully, as a result of his/her obedience to God’s law, in expectation of God’s future reward of salvation. By faith the believer endures through love of Christ although he/she has never seen Him.

Note: Faith that is tested and proven true through suffering is of great value to God.

g. Peter addresses the importance of faith again in two other passages in his epistle: ch 1:21-22 and ch 5:8-9. Read them and then write below what they add in the way of reinforcing, explaining or providing new insight to his teaching in the first passage (v5-9).

i. What faith means in these passages:

Faith in each passage means confidence in God. It accompanies hope (1:21) and it requires vigilance and resistance against the attacks of Satan (5:9)

ii. How faith protects the believer:

-It helps the believer to focus on God and His power to save through trials, reminding him/her that after Christ suffered and died God raised Him up (1:21).

-It is forward-looking and motivates the believer to purity and love in this world (1:22)

-It gives confidence in God's power to resist Satan and his attacks as roots hold a tree firmly in place through the storm (5:9).

Note that 1:21-22 can be considered a parallel passage on faith in Peter's outline of ch 1 (see appendix at the end of this lesson.) Also note that Peter ends his epistle in 5:8-9 as he began it in 1:5-9, with an exhortation to exercise a faith that endures under opposition and trials.

h. Based on your summary of "faith" from the Bible dictionary and Peter's use of "faith" elsewhere in this letter, what does he mean by "faith" in 1 Peter 1:3-5?

Faith is the exercise of the will and intellect to understand and believe the things of God and the confident, joyful living out of the resultant convictions despite opposition.

i. Now you need take all that you have learned and try to put it together to understand the phrase. In your own words describe what Peter means when he writes that the believer is "protected by the power of God through faith".

Open answer – example: Faith, that is, the exercise of one's will and intellect to understand and believe the word of God, together with a cultivated desire to obey it, guards one's relationship of trust with God. God protects the believer from Satan and all enemies with His mighty power as he/she remains joyful and at peace in expectation of God's final salvation. This protects the believer being tempted from the consequences of sin in this life and enables him/her to lead a life of holiness and love while awaiting a glorious reward for eternity at Christ's appearing.

j. How does your "faith" enable the "power of God" to "protect you"? What testimonies can you give to God's protecting you through faith in your own life? How should what Peter writes about faith affect your mindset and attitudes when you face trials?

Open response.

Note: Make sure you are prepared to share examples from your testimony, and how this study has impacted you.

Conclusion

5. Having defined the key terms, looked at other scriptures to get a feel for the context, and made use of Bible dictionaries, concordances and other helps as necessary, it is time to make an effort to write a summary of the meaning of the passages. This summary, or interpretation, should reflect what you conclude that the writer meant when he wrote it to his readers. In your own words, write a summary interpretation of this passage, making sure to include what you have learned from each verse of 1 Peter 1:3-5.

Open answer – example: God our Father is to be praised because He has saved us according to His great mercy which has given us a living hope because of the resurrection of Jesus. This salvation of ours has as its objective an inheritance which is indestructible and reserved in Heaven for us. Finally, as a result of our faith we put ourselves in the place of Divine protection until our salvation is revealed.

Appendix

Understanding the “now” and the “not yet” aspect of our salvation.

In the early days of Israel’s history, God drove Israel’s enemies out of the Promised Land to a point where He gave “rest” to Israel. Despite this rest there were still enemies to be driven out! In other words, Israel was able to say that they possessed the land. For many Israelites of that generation, the possession of the Promised Land was a “now”, in their lifetime experience. And yet, enemies still dwelt in the Promised Land – enemies that God had promised to eliminate. This look to the future to a time when all of the Promised Land would be theirs without contest, was the “not yet” of their experience.

In a similar way, this experience of the “now, but not yet,” is also found in the reality that the Christian must face. Just as God did with the Israelites, He has brought us into His kingdom, triumphing over our enemies. And yet there are still battles to face and enemies to conquer. For the Christian however, in contrast to Israel, the battles are spiritual battles, not physical ones. But just as God promised to drive out Israel’s remaining enemies, so He has also promised to give the Christian victory over sin in his present life and over death for the life to come.

And so, for the Christian, salvation is both a “now, but not yet” reality. It is ‘now’ because our sins are forgiven, we are members of God’s family, we do have access to God through prayer, etc. It is also a “not-yet” reality because we will live in God’s presence, we will be glorified, and we will be delivered from the presence of sin and death.

Definition of Key and Difficult terms

(Copied from the *Holman Bible Dictionary*, 1991)

Faith: Trusting commitment of one person to another, particularly of a person to God. Faith is the central concept of Christianity. One may be called a Christian only if one has faith... Faith was fidelity. "Belief" came to be distinguished from faith as an intellect process having to do with the acceptance of a proposition.

Hope: Trustful expectation, particularly with reference to the fulfilment of God's promises. Biblical hope is the anticipation of a favourable outcome under God's guidance. More specifically, hope is the confidence that what God has done for us in the past guarantees our participation in what God will do in the future. This contrasts to the world's definition of hope as "a feeling that what is wanted will happen."

Inheritance: A legal transmission of property after death. The Hebrew Bible has no exclusive term for "inheritance". The words often translated "inherit" mean more generally "take possession". Only in context can they be taken to mean "inheritance". The Greek word in the New Testament does refer to the disposition of property after death, but its use in the NT often reflects the Old Testament background more than normal Greek usage.

Mercy: A personal characteristic of care for the needs of others. The biblical concept of mercy always involves help to those who are in need or distress. Such help covers a broad range, from assistance in finding a bride to God's forgiveness of sin. A wide vocabulary is employed in the original languages to express these concepts, and an even wider vocabulary is found in English translations.

Salvation: The acutely dynamic act of snatching others by force from serious peril. In its most basic sense, salvation is the saving of a life from death or harm. Scripture, particularly the New Testament, extends salvation to include deliverance from the penalty and power of sin.

Lesson 4: Interpretation II : Validation

Introduction

The work of interpretation is not finished until you complete the exercise of validation. Validation is the process of verifying that the interpretation that you have decided upon for a given word, phrase, verse or passage fits with the meaning of the rest of the verse, paragraph, section, or book of the Bible from which it comes. Validation keeps us from coming to interpretive conclusions which are disconnected from the Bible and, as a result, protects us from moving to application which is not biblically justified.

Exercises

The first step in the validation process is checking the “context”, that is, verifying that your interpretation of a given passage makes sense in light of the surrounding literary, historical, theological, cultural and geographical information. Not every verse will be linked to all these aspects, but it is wise to take the time to check your interpretation against those that apply in order to be certain that you have accurately interpreted the passage.

1. Reread 1 Peter 1:1-25.

The first step is to identify which aspects of context need to be checked to verify your interpretation of 1 Peter 1:3-5. Look at the following terms and related questions. If the answer to the question for any of the given terms is “yes”, then you need to consider that aspect of context in order to validate your interpretation of the passage.

Check the box next to the concepts that seem to be most important to the understanding of 1 Peter 1:3-5.

- ☐ Literary – is the passage part of a larger paragraph or section of a book?
- ☐ Historical – is there a reference to a past or future physical event?
- ☐ Theological – does the passage deal with theological terms and ideas?
- ☐ Geographical – is there reference to a specific place on the Earth?
- ☐ Cultural- does the passage refer to specific behaviours, traditions, celebrations or teachings/laws of a certain group of people?
- ☒ *✓Theological is most important, although the literary and historical aspects are also important to consider.*

2. In the first chapter of 1 Peter, the writer (as is common in the epistles of both Paul and Peter) introduces the key topics that he will treat in the rest of the letter. In addition, Peter provides a brief picture of God and His relationship to the believer that he will use throughout. What do you think are the key themes that Peter wishes to address in this chapter?

Open answer – examples include:, salvation, how to live as sojourners and foreigners in this world, faith, the word of God, trials/persecution

3. Now do a rapid reading of the rest of 1 Peter to see which themes indeed are most important throughout his book. You may try to arrange them in order of importance.

Open answer

4. To assist the Bible student in verifying the context issues of a passage, the notes provided in a study Bible can be very helpful. Read the introduction to 1 Peter in the appendix (section I).

a. Record what the writer of those notes indicated as the major themes of 1 Peter.

*Persecution, salvation, how to live the Christian life in light of persecution (submission) According to Holman Bible Dictionary (in appendix of English course version)
The central theme of book: "The Believer is to stand in God's true grace."; sub-themes include: holiness, Christian living, suffering, hope of future kingdom*

b. How do his conclusions differ from your own?

Open answer

c. Now adjust your list of themes. Note any themes you may have missed, new insights or questions you would like to verify or explore further.

i. Important themes of 1 Peter

Open answer

ii. Now reread 1 Peter 1:1-5 and review your interpretative conclusion at the end of lesson 3. Are there any insights, themes or questions you need to explore further to better understand and interpret 1 Peter 1:1-5?

Open answerEx. –Holiness and suffering are key themes of Peter's letter. They are not mentioned in v1-5, and only briefly presented in chapter 1, but the motivation for enduring hardship in this life is firmly established: the future hope of salvation as a reward.

- The importance of terms Peter uses to address the believers in his address become more vivid and significant. He calls them sojourners/foreigners and exiles. This already prepares them to keep in mind their future inheritance—another key term to study-- and not seek temporary relief or gain in this present world. It could be useful to explore these terms as they would be understood by the readers with a biblical background.

-With persecution being such a major theme, it would be important to explore 1) God's protection of the believer and 2) the historical context of the believers in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) at the time. What kind of persecution were they facing or about to face? The infamous Roman emperor Nero is mentioned in the introduction to 1 Peter for example.

(Note that the historical context of persecution will be examined in more detail in lesson 8.

5. In Peter's address (ch1:1-2), we see some geographical/historical and cultural elements that could help us better understand who the recipients were and the situation they were facing. In our observation and previous interpretation and verification work, we discovered that the recipients were believers and that they were facing intense persecution. You may have observed in the introduction to 1 Peter in the study Bible or Bible dictionary that 1 Peter was likely written just before or during the persecution of the Emperor Nero in 62-64 AD). We will explore the nature of that horrible persecution further in lesson 8.

a. Two important terms Peter uses to describe his recipients are sojourners (foreigners) and exiles (v1). What do these terms mean? Give a definition of each.

i. Sojourner:

A traveler staying temporarily or passing through a foreign land.

ii. Exile:

Someone who is forcibly sent out of his/her homeland and unable to return due to banishment or threat of harm.

b. The term 'exiles' would be particularly meaningful (historically/culturally) to Jewish believers and to those who knew the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). It was important to dwell at home in one's family inheritance allotted by God and participate in the religious life of the community.

i. Read 2 Chronicles 36:15 and then identify the exiles and describe the events referred to.

The king of Babylon (Neb) attacked and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and exiled to Babylon those who survived the massacre. (70 years later King Cyrus of Persia decreed that they could return.)

ii. Now read Jeremiah 29:1-14 and summarize how Jeremiah counsels them to live as exiles.

He said to settle in the land, to raise up families, to participate in the local communities, to seek one's city's prosperity and to pray for God's blessing on their neighbors. He encouraged them to be ready to return to their homeland when God enables them to do so (after 70 years).

Note that most exiled Jewish families never returned to settle in the Promised Land. They gathered in small communities and worshiped in synagogues in Gentile cities, making occasional pilgrimages on holiday feasts to their ancestral and cultural homeland in Jerusalem.

c. Now read Heb 11:8-10 and note what the writer says about Abraham and his descendants being sojourners and foreigners.

Abraham became a sojourner the rest of his life on earth in order to receive the inheritance God promised him. He travelled to the promised land and then when he arrived he lived like a sojourner there, in tents. He realized that he would receive his true inheritance and eternal dwelling in the life to come.

d. What would Peter communicate to his readers about their identity and the mindset they needed to adopt in calling them sojourners and exiles?

They were scattered as minority communities of faith in Gentile lands. They also belonged to God their king and they awaited their inheritance and homeland which were still unseen. Meanwhile they had to interact with and bless the peoples and cities where they lived, and be ready to suffer hardship and deprivation because of their unique citizenship and values.

e. If you'd like to **Go deeper**, do this section (e i&ii); otherwise go to section 'f'. One other term which is rich in meaning in Hebrew scriptural culture is 'sprinkled' (also translated 'purified' or 'cleansed' in ch1:2).

i. Read Leviticus 16:15-19 and Hebrews 9:16-22 and explain the significance of that ritual act.

The priest in the sanctuary would take the blood of a sacrificed animal and sprinkle it on people or sacred objects in order to cleanse or purify them from sin and make them acceptable to God. This testified to the symbolic death of the one making the covenant as the innocent animal took his/her place in substitution, making the one sacrificing to be considered guilt-free..

ii. Now read Hebrews 9:11-15 and explain the meaning of the expression 'by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus-Christ.'

Jesus fulfilled in reality—in the heavenly tabernacle—what the blood of goats and bulls only symbolized and foreshadowed, that through Christ's death on the cross full and final payment was made for the believer's sin, as if he/she had been sprinkled with Christ's blood. He died as a ransom to guarantee an eternal inheritance to all who trust in God's salvation both before and after Jesus' death on the cross.

f. What would the use of these terms tell us, or confirm what we already observed, about the people Peter addresses?

His audience is clearly believers in Christ who are set apart from the people of this world. Many of them would be believers from Jewish background and/or Gentile believers with a good background in the Old Testament Scriptures. Peter seems to be laying a good foundation that will enable them to stand firm against difficult trials.

6. As far as 1 Peter 1:3-5 is concerned, the geographical, historical and cultural elements are minimal or non-existent in the passage. However, Peter uses a great number of theological terms and ideas to communicate his message. You've already done the work of defining these terms and proposing an interpretation of what they mean. Now you need to look for other passages of Scripture which confirm and support your conclusions.

1. Did you discover these two elements in your interpretation of 1 Peter 1:3-5: a "future inheritance" and "God's protection"ⁱ? Whether or not the words you have used to describe these elements are the same or if you discovered other things, let's take the next step and validate your interpretation of these ideas. To do so, you need to identify other passages that speak of these same things. If possible, you want to find passages that are as "close"ⁱⁱ to these as possible, understanding that the "closer" they are to the passage you are studying, the more likely they are to share common meaning and reinforce your interpretation. According to the interpretation principle number 8, words that are used in texts that are close in proximity likely share the same meaning. Therefore, you can consolidate your interpretation by locating them.

a. First look for other biblical passages which talk about our inheritance as the goal of our salvation. Using a Bible concordance to find New Testament verses that use the term “inheritance”, the following passages were selected for you. Read each passage and summarize what each says concerning our inheritance.

i. Ephesians 1: 7--14, 18

Our inheritance is in Christ. God purposed to gather everything together in Him. We saints (the Church) are Christ's glory and inheritance, and we benefit from and share in that inheritance as members of the family. The Holy Spirit is the pledge or guarantee of our inheritance. Our inheritance is full of the riches of the glory of Christ.

ii. The blessing of forgiveness of sins is mentioned in v7 as well .Acts 26:15-18

*The inheritance that God promises to His people is equally available to Jew and Gentile alike. It is described as a place among those who are sanctified
The blessing of forgiveness of sins is mentioned alongside.*

iii. Hebrews 9:15

*Our inheritance was purchased by the death of Christ for all eternity.
The ransom Christ paid also sets the believer free from sin*

b. What do these verses add to your understanding of your inheritance?

Open answer – example: Our inheritance was purchased by Christ along with forgiveness of sins. It is equally available to Jew and Gentile alike through their faith in Christ. It is full of the riches of the glory of Christ. We will be part of Christ's own inheritance. We will share in His glorious nature and enjoy communion with all the redeemed saints.. Tthe Holy Spirit is the pledge/evidence that an inheritance is being kept for us.

c. The other important theme that you probably noted in 1 Peter 1:3-5 was God's preservation or protection. Using the Bible Concordance in the appendix and your Bible, identify other passages that speak of God's protection or preservation of His people from those things that would keep them from receiving their inheritance. List the verse and summarize briefly what it says. Use the words, “protection”, “protect”, “guard”, “preserve”, and “deliver” to find the verses. *Two examples are given.* Find three more.

i. 1 Thess 5:23, 24 – *God will work to preserve my soul, body and spirit until the return of Christ.*

ii. 2 Timothy 4:18 – *The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed and bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom.*

Phil 4.7— And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Jude 24 – God is able to keep me from stumbling and to make me stand in the presence of His glory blameless and with great joy.

Psalms 121: 5-8 – The Lord will guard and protect me from all (ultimate) evil and will keep (guard/protect) my soul.

Other verses may also be accepted so long as they speak of protecting the believers' inheritance.

d. What do these verses add to your understanding of God's protection/preservation so that you can receive your inheritance?

Open answer – example: God is actively engaged to protect, guard, preserve and deliver me from evil so that I receive the inheritance that He has purchased and is preparing for me in heaven. I am encouraged to rest in His blameless righteousness, faithfulness and power to preserve me. This confidence will produce peace and joy in my life on earth.

*If you'd like to **Go deeper**, read this section and do questions 7 & 8; otherwise read the following paragraph and then go directly to question 9.*

Let us now verify our interpretation through the **literary context**. We have recognized 1 Peter 1:1-2 to be the address introducing the writer and the recipients, and v3-5 as the opening to the first major section or chapter of his letter ch 1:3-25. We observed that the closing section of the chapter (v23-25) had a similar theme and message as our opening verses of study (3-5). This is a common ancient technique used by many Biblical writers of organizing and presenting a literary unit (paragraph or chapter). Often the connecting and supporting ideas in between are presented in parallel pairs in inverted order, as we observe in the following outline:

1) Our New Birth in light of a living and imperishable hope	1.3-4
2) A glorious <u>faith</u> , producing joy and love in light of future salvation	1.5-9
3) <u>Salvation</u> in Christ long expected but now <u>revealed</u> for you	1.10-12
4) A wise and pure conduct as children born of God	1.13-17
3a) <u>Redemption</u> by the precious blood of Christ is <u>revealed</u> in these last days for you	1.18-20
2a) Purifying <u>faith</u> in God and love for the brothers	1.21-22
1a) Our New Birth by the living and permanent Word of God	1.23-25

7. We already noted how supporting sections 2 and 2a have helped further explain the key theme word 'faith'. Now read sections 3 and 3a and write what ideas presented here contribute to understanding our opening (and closing) theme 1.

Believers are encouraged to realize what a great privilege we have to understand the wonderful, costly salvation God has now provided and revealed to us—we see it more clearly than the prophets before.

The ancient literary structure presented above is commonly referred to as 'chiastic' as the parallel themes are most often presented in inverted order, resembling the Greek letter Chi (X).

8. Theme 4 (v13-17) is especially significant as the central theme of the section. It is closely tied to the outer themes (1 & 1a) and crucial to the point Peter is trying to make. Read these verses and summarize Peter's message.

Because of our identity as children of God, and the great inheritance He has bought and kept for us, we need to live wisely and with purity to represent and glorify our Father.

9. A final step in the process of validation is to look at what a commentary says about the passage you are studying.

There are many commentaries available and over the centuries not all commentators agree on the interpretation of a given passage. In a good commentary, the author will usually give the point of view of the most commonly held interpretations, even if they differ from his, and he will explain why he doesn't agree with some of the more obscure interpretations. It is often difficult for a beginner to decide which is the most accurate commentary. We would say that **the most commonly held interpretations are the most accurate even if there are slight differences**. We have chosen for you a widely held interpretation of 1 Peter 1:3-5.

a. Read the commentary provided on 1 Peter 1:3-5 in the appendix (section II). Summarize what the commentator says about these verses below.

This passage is the theological foundation to prepare the believers to face persecution, as it shows that the future inheritance produces in us a living hope. This hope looks forward to the future, indestructible inheritance which is being prepared and preserved in heaven for us who are preserved by God through our faith in Him.

b. What does the commentary say that is a new insight or is different from your own interpretation of 1 Peter 1:3-5?

Open answer:

It is very much in agreement with our interpretation. He entitles this passage 'the future inheritance'.

Some new insights from key Greek words used:

-“has given . . . new birth” translate anagennessas, from the verb “beget again” or “cause to be born again.” It is used only twice in the New Testament, both times in this chapter (1 Peter 1:3, 23). Peter may have been recalling Jesus interview with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21).

-Kleronomion This is the word used by the Septuagint translators of the Old Testament to refer to the inheritance God gave His people in the promised land.

-“Shielded” (phrouroumenous) is a military term, used to refer to a garrison within a city (Phil. 4:7 uses the same Gr. word).

Conclusion

If your interpretation differs greatly from that of the commentary, it may nevertheless coincide with what other commentators say which we haven’t been able to provide for you. However, if you have followed the instructions on observation and interpretation learned in lessons 1-4, then you should have a good result. As a final check of your interpretation, look at all that you have learned through the interpretation and validation exercises to this point and rewrite your interpretation summary to reflect your final conclusions.

10. Write your “final” interpretation summary of 1 Peter 1:3-5 below:

Open answer – example:

God our Father is to be praised because He has caused us according to His great mercy through Christ’s sacrifice to be born again into His family/Kingdom. So we have a living and sure hope because of the resurrection of Jesus. This salvation of ours has as its objective an inheritance which is indestructible and reserved in Heaven for us. Finally, as a result of our faith we put ourselves in the place of Divine protection as we trust in God until our salvation is revealed.

11. Note down some key insights you have gained in your understanding of this passage through the exercises in this lesson to validate your summary. Note also the resource(s) that helped you find it (Bible dictionary/Study Bible, Bible commentary, Bible concordance, content in lesson text, etc.).

New insights from validation study of 1 Peter 1:3-5	Bible study resource used

Teacher Notes:

-Note for Conclusion question 1 above: While the summary may not change significantly from the previous time, the student should be able to understand and explain with much more precision, richness and fullness the importance of each word or phrase used. You may ask students to identify key words in the summary and have them explain what they mean.

-Note for question 2: This would be a good time to discuss the Bible study resources the students use in their personal study and how they may access ones they do not yet have available.

Lesson 5: Application

Introduction

Once the work of observation and interpretation is completed you can move on to determining how the biblical text applies to your life. At the core of this exercise is the question, “What does this text mean to me?” Unlike the work of interpretation, which should lead you to the one meaning of what the writer meant to say when he wrote it to his original readers, application of a given text may have multiple possibilities. A general principle to keep in mind is this: **there is usually only one interpretation, but there are several ways of applying it.**

Principle 9 : One interpretation, several applications

Usually, there is only one interpretation for a biblical text but several ways to apply the message.

You may remind students of the previous principles by mentioning several that support the idea of only one interpretation, such as principle number 7. However, there can be many ways to put into application today the message that was originally addressed to the first recipients.

Exercises

As you saw in lesson 1, determining appropriate application of a given text is helped by asking the 11 application questions. No one biblical text will provide an answer to all of these questions, but you can ask as many of them as “fit” the text in order to identify the possibilities. For the sake of review, these questions are:

1. Is there an example for me to follow? (Or a bad example to avoid following?)
2. Is there a sin for me to avoid?
3. Is there a promise for me to claim?
4. Is there a prayer for me to pray?
5. Is there a command for me to obey?
6. Is there a condition for me to meet?
7. Is there a verse for me to memorize?
8. Is there an error (doctrinal/theological) for me to avoid?
9. Is there a challenge for me to face?
10. Is there something that helps me cope with a situation that I am going through?
11. Is there anything that I need to share and pass on to others a) in my family, b) in my church fellowship, c) in my relationships or contacts with unbelievers?

When it comes to defining application from a passage that includes more than one thought or idea, it may be necessary to break the interpretation of the passage up into its basic parts and assign an application to each one. In that way, nothing of the passage is missed.

Do you know the story of King David and Bathsheba? There is adultery, murder and cover-up. We see the bad side of King David. However, when confronted by Nathan the prophet, David sees his sin and repents. Despite his confession, the child born to Bathsheba dies. This story has lots to say about sin and repentance, lying, etc. Because this story is so full of events, people and ideas, we need to break up the story and make application of each part. That way we will not miss any part of the passage.

1. From the interpretive summaries of four texts given below, write an application of each one that could be applied to your life. Use the 11 application questions to help guide your thinking. *A model answer is outlined in the first question, to be completed.*

a. Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5

Interpretive Summary: Failure to fulfill one's duties opens the doors to temptation.

Proposed application: (an example to follow or not follow): *To avoid temptation, I should stay faithful to the roles and responsibilities that God has given me.*

The responsibilities I need to be especially mindful of are:

-Make sure I spend adequate time with the Lord in Bible study and prayer each day.

-Fulfill my commitments to:

*My family, my Bible study group, my employer/clients, my volunteer organization, etc.
(You may want to list your commitments to each.)*

-(Other responsibilities):

I will pray over this list each week and ask God to show me what I need to do to fulfill each responsibility or commitment.

I will share this list with my brother or sister in Christ _____ (fill in name) and ask to meet regularly to review it.

b. Read 2 Samuel 11:6-27

Interpretive Summary: Unconfessed sin produces more sin.

Proposed application: (Make sure your application is specific and verifiable.)

Open answer – example: (an example to follow or not to follow): To stop the multiplication of sin in my life, I ask God now and will do so each day to examine my heart to reveal hidden sin and then confess my sin to God and to whomever I have hurt as soon as possible.

c. Read 2 Samuel 12:1- 6

Interpretive Summary: Confrontation by a faithful friend can lead to repentance.

Proposed application:

Open answer – example: (an example to follow): After each Bible study and prayer time, I will ask God to show me 1) what I need to apply in my own life first and then 2) for whom I need to pray this or with whom I need to share this. When I am aware of a brother or sister's sin, I will help him/her by praying for him/her and asking the Lord to show me when I should go and in love confront him/her. My goal will be to lead him/her to repentance and back into fellowship with God.

d. Read 2 Samuel 12:7-14

Interpretive Summary: Though God forgives a repentant heart, the consequences of sin remain.

Proposed application: (Remember, make each application specific and verifiable.)

Open answer – example: (a challenge to face):

I will patiently and thankfully endure the consequences of my previous sins:

<i>Sin</i>	<i>Consequence</i>	<i>My attitude</i>
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To limit the negative effects of sin in my life, I will seek to avoid sin.

The sins I am most tempted to do are: _____ My plan to avoid committing this sin is:

2. Look again at your summary interpretation of 1 Peter 1:3-5. Take some time to pray over these verses, asking the Lord to help you apply them to your life. Write out three different personal applications of this passage, choosing a different application question each time from the list above. In your response, state the application question that you wish to respond to and then state your application. The first question has been chosen for you.

a. Application question #3: A promise for me to claim

Open answer – example:

-Each time I pray, I will verbally thank God for the salvation that He has purchased for me by the death of Jesus.

-I will consider myself to be a sojourner and fix my mind on my inheritance which is reserved for me and not allow difficulties or hardships in this world to deprive me of my joy and hope.

b. Application question #__ : (Choose any one of the ten remaining)

Open answer :

Example : A condition for me to meet

I resolve to maintain my faith in Christ so that I can benefit fully from God's protection.

c. Application question #__ :

Open answer

Note: You can encourage each study group member to memorize 1 verse or all 3 verses to help them fix on and rejoice in their great inheritance. Tell them a little extra work may be all they need since they have been studying them so intensely until now.

3. The last and most important step of applying Scripture to our lives is DOING it. To help you do so, the following three steps are encouraged.

- a. **First, decide to change.** Make up your mind that when you conclude something from Scripture that you should do, that you will indeed do it.

Take a moment right now to ask God to help you make the change from one of the applications that you have noted from your study of 1 Peter 1:3-5.

- b. **Second, make a plan to implement this application.** If your application involves prayer, make a plan to modify your current prayer habits to include his new application. If your application involves forgiving or seeking forgiveness from someone, make a plan to go and see the person and say and do what is necessary so that forgiveness is granted/given. Your plan should include not only what you will do but also when you will do it. It should be specific and verifiable.
- c. **Third, involve the help of a faithful Christian friend to help keep you accountable and pray for you.**

Choose one of the applications that you identified from 1 Peter 1:3-5 and complete the table below. A first application has been provided as a model. :

Application	Plan (I will do what, when)	My faithful friend
<i>I will keep my attention fixed on my inheritance by memorizing these 3 verses for regular meditation and worshipful prayer.</i>	<i>I will write the verses on a card or cell phone (today) which I will review morning and evening as I pray, and carry in my pocket to review while commuting each day until all are memorized.</i>	<i>I will tell my wife/husband (or prayer partner) of my plan and ask him/her to have me recite them when we meet to pray.</i>
<i>Open answer Example. I want to encourage my brother _____ who is discouraged because of opposition with the hope of his inheritance.</i>	<i>Open answer Example: I will send him a text message of these verses today and ask to talk or meet to share the message and pray with him this week.</i>	<i>Open answer Example: I will send the message directly to him. Or, I will tell my prayer partner to pray with me first about this brother and then to ask me about it a week from now.</i>

Conclusion

Once you have defined appropriate applications that relate to the interpretation of the text you are studying you have successfully completed your study of the passage. Remember though, the point of studying the Bible is not just to learn more about the Bible, but to be transformed. As the Apostle Paul wrote to his young friend Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:5, *“But the goal of our instruction (or learning) is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”*

Lesson 6: Study a book of the Bible

1 Peter

Introduction

This lesson is concerned with the study of a book of the Bible. To begin, you must first acquire a panoramic view of the writer's message as if you were looking at it through a telescope or from the top of a skyscraper. The idea is to better understand the overall message, structure and contents of the book in question. A basic approach to studying a book of the Bible is summarized below:

1. Reread the book of the Bible without stopping to note the details.
2. Take notes on the literary and theological context and contents of the book.
3. Study the historical context of the book.
4. Make a schematic table (a plan of the contents) of the book.
5. Summarize the message of the book as it was intended for its original readers.
6. Determine a personal application from the contents of the book.

A schematic table (see point 4, above) of a book of the Bible is nothing more than a collection of rows and columns of information, unique to each book of the Bible, which show the important themes, facts, events, or people that the writer used to communicate the unique message of the book. Such a table provides a one-page summary of the elements that make up the message of the book of the Bible.

The key to making a schematic table is good observation. Observation, as you have learned, is the art of asking, "What do I see?" In lesson 1 a long list of typical questions was provided to help you get an idea of what kinds of questions should be asked during observation. As was noted however, because the Bible is made up of different types of literature, not all questions apply to every passage of the Bible. In the case of 1 Peter, which is an epistle (a letter) written from an apostle to a group of believing friends, the following questions are appropriate.

- Who is speaking?
- To whom is the writer speaking?
- What is going to happen?
- When is it going to happen?
- What contextual or historical references need to be understood?
- Is the writer emphasizing future events or past ones? How can you tell?
- What terms seem to be important or difficult to understand?
- How does the verse (or verses) you are studying fit with what you know about the book in question?
- What is emphasized, repeated or true to life?
- What things are related, similar or different?
- What promises to depend on, commands to obey, or prayers to pray are given?
- What does the verse/passage say about God?
- What questions does this verse/passage raise that you need to answer?
- Can I say in one sentence what the major theme is?

Exercises

When making a schematic table of a book, instead of looking into the details of a given verse, we are instead looking for patterns, repeated phrases or events, beginnings and endings, etc. In short we are trying to uncover the structure that the writer used to organize his thoughts in order to communicate his message.

1. Read 1 Peter entirely two times. As you read, write down the verse references where you notice a change in topic. In a book like 1 Peter which is a letter that deals with theological ideas and pastoral counsel, recognize that the breaks between sections will be indicated by a change in topic instead of a change in scene or an event.

Open answer: See examples of section divisions below :

Model A	Model B (chiastic inverted parallel*)
1:1-2	1 :1-2
1:3-12	1 :3-25
1:13-2:12	2 :1-12
2:13-3:12	2 :11-3 :9
3:13-4:19	3 :8-4 :19
5:1-5	5 :1-11
5:6-14	5 :12-14

**See Lesson 4 Going Deeper section after question 6 and teacher's note after question 7.*

2. Once you have listed the verse references that define the topic sections of the book, decide upon and write down a title for each section. A sample list is provided below. Your own list of topic sections from the previous exercise may differ. You may compare the two lists, determine the section breaks you will adopt and then write a theme title for each section.

1:1-2	<i>Welcome</i>
1:3-12	<i>How great a salvation</i>
1:13-2:12	<i>Live holy lives</i>
2:13-3:12	<i>Learn to submit with joy</i>
3:13-4:19	<i>Learn to suffer with hope</i>
5:1-5	<i>Instructions to church leaders</i>
5:6-14	<i>Conclusion</i>

3. Draw a schematic table of 1 Peter, by dividing the box below (vertically to show the topic sections) into the major sections of the book that you identified above. Make sure to include the verses that mark the beginning and ending of each section. *The first and last sections and verses have been given as an example.*

1 Peter

Title:						
Introduction	<i>How great a salvation</i>	<i>Live holy lives</i>	<i>Learn to submit with joy</i>	<i>Learn to suffer with hope</i>	<i>Instructions to church leaders</i>	Conclusion
1:1-1:2	1:3 -1:12	1:13-2:12	2:13-3:12	3:13-4:19	5:1-5:5	5:6-5:14 (or 5:12-14)

Note: the above exercise uses sections from Model A above. Students are to follow their own section divisions from question 2 above. To consult the Model B section titles, see the chart in the appendix at the end of the course.

4. For each topic section, the next step is to identify the major elements of that topic section that Peter talks about to develop this part of his message. Which verse references did you decide upon for the first section after the introduction in the table above and what title did you give to this section?

1:3–12 : How great a salvation

It doesn't matter if you didn't mention exactly the same ones as others. But perhaps you agree with us when we say that chapter 2:13 – 3:12 of 1 Peter is one of the major sections in the book. The main theme of this section is submission. Read the section twice through and identify the three major examples that Peter uses here to make his point about submission. *The first set of verses and example are given below.*

Verse	Example
a) 2:13-17	<i>submission to the government</i>
b) 2: 18-25	<i>submission to employers (and others in authority over you)</i>
c) 3:1-7	<i>submission in marriage</i>
d) 3.8-12	<i>Submission to brothers in Christ</i>

5. Write the information from your study of chapter 2:13-3:12 in question 4 into the third column of the schematic table of 1 Peter below in the space provided for "Major Elements". Be careful to summarize each section in as few words as possible. When you have

completed the summary of each major element in the section, write a title which identifies the main theme of that section. The title of the first section is given as an example.

Major Section titles

1 Peter

Title: <i>How great a salvation</i>	Title: <i>Live holy lives</i>	Title: <i>Learn to submit with joy</i>	Title: <i>Learn to suffer with hope</i>
Major elements: <i>We have a living hope of an eternal inheritance (3-5). Trials prove our faith and lead us to our ultimate salvation (6-9). Even the prophets marvelled at this salvation (10-12).</i>	Major elements: <i>Be holy because you were bought with a price (13-21). Love one another (22-25). Desire God's Word (3:1-3). Behave in such a way to show that you are a spiritual dwelling of God (4:12).</i>	Major elements: <i>Submit to the government to silence foolish men (13-17). Submit to (unjust) employers to find favour with God (18-25.) Submit in marriage so that your spiritual life is not hindered (3:1-7). Submit your desires to the good of others in order to inherit a blessing (8-12)</i>	Major elements: <i>Suffering for doing the right things puts to shame those who hate you (13-17). Christ is our example of one who suffered for doing the right things (18-22). Do not let the fear of suffering tempt you to live like the World (4:1-6). Serve each other in the face of suffering (7-11). Suffering for the right things is honourable, suffering for the wrong things is not (12-19).</i>
1:3-1:12	1:13-2:12	2:13-3:12	3:13-4:19

6. Repeat the exercise of question 4 above for each remaining section of 1 Peter and record your summaries of the major elements of each section in the schematic table above as you did for the section on submission from 1 Peter 2:13 - 3:12. The information for sections 1:3 – 1:12 and 3:13 – 4:19 is given as an example, so that leaves 1:13-2:12 (column 2) to do now.

7. Now take a look over all that you have included in the chart. Write a phrase that summarizes the overall message of the book. Answer the question, “what did the writer want to say to his readers when he wrote this book?”

Open answer – example: Because of the great salvation that God has purchased for you, it is possible to lead holy lives that are marked by submission with joy and suffering with hope.

8. Making use of the suggested application questions from lesson 1, write a personal application applying the overall message of 1 Peter to your life. To do so,

a. First identify which application questions “fit” with the message of 1 Peter. Write those questions which you think “fit” below (not more than 3).

Application Question: Open answer – example: Is there a command for me to obey?

Application Question: Open answer – example: Is there a promise for me to claim?

Application Question: Open answer – example: Is there a condition for me to meet?

b. Choosing 1 of these application questions, write out a personal application for you.

Open answer – example: I claim the promise of 1 Peter 5:10 that says that after I have suffered for a little while, God Himself will perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish me. With this in mind I will continue to serve Christ wherever and however He asks me to.

c. As you learned in lesson 5, note below your plan to put this application into practice (be sure to note “what” you will do, when you will do it, and who will help you to remember to do it).

What I will do... Open answer – example: I claim the promise of 1 Peter 5:10 and resign my heart to continue to serve Him wherever and however He asks me to.

When I will do it... Open answer – example: I will pray this claim back to God, when I pray daily.

Who will help me remember to do it...

Open answer – example: My wife, my study group...

9. Finally, record the results of your study in the final version of your schematic table of 1 Peter below.

1 Peter

Overall Message: Because of the great salvation that God has purchased for you it is possible to lead holy lives that are marked by submission with joy and suffering with hope.

Key Verse(s)ⁱⁱⁱ : 1 Peter 1:3-5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation to be revealed in the last time."

Personal Application:

Open answer – example: I claim the promise of 1 Peter 5:10 that says that after I have suffered for a little while, God Himself will perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish me. With this in mind I will continue to see to serve Christ wherever and however He asks me to.

Titles:					
Introduction	How great a salvation	Live holy lives	Learn to submit with joy	Learn to suffer with hope	Instructions to church leaders
<p><i>From Peter the apostle to the saints scattered (v.1) Chosen by the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ (v.2).</i></p>	<p><i>Major elements: We have a living hope of an eternal inheritance (3-5). Trials prove our faith and lead us to our ultimate salvation (6-9). Even the prophets marvelled at this salvation (10-12).</i></p>	<p><i>Major elements: Be holy because you were bought with a price (13-21). Love one another (22-25). Desire God's Word (3:1-3). Behave in such a way to show that you are a spiritual dwelling of God (4:12).</i></p>	<p><i>Major elements: Submit to the government to silence foolish men (13-17). Submit to (unjust) employers to find favour with God (18-25). Submit in marriage so that your spiritual life is not hindered (3:1-7). Submit your desires to the good of others in order to inherit a blessing (8-12).</i></p>	<p><i>Major elements: Suffering for doing the right things puts to shame those who hate you (13-17). Christ is our example of one who suffered for doing the right things (18-22). Do not let the fear of suffering tempt you to live like the World (4:1-6). Serve each other in the face of suffering (7-11). Suffering for the right things is honourable, suffering for the wrong things is not (vvs. 12-19)</i></p>	<p><i>Shepherd the flock willingly with eagerness, as examples to them in order to receive a reward (5:1-4). Clothe yourselves with humility (5).</i></p>
1:1-1:2	1:3 -1:12	1:13-2:12	2:13-3:12	3:13-4:19	5:1-5:5

Conclusion: A schematic table brings together on one page, the key themes, people, and events that the writer used to communicate his message. The schematic table of 1 Peter makes clear that Peter was concerned for his persecuted brothers and sisters. By recalling and reviewing the greatness and eternal aspects of their salvation, Peter sought to encourage them despite their experience of submission and suffering.

Lesson 7: Study of a chapter from 1 Peter

Introduction

Once you have completed a schematic table of the book of the Bible that you are studying – which serves as an overview of the contents and message of the book – the next step is to study in detail the chapters of the book. To do so, you want first to try to get an overview of the contents and structure of the chapter. Then you want to look in more detail at each theme, noting the emphasis the writer places on each. Lastly, you want to identify a personal application of this portion of Scripture for your personal life.

For this lesson, you will study 1 Peter chapter 4.

A. Observation

1. Beginning with observation, seek to answer the question, “What do I see?” From the list of typical observation questions that you first used in lesson 6 which refer to an epistle (a letter), note below your observations of 1 Peter 4.

Note to the leader: Below is a large selection of observed material. Not all of this needs to be discovered or processed by the student to get an accurate understanding of the text.

Open answer – examples include:

- *Peter continues his teaching to his readers concerning suffering (Section 3:13-4:19).*
- *He is writing to Christians who are suffering for their faith (chapter 1:6-7; 2:18-21; 3:13-17).*
- *Peter is saying that Christ has suffered physically and Christians can learn from Him (4:1).*
- *Peter says that Christians should adopt the same purpose as that of Christ (v. 1).*
Q. *What is the “purpose” of Christ that we should adopt?*
- *Peter says that we should live our days for the will of God and no longer for the lusts of men (v.2).*
Q. *What is the “will of God”?*
- *Peter says that we have had enough time to carry out our lustful desires (v. 3).*
- *Peter says that those who persist in this way of life will answer to God for it (v. 5).*
- *Peter says that this is why the Gospel was preached so that these men and women could be made alive to God (and cease living according to their lusts) (v. 6).*
- *Peter says that because the “end of all things is at hand” that we should be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer (v. 7).*
Q. *What does he mean by “the end of all things is at hand”?*
Q. *What does he mean by being of “sound judgment” and of “sober spirit”?*
Q. *How would this help my prayer life?*
- *Peter commands us to be fervent in love for one another because love covers a multitude of sins. (v. 8).*
Q. *How does love “cover a multitude of sins”?*
Q. *How am I supposed to love my brother by confronting him if love “covers” sins?*
- *Peter commands that we be hospitable to each other without complaint (v. 9).*

- Peter commands that all should use their gifts for serving each other as a good steward of what we have received from God (v. 10).

Q. What is my gift(s) that God has given me?

- Peter commands that those who speak do so as if speaking the words of God (v. 11a).

Q. Does “speak” mean speak publicly as in preaching and teaching?

Q. What does it mean to speak the “utterances of God”?

- Peter commands that those who serve do so with the strength that God supplies (v. 11b).

Q. What is the strength that God supplies?

- Peter notes that we speak and serve in this way so that God gets all the glory. (11).

- Peter encourages us to not consider suffering to be something unusual (v. 12).

- Peter says that to the extent that we suffer, we should also rejoice so that “at the exultation of His glory” we will also rejoice with exultation (v. 13).

Q. What does “the exultation of His glory” refer to?

- Peter says that if we are reviled because of our faith in Christ we are blessed because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on us (v. 14).

- Peter warns us not to suffer because of unrighteousness (i.e. murder, stealing, etc.) (v. 15).

- Peter says that if we suffer because we are a Christian, that we should not be ashamed, but rather glorify God (v. 16).

- Peter says that it is time for judgment to begin with God’s people and therefore not to worry because if it begins with us, it will certainly be more severe for those who “do not obey the Gospel of God (v. 17).

Q. How does this comment about judgment fit with the discussion of suffering and persecution?

- Peter asks a rhetorical question to underline his conviction that if the righteous are with difficulty saved, what will happen to the unrighteousness (v. 18).

Q. Again, what does this have to do with suffering and persecution?

- Peter exhorts those of us who suffer according to the will of God to entrust our souls to Him to do what is right (v. 19).

Q. What does it mean to “entrust my soul to Him”?

2. In verses 7-11, Peter gives a number of commands. List them below:

- a. v. 7 - *be of sound judgment and of sober spirit for the purpose of prayer*
- b. v. 8 - *keep fervent in our love for one another*
- c. v. 9 - *be hospitable to one another without complaint*
- d. v. 10- *employ my gift(s) in serving one another*
- e. v. 11a - *speak as if from God (watching your language)*
- f. v. 11b - *serve (others) with God's strength/do everything for the Lord*

3. The exercise of observation will often raise questions that need to be answered as part of your work to interpret the passage. Remembering that Peter is writing these commands in a chapter that is dealing with suffering, why do you think that Peter included these commands here. Or, in other words, what does behaving well have to do with suffering?

Open answer – example: Peter is trying to help his readers understand that though suffering is inevitable in the Christian life, there is a difference between suffering BECAUSE they are Christians and living lives for God in His strength and suffering BECAUSE they are doing the wrong things. Peter states clearly that suffering because they are doing the right things is honourable, whereas suffering for doing the “wrong” things is not. These commands then are God’s words through Peter to tell the believers how they should live so that despite the persecution that will come because of this behaviour, they will be sure to be pleasing God.

4. In this chapter Peter compares and contrasts suffering for “good” reasons with suffering for “bad” reasons.

a. What are the good reasons that Peter refers to in this chapter?

*for not doing the (former) things = “the desires of the Gentiles” (v. 3-4)
“for the name of Christ” – being associated with Christ (v. 14)
for being a Christian (v. 16)
according to the will of God (because they are doing the will of God) (v. 19)*

b. What are the “bad” reasons that Peter refers to in this chapter?

*because of committing (v.15)
murder
theft
evil
because of being a “troublesome meddler” (v. 15)*

5. List here the questions you need to answer and other things you discovered in your work of observation of the passage.

Open answer

B. Interpretation

Once you have finished observing the chapter, the next step is to **determine an interpretation of the writer's message as he intended it for his original readers**. In this step you want to try to answer the questions you raised during the observation phase of your study and also find other Scripture to support your interpretive conclusions.

1. What difficult words or concepts does Peter use in this chapter?

Open answer – examples include:

What is the "purpose" of Christ that we should adopt? (v.1)

What is the relationship between suffering and victory over sin?

What is the "will of God" that we should live for? (v. 2)

Who are the dead who heard the gospel preached? (v.6)

What does he mean by "the end of all things is at hand"? (v.7)

What does he mean by being of "sound judgment" and of "sober spirit"? (v.7)

How does love "cover a multitude of sins"? (v. 8)

Does "speak" mean speak publicly as in preaching and teaching? (v. 11a)

What does it mean to speak the "utterances of God"? (v. 11a)

What does "the exultation of His glory" refer to? (v. 13)

What does it mean to "entrust my soul to Him"? (v. 19)

2. Using the dictionary provided at the end of this lesson, look up the word, "hospitality" from 4:9.

a. What is the meaning of this word?

The action of welcoming someone (to your home...often with the intent to provide food, shelter, companionship and entertainment)

b. Let's look at Peter's command to, "be hospitable to one another, without complaint" (4:9).

i. What kinds of things would make hospitality a reason to complain?

Open answer – examples include:

If it was expected too often or if it involved too much work (i.e. often citizens were obliged to “offer hospitality” to national armies in wartime).

If the recipients of my hospitality were critical, complaining or abusive of my family, myself or my things.

If there was not reciprocity between someone who always came “looking” for hospitality but who never sought to return the gift (who nevertheless had the means to do so). (Feelings of being exploited)

If you don’t know how to say “no” by shame of what others will think of you.

ii. How does Peter’s command to be hospitable fit in the context of suffering?

Hospitality among believers is a way to comfort and share with persecuted brothers/sisters in need. Their persecution may deprive them of their home or of the means to provide for themselves... hospitality is then an expression of the solidarity of the body of Christ that does whatever is necessary to care for a brother/sister in need.

iii. Thinking about your situation, what kind of things could a believing brother or sister do for you to show hospitality?

Open answer – example: Offer to care for my family by cooking a meal while I am travelling.

Receive participants who are attending Christian conferences

3. In verses 1-6, Peter refers to Jesus as an example of someone who also suffered. What does Peter want to tell his readers by using Jesus as an example?

Peter makes reference to Jesus and His suffering here to give his readers an example of someone that they should follow when it comes to how to live their lives. Should they live like they always have, doing the things that their “gentile” friends do? No, Peter says. Rather they should adopt the purpose of Christ (which I take to mean, doing the will of God – living in righteousness) and abandon the former practices. Doing so will not enable them to escape persecution (Jesus didn’t – in fact, He died because He was doing the right things), but they will bring glory to God as they follow Him.

4. Based upon the example of Jesus and verses 12-19 what is the attitude that Peter wants his readers to develop when faced with persecution and the suffering that comes with it?

Peter wants his readers to adopt an attitude of praise in the midst of and despite their suffering due to persecution. He tells them that having an attitude of praise is possible because:

- a) their suffering is a sharing in the sufferings of Christ in the same way that His glorious appearance will result in their exultant rejoicing (v. 13)*
- b) their suffering for the name of Christ indicates that they are blest because the Spirit of Glory and of God rests on them (v. 14)*
- c) their suffering as a Christian is not shameful but honours God (v. 16)*
- d) their suffering will be dealt with by God (v. 17-19)*

5. Based on what you have learned of Peter's message from 1 Peter 4, write an interpretive summary of Peter's message of this chapter.

Open answer – example: Peter writes to help his readers understand how they should live in the light of suffering induced by persecution which for the sake of Christ is inevitable and glorious as opposed to suffering because of unrighteousness which is shameful and unsuited to their new life in Christ.

6. What overall title would you give to this chapter?

Open answer – example: Living for God and suffering for Christ go hand in hand

7. What would you say is the key verse? (Note: a key verse is one that seems to best summarize the message of the section of the Bible you are studying.)

Key verse(s): Open answer – example: 4:12, 13: "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation."

8. In this chapter Peter mentions three different themes. Complete the table below by providing the verses and a summary title for each section as required. *An example is given in the table below.*

Verses	Summary of theme of the section
1-6	<i>Christ has suffered for our sins therefore we should turn from sin</i>
7-11	<i>How to serve others in the face of suffering</i>
12-19	<i>Rejoice for suffering that comes from following Christ</i>

Having identified the structure of the chapter and noted the main themes, the next step is to analyze the chapter making use of the observation, interpretation and application exercises you have learned.

9. As you learned in lesson 1, to reinforce and support your interpretation, it is necessary to seek in other chapters or even in other books of the Bible, examples of the theme in the book you are studying. This step of validation can reinforce and sometimes clarify your interpretation of a verse or passage of Scripture. The following verses on suffering were selected using a Bible concordance. Summarize what each one says with regard to suffering and the believer's response to it. *An example is given.*

Verse	Summarize how the believer should respond to suffering
1 Peter 2:20	<i>He/she should endure suffering with patience.</i>
1 Peter 3:14	<i>He/she should not fear nor be troubled when faced with persecution but rather rejoice about it</i>
1 Corinthians 4: 11-13	<i>He/she should return blessing for cursing, enduring for the sake of Christ.</i>

10. Based on what you have learned from the passages above, how would you modify your interpretive summary of Peter's message from 1 Peter 4 (from question 5) to better reflect what he is saying?

Open answer – example: Peter writes to help his readers understand how they should live in the light of suffering induced by persecution which for the sake of Christ is inevitable and glorious as opposed to suffering because of unrighteousness which is shameful and unsuited to their new life in Christ.

C. Application

Now that you have written an interpretative conclusion of Peter's message in chapter 4, it is time to make personal application of the passage to your life.

1. Review the application questions to help orient your thinking.

1. Is there an example for me to follow (or a bad example not to follow)?
2. Is there a sin for me to avoid?
3. Is there a promise for me to claim?
4. Is there a prayer for me to pray?
5. Is there a command for me to obey?
6. Is there a condition for me to meet?
7. Is there a verse for me to memorize?
8. Is there an error (doctrinal/theological) for me to avoid?
9. Is there a challenge for me to face?
10. Is there something that helps me cope with a situation that I am going through?
11. 11. Is there anything that I need to share and pass on to others a) in my family, b) in my church fellowship, c) in my relationships or contacts with unbelievers?

2. Which of the eleven application questions above “fit” with your interpretation? In other words, does your interpretation speak about an example to follow, a sin to avoid, a promise to claim, etc? List the ones that “fit” below.

Open answer – examples include:

Is there a challenge for me to face?

Is there a prayer for me to pray?

Is there a promise for me to claim?

3. Choosing one of the ten application questions that “fit” with your interpretation of 1 Peter 4, write out a personal application of what you will “do” as a result of your study of this chapter.

My personal application:

Open answer – example: I will pray for my persecuted brothers and sisters in Algeria.

4. Remember that once we have written a personal application, it is helpful to develop a plan of follow-through which includes the personal application, a description of how and when it will be done, and a faithful friend who will help you follow through. Complete your application by describing a plan and identifying a faithful friend in the table below.

Application	Plan (I will do what, when)	My faithful friend
<i>I will pray for my persecuted Brothers and sisters, asking God to give them comfort, wisdom and patience.</i>	<i>In my prayer time each day, I will pray for the persecuted Church in Algeria – and in particular for the leaders of the church in Oran.</i>	<i>My wife.</i>

5. In addition to the personal application above, what can you do for a believing brother or sister who is undergoing persecution?

Open answer – example: I can pray for him/her (and let him/her know that I am doing so). I can see if I can comfort their family that may be worried. I will try to find a way to visit and encourage the person with my presence.

Conclusion

In this lesson you have studied a chapter of 1 Peter. A chapter study such as this enables you to begin to look more closely at the details of a book and should come after you have taken the time to analyze the book of the Bible as a whole as you did in lesson 6 (for instance by making a schematic table of the book). To continue your study of Peter, you should complete a chapter study as described here for each of the chapters of the book.

Appendix

Definition of Key and Difficult terms

(Copied from the *Holman Bible Dictionary*, 1991):

Hospitality: To entertain or receive a stranger (sojourner) into one's home as an honoured guest and to provide the guest with food, shelter, and protection. This was not merely an oriental custom or good manners, but a sacred duty that everyone was expected to observe. Only the depraved would violate this obligation. Hospitality probably grew out of the needs of nomadic life. Since public inns were rare, a traveller had to depend on the kindness of others and had a right to expect it. This practice was extended to every sojourner, even a runaway slave (Dt. 23:16-16) or one's arch enemy.

Lesson 8: Study a key theme from 1 Peter

Introduction

From your study thus far of 1 Peter, you have learned that the letter deals with three primary themes: salvation, submission and suffering. Certainly what Peter says about these themes in his first letter is not all that the Bible has to say about them. The goal of your study of a key theme from a book of the Bible is to determine what aspect of the theme the writer develops or emphasizes in order to communicate his message to his readers. In Peter's first letter, the chapter breaks do not necessarily coincide with a change of theme (see lesson 6). Therefore, in order to follow Peter's thoughts we will concentrate our study on a section rather than a chapter. The section chosen is 1 Peter 2:13 – 3:12, which you already examined briefly in lesson 6.

A. Finding the key theme(s)

1. Read 1 Peter 2:13 – 3:12 twice.
2. Summarize the message of this section in a short phrase (expand upon the title you used for your schematic table in lesson 6).

Peter tells his readers that one aspect of holy living in light of suffering because of persecution involves submission. In this section, Peter identifies a number of life situations and explains what godly submission looks like.

3. Complete the table below by identifying and summarizing the major themes of 1 Peter 2:13-3:12. Note the verse references that separate one theme from the next. (This should already have been done for the final chart completed in lesson 6. If so, this is a good place to verify that you have accurately defined the major parts of the section.)

Verses	Summary of Theme
2:13 - 2:17	<i>Submission to the government</i>
2:18 – 2:25	<i>Submission in employment</i>
3:1 – 3:6	<i>Submission in marriage</i>

B. Observation

Once you have identified the parts of the theme you are studying, begin to analyze them by making use of the exercises of observation, interpretation and application that you have learned earlier in this course.

1. Record below your observations from 1 Peter 2:13-3:12 below. Be sure to make use of typical observation-type questions (refer to lessons 1 and 6 if necessary). Seek to answer the question, "What do I see?"

Note to the leader: Below is a large selection of observed material. Not all of this needs to be discovered or processed by the student in order to get an accurate understanding of the text.

Open answer – answers include:

The apostle Peter is speaking (1 Peter 1:1).

Peter is/writing to persecuted believers (1 Peter 1:1).

Peter is talking about what godly submission looks like in “real” life (1 Peter 2:13-3:12).

Peter commands believers to submit themselves to every human institution (2:13).

- a. *to the king, because he is the ultimate earthly authority (v. 13).*
- b. *to the governor because God put him in that position to punish evildoers and bless those who do right (v. 14).*

Peter says that in submitting to authorities, we accomplish God’s will (v. 15).

Peter says that in submitting to authorities, we “silence the ignorance of foolish men” (v. 15).

Peter says that we (Christians) should act as “free men” not for the purpose of doing evil, but for the purpose of demonstrating that we are bondslaves of God (v. 16).

Q. What does he mean that we should act like “free men”? Free as compared to what?

Q. What is a “bondslave of God” and what is the significance of being a bondslave of God? How does this allow us to act as “free men”? It seems to me that if we are slaves, we are not free.

Peter commands us to (v. 17):

- a. *honor all men*
- b. *love the brotherhood*
- c. *fear God*
- d. *honor the king*

Q. Is this what it means practically speaking to live as a bondslave of God?

Peter commands servants to be submissive to their masters – both the “good” ones and the “bad” ones (v. 18).

Peter says that in so doing this submission “finds” or earns the person favour (v. 19).

Peter says that this favour is particularly evident if in so submitting the person suffers unjustly (v. 19).

Peter comments that there is no favour earned if one sins and is treated harshly and endures it with patience; that should be expected. But if one is treated harshly for having done what is right, this finds favour with God (v. 20).

Peter says that we have been called for this purpose (v. 21).

Q. What is the purpose for which we have been called that Peter refers to here?

Peter says that Jesus also suffered (for doing the right thing) and therefore serves as an example for us of how to suffer with patience (v. 21).

Peter explains in what ways Jesus was unworthy of evil treatment (vvs. 22-23).

- a. *Jesus committed no sin, and was without deceitful speech (v.22).*
- b. *Jesus did not react to the unjust treatment and suffering he endured (v.23a).*
- c. *Jesus rather kept on entrusting himself to God (v. 23b).*

Peter explains that Jesus bore our sins in his body (v. 24).

Peter explains that Jesus did this so that:

- a. *we might die to sin (v. 24b).*
- b. *we might live righteously (v. 24b).*
- c. *because by His wounds (his suffering and death) we have been healed (forgiven) (v. 24c).*

Peter explains that all this was done to turn us from our wandering as sheep back to the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls (v. 25).

Peter says that “in the same way” wives should submit to their husbands (3:1a).

Q. What does Peter mean by, “in the same way”?

Peter says that wives should do this so that if they are not believers, they might be “won” to faith without a word, but by the faithful, chaste and respectful behaviour of the wife (v. 1b-2).

Peter says that women should not be noticed simply because of the external things (hair, jewellery, clothes) (v.3).

Peter says rather, women should be noticed for their inner (hidden) qualities and character which is defined by a gentle and quiet spirit (v. 4).

Peter says that this kind of spirit/attitude is precious to God (v. 4).

Peter says that in the past (OT history), “holy” women showed their hope in God by adorning themselves in this way with submission to their husbands (v.5).

Peter cites the case of Sarah and Abraham as an example of a woman who lived in such a way (v. 6a).

Peter goes on to say that women who follow the example of Sarah in their submission to their husbands, have become “her children”.

Q. What does Peter mean by saying that women can become “her [Sarah’s] children” by behaving as she did?

Peter commands husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way as with a “weaker vessel” (v. 7a).

Q. What does it mean to live with my wife in “an understanding way”?

Q. In what sense is my wife a “weaker vessel”?

Q. Why is she considered a “weaker vessel”?

Peter says that the husband should honour his wife so that his prayers are not hindered (v.7b).

Q. What does it mean to honour my wife?

Q. How does honouring my wife keep my prayers from being hindered? (What makes dishonour of my wife hinder my prayers?)

Peter summarizes his commands to believers by saying that they should (v. 8):

be harmonious

be sympathetic

be brotherly

be kind-hearted

be humble in Spirit

Peter says that in our behaviour we should not return evil for evil but rather give a blessing instead (v. 9).

Peter says that we were called for the very purpose that we might inherit a blessing (v. 9b).

Q. What is the purpose that Peter mentions here that we have been called for?

Q. What is the blessing that we will inherit if we behave in this way?

Peter supports this conclusion (that if we live this way we will receive a blessing) by quoting Psalm 34:12-16 (vvs. 10-12).

In this Psalm Peter notes that to live in such a way that receives the blessing of God includes (vvs. 10-11):

- a. controlling his tongue to not speak evil or deceit*
- b. turning away from doing evil*
- c. doing good*
- d. seeking peace and “doing” it*

The passage from Psalm 34 concludes by noting that (v.12):

- a. the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteousness and His ears are attentive to their prayers (v.12a).*
- b. the face of the Lord is against those who do evil (v. 12b).*

2. Note key and difficult words below that need to be explained.

Open answer – examples include:

- Q. What does it mean to “submit”?*
- Q. What is a “free man” as used here by Peter?*
- Q. What is a “bondslave of God”?*
- Q. In what sense is my wife a “weaker vessel”?*

3. Write below questions that you have about the passage that need to be answered.

Open answer – examples include:

- Q. What does he mean that we should act like “free men”? Free as compared to what?*
- Q. What is a “bondslave of God” and what is the significance of being a bondslave of God? How does this allow us to act as “free men”? It seems to me that if we are slaves we are not free.*
- Q. What does Peter mean by saying that women can become “her [Sarah’s] children” by behaving as she did?*
- Q. What does it mean to live with my wife in “an understanding way”?*
- Q. In what sense is my wife a “weaker vessel”?*
- Q. Why is she considered a “weaker vessel”?*

C. Interpretation

Now that you have completed your initial observation of the passage, it is time to move into interpretation, seeking to answer the question, “what does it mean?” To help you in doing so, be careful to work paragraph by paragraph because the paragraph serves as the basic unit of literary thought. For each paragraph:

1. Define the key or difficult words that you noted above, making use of the dictionary provided in the appendix. (If you had a difficult time identifying key or difficult words, take time to provide a definition for the following words.)

a. **Submit:** *To yield to governance or authority.*

b. **Bondslave:** *Someone in the service of another.*

2. Read 1 Peter 2:12 and 21-24. What does Peter mean when he says to submit “for the Lord’s sake” in 2:13?

The phrase “submit for the Lord’s sake” is used by Peter to indicate one of two things:

a. “Submit” in the same way that Jesus did when he walked the Earth and Peter gives an explanation in verse 21-24 of how Jesus submitted. In so doing, we bring honour to him by imitating (following) his example.

b. “Submit” for the purpose of accomplishing the things – the spiritual things - that Peter points out that submission will accomplish. In 2:15, Peter says that he who submits to kings and authorities will “silence the ignorance of foolish men”. In 2:19 and 2:20, Peter says that he who submits to masters (even evil ones) will find favour with God. In 3:1, Peter says that a wife who submits to her unbelieving husband may win him to faith by her exemplary behaviour. Submitting “for the Lord’s sake” then is to submit with the desire to see accomplished these spiritual gains.

3. Based upon the information you have gleaned from this passage (2:13 – 3:12), write an interpretation summary that explains what this passage means. (Remember in this step you are trying to state what the writer meant when he wrote this to his original readers. Do not jump ahead and state what you think this passage means to you today... that is the application step which comes later!)

Open answer – example: Peter commands his readers to practice submission in every aspect of their lives (political, professional, marital and relational) by following the example of Jesus. By doing so, they will earn favour with God, put to silence ignorant men and perhaps win some to faith.

4. The next step in the study of the passage is validating the interpretative conclusion(s) that you have come to. To do so, you first need to check the literary, cultural, historical, and theological contexts to make sure that your conclusions “fit” with what comes before and what comes after. Secondly, you need to identify other Scriptures which support your conclusions.

a. Literary Context: Look briefly at the rest of 1 Peter (look at your final chart from lesson 6).

i. What are the other main themes of the book in addition to submission?

*Living holy lives
Learning to suffer with hope*

ii. Is anything else said about submission anywhere else in 1 Peter? (i.e. Is there an example of someone who has submitted?) Does Peter make any other comment about submission elsewhere? If so, what does he say?

In chapter 5:5, Peter directly commands younger men to be subject to (submit to) their elders. He goes on to add later in that same verse that all should behave towards one another with humility. If humility is the mark of submission, then his directives to elders in verses 1-5 of chapter 5 with regards to their respective “flocks” sounds like he is asking them to exercise a certain level of submission even to their church members.

b. Cultural/Historical Context: Read the following text taken from “*La Dictionnaire Biblique pour Tous*”, concerning the Roman Empire in Peter’s day.

The Roman Empire at the time of 1 Peter

In AD 54, Nero, son of a distinguished Roman family, succeeded Claudius as the Emperor of Rome. As a young man with refined taste his artistic research both scandalized and fascinated his contemporaries. His atrocities (including the murder of his own mother) and his weaknesses sullied the name of his family. Faced by a revolt, he committed suicide in AD 68. Paul called upon Nero (Acts 25:10 ff) whose authority he respected (Romans 13:1 ff). The loyalty of the Christians of Rome was cruelly rewarded by one of the worst barbaric tyrants in history: in AD 64, Rome was seriously damaged by fire and Nero diverted suspicions of his own responsibility by ordering massive arrests and executions of the Christians whom he subsequently blamed for the fire. By so doing Nero created a legal precedent transforming dislike of Christianity into official repression. The first epistle of Peter echoes this situation.

i. The Apostle Peter wrote the epistle of 1 Peter from Rome shortly before the outbreak of the persecution described above. How would you describe the government (the Roman Emperor) that Peter lived under?

Open answer – example: The Roman government under Nero was slowly deteriorating due to the megalomaniacal character of Nero, who may have been slowly losing his mind. By the time Peter wrote this letter in AD 64/65, the Roman Empire would have been reeling from the burning of Rome, which Nero blamed on the Christians, and the resultant horrific persecution against them.

ii. Would you say this King was friendly to Christians? Why or why not?

Open answer – example: The Roman Emperor, Nero, was not friendly to Christians. His attempts to blame them for the burning of Rome together with the spectacular torture of Christians makes it clear that he was not their friend!

iii. Imagine that you are living in the time of Peter and you are hearing his letter. When you get to chapter 2:13-14, Peter says that you should submit to kings and governors. But that means you should submit to Nero. How does this make you feel?

Open answer – example: I would feel afraid and really wonder how I was supposed to submit to such an evil man.

c. The next thing to check is the meaning of important or difficult theological terms or expressions. There may be other terms of significance in this passage, but for this exercise, after reading the following excerpt taken from a Bible Dictionary, answer the following question.

“Righteousness is conformity to the law, especially to the law, mind, and will of God, which is the norm of righteousness. Christ fulfilled this righteousness, both by conformity to the precepts of God in life, and by conformity to the righteous judgment of God on sin in his death.” (*The New Bible Dictionary*, Eerdmans, 1979, pg. 1097.)

In 2:24, when Peter says that “(Jesus) bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness,” what did he mean by the phrase “that we might...live to righteousness”?

Peter meant that the purpose of Jesus’ death was to enable us to live in obedience to God’s law, hence exhibiting “righteousness”.

d. Does the passage make reference to significant people from the Old Testament? If yes, list them.

i. Old Testament person:

Abraham and Sarah

ii. Why do you think Peter includes this person in this passage?

Open answer – example: Abraham and Sarah were well known to Peter’s readers and their example served to reinforce and illustrate Peter’s discussion of submission in marriage.

e. Once the context has been checked, you need to finalize the validation of your interpretation by finding other Scriptures which support your findings. Making use of the Bible concordance in the appendix, look up other passages that deal with submission to authorities. (Note: remember to begin with Scriptures that are “close” and move progressively “further” away. So, look first for other verses from 1 or 2 Peter, then look for other verses in the Epistles.^{iv} Then look for verses in other New Testament books and, finally, look for verses in the Old Testament.)

List 2 passages that speak of submission to authority. Summarize the message of each one.

Open answer – examples include:

1. *Romans 13:1-2 – Since God is the one who has established the rulers (kings, governors, etc.) everyone should be in submission to them because they are in God’s “service”. He who resists such authorities opposes God’s ordinance and will suffer the consequences.*
2. *Titus 3:1-2 - We should be obedient and ready for every good deed, uncontentious and gentle, in subjection/submission to the rulers.*

f. Finally, reread your interpretation of 1 Peter 2:13-3:12 from section D, question 3. Does your interpretation summary agree with the contextual information you learned above and also with the other passages that talk about submission? If not, rewrite your interpretation summary of the passage here, making sure to include the new information you have learned.

Peter commands his readers to practice submission in every aspect of their lives (political, professional, marital and relational) by following the example of Jesus. By doing so, they will earn favor with God, put to silence ignorant men, and perhaps win some to faith.

D. Application

Once the observation and interpretation exercises are complete you are finally ready to move to application. Remember, application is the process of answering the question, “What does this passage mean to me?” To help answer this question, make use of the

application questions (from lesson 1) to help isolate the specific thing(s) that God would like you to put into practice as a result of your study of this passage.

1. Write out two possible applications that follow from your study of this passage.

Open answer – examples include:

I will memorize 1 Peter 2: 15, “For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.”

I will claim the promise of 1 Peter 3:12, “For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against the those who do evil.”

2. Choosing one of these applications, write out the following:

- a. Describe your plan for putting this into action (give dates, actions and people involved).

Open answer – example: I will memorize 1 Peter 2:15 this week.

- b. Note a Christian friend that you will ask to hold you accountable to follow through on this application.

My wife.

- c. Take a moment to ask God to help you follow through on this application and see real change in your life.

Conclusion

Submission is an aspect of the Christian life that Peter wanted to be certain that his friends understood. As a closing exercise, how does the biblical view of submission that you have studied here, differ from the view of submission that you observe around you at work, or at home or in your culture in general?

Open answer – example: Peter suggests that faith in Christ – our ultimate authority – is what makes possible submission to lesser, earthly authorities who exist only by His decree. Those around me who do not share my faith in Christ and hence, do not share this view of the relationship of earthly authorities to God, do not share this same motivation to submit to them. As a result, submission to authority is either contested, challenged and considered to be “weak”, or it is pursued blindly is a necessary element of life and faith. 1 Peter calls the Christian to submit to authority, not out of blind duty, but because submission is part of God’s plan. As part of our submission to authority, Christians are called to pray for rulers and respect them.

Appendix

Definition of Key and Difficult terms

Submit: Yield to somebody; to give in to somebody's authority, control, or demands; to agree to undergo something; to defer to another's knowledge, judgment or experience. (Copied from the *Encarta World English Dictionary*, 1999)

Bondslave: A servant, serf, or slave. Slavery was quite common in biblical times. All slaves were considered the property of their owners and could be freely bought, sold, or punished. However, it was the master's duty to supply the basic needs of the slave: food, clothing, and shelter. The treatment and duties of any given slave varied greatly depending on the slave's own abilities, the slave's disposition, the master's needs, and the master's disposition. Some slaves were treated very harshly, to the point of dying or fleeing for their lives. Others were given very high level responsibilities and honour. Many became quite wealthy and influential in ancient societies.

Lesson 9: Biographical Study of a Biblical Character

Introduction

The Bible is a book that provides mankind with the message of God via the lives of men and women, many of whom lived ordinary lives just like us, while others led somewhat exceptional lives. But each of them can be a source of learning for our own lives, through their faith or lack of it, their exploits, their daily living, their mistakes, their sins, in short – their humanness.

Because, as the Apostle Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 “all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work,” the lives and stories of men and women of the Bible are also a great subject for Bible study. God has in fact provided the details of their lives to instruct us about what it means to be men and women of faith.

The study of one of these men or women of the Bible is called a “biographical study” of a biblical character. The objective of such a study is to learn about and develop in our own lives the godly habits and convictions which defined many of these men and women.

A biographical study involves 6 steps:

- 1) Choose the person that you want to study.
- 2) With the help of a concordance or Bible dictionary, make a list of all the biblical references you can find concerning the person.
- 3) Make a chronological profile of the events of his or her life.
- 4) Note the important events of his or her life.
- 5) Identify the character traits that you observe over the course of his or her life.
- 6) Identify and describe a personal application for your own life.

Exercises

For this lesson, you will study the Apostle Peter.

1. Using the concordance and the Bible Dictionary in the appendix find and note the references to Peter from the New Testament.

a. Here are three suggestions:

- i. To avoid repetition of verses and events in Peter’s life as they are recorded in the Gospels just look in the Gospels of Matthew and John, and the book of Acts.

(Note: The Gospel writers, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, selected incidents from the life of Jesus that served to convey their particular message. Not all of the Gospels include all of the same incidents, teachings or people. However many of the same events are recorded by more than one of the Gospel writers. The key when studying a biblical person who is described by the Gospel writers is to find all the passages that cover all the various events that are recorded in the Gospels.)

- ii. Don’t forget that Peter is also referred to as “Simon”, “Simon Peter” or “Cephas”.
- iii. The concordance will only give you the reference to the chapter and the first verse. When you find this reference in your Bible, it is necessary to read the whole text concerning Peter and not just the first verse.

b. Read and give a brief title to the following references to Peter in the New Testament (from Matthew, John and Acts), found with the help of a Bible concordance. *An example is given.*

- i. Matthew 4:18 – *Jesus calls His disciples (one of whom is Peter)*
- ii. John 21:2-21 – *Jesus talks to Peter on the beach (after his resurrection)*
- iii. Matthew 14:28-29 – *Peter walks on the water*
- iv. Acts 4:8-19 – *Peter preaches to the Sanhedrin*
- v. Matthew 17:1-26 – *Peter, James and John witness the transfiguration*
- vi. Acts 12: 3-18 – *Peter is released from prison*
- vii. Matthew 16:16-23 – *Peter declares Jesus to be the Messiah*
- viii. John 13:6-37 – *Jesus washes Peter's feet*
- ix. John 20:2-6 – *Peter runs to the tomb of Jesus*
- x. Acts 2:14-38 – *Peter preaches on Pentecost*
- xi. Acts 10:5-46 – *Peter meets and preaches to Cornelius' family*

c. Organize these verses of the life of Peter in chronological order.

To do so:

- i. First group together all the verses referring to Peter that speak of the same event. (For instance you might find a reference to Peter in Galatians 2:7, 8, 9, 11 and 14. These are all speaking about the same event. So you group them like this: Galatians 2:7-14).
- ii. Next summarize what is happening in these verses. (Example: Galatians 2:7-14 records the time when Paul confronted Peter over his withdrawal from Gentile Christians. A summary of this passage could be: "Paul confronts Peter")
- iii. Now arrange the passages in chronological order. The Gospels and the Epistles do not always give clear indication of when things happened, so use your best judgment if you are not sure.

Matthew 4:18 – Jesus calls His disciples (one of whom is Peter)
Matthew 14:28-29 – Peter walks on the water
Matthew 16:16-23 – Peter declares Jesus to be the Messiah
Matthew 17:1-26 – Peter, James and John witness the transfiguration
John 13:6-37 – Jesus washes Peter's feet
John 20:2-6 – Peter runs to the tomb of Jesus
John 21:2-21 – Jesus talks to Peter on the beach (after his resurrection)
Acts 2:14-38 – Peter preaches on Pentecost
Acts 4:8-19 – Peter preaches to the Sanhedrin
Acts 10:5-46 – Peter meets and preaches to Cornelius' family
Acts 12: 3-18 – Peter is released from prison

d. Identify what you consider to be five of the most important events in the life of Peter. Note these below in chronological order:

Open answer – examples include:

<i>Matthew 4:18</i>	<i>Jesus calls his disciples (one of whom is Peter)</i>
<i>John 13:6-37</i>	<i>Jesus washes Peter's feet</i>
<i>John 21:2-21</i>	<i>Jesus appears to Peter on the beach</i>
<i>Acts 2:14-38</i>	<i>Peter preaches on Pentecost</i>
<i>Acts 10:5-46</i>	<i>Peter meets and preaches to Cornelius</i>

2. Make a list of traits of Peter's character that you have noticed.

Open answer – examples include:

Bold, spontaneous, courageous, outspoken, passionate, action oriented

a. What do you think were the things (i.e. attitudes, feelings, etc...) that Peter struggled with?

Open answer – examples include:

I think that Peter struggled with:

humility – He had a hard time when Jesus wanted to wash his feet.

patience – He wanted everything to happen fast. He walked on the water to get to Jesus. He jumped in the water to swim to shore to be with Jesus.

grace – He wasn't sure how many times he had to forgive his brother.

b. What do you think were Peter's strengths?

Open answer – examples include:

I think Peter's strengths included:

boldness and courage: He declared Jesus to be the Messiah. He tried to physically defend Jesus in the Garden. The last days of his life were probably in Rome under the reign of Nero.

passionate faith: Peter really believed the words of Christ and wanted to give his all to follow him. Despite his failure at the trial of Jesus, I think Jesus really knew that Peter would indeed follow him to the end.

c. What do you think was the most important event in his life?

Open answer – example: I think the most important event of his life was when he visited the tomb of Jesus. In that moment, Peter knew that all that he had hoped for was true. It changed his life from a doubting, fleeing disciple to a bold, confident apostle.

d. What progress do you notice in Peter's attitudes and behavior (example: how did he change and grow from the man he was as depicted in the Gospels to what he became as described in the book of Acts when he had not only received the Holy Spirit, but also grown in maturity. Don't forget that the Peter who wrote two epistles is a changed man from whom he was as seen in the Gospels.)

Open answer – example: Peter shows that he learns along the way. He starts out as a "rookie" follower of Jesus, full of questions and outbursts. He is impetuous and makes statements of faith that he is not capable of standing by. He grows into one who is taken into the inner confidences of Jesus. He remains ready to act and react, but that makes him apt to preach at Pentecost and before the Sanhedrin. As his walk with Christ continues he responds well to the confrontations of his old-habits: he goes to preach and embrace Cornelius as a brother after God shows him that all people are acceptable to God. He turns to preach and defend salvation by grace alone after Paul confronts him about withdrawing from non-Jewish brothers. By the end of his life and the writing of his two epistles, he is a solid defender of the faith, encourager of the brethren, and humble servant who stands to defend his flock and love His Savior.

e. How does Peter's progress encourage you to progress?

Open answer – example: Peter's progress reminds me that God is continually at work, using people, situations and surprises to mould, shape, instruct, and change me into what He wants me to be.

3. Write a description of Peter using your own words. To do so imagine this scene, you have just met Peter on the street in your hometown. He knows no one and needs a place to stay for a few days. You call home to ask your family if he can stay with you and they say to you, "Tell us about him." What would you say to describe who Peter is?

Open answer – example: Peter is a man I met who spoke the truth to me. He said that he had been a fisherman, and he often travels to preach the Good News – a message that God loves us so much that His only Son was sent to die in our place; taking away our sin and judgment and giving us eternal life with Him. Peter has always been kind to me and he has helped me understand the need to follow Jesus with all my heart and strength. He has seen and heard some amazing things, but he is incredibly humble... as if he knew that his very life is a gift that has been purchased by someone and given to him to use for others. He makes me laugh because he always has an opinion about everything and always wants to see 100% change happen instantly! He is very intelligent, but he never boasts, nor is he rude, but always shows the greatest respect for others. I'm not sure how long he will stay, but I would like to have him stay for a few days at least. I think you'll like him.

4. Based upon what you have learned about Peter, think about how you are like or unlike him. Write a brief answer to the typical application questions below to help orient your thoughts.

a. What in Peter's life is an example for me to follow or not to follow?

Open answer – example: Peter's boldness to speak up to proclaim and defend the truth is an example for me to follow.

b. What in Peter's life reveals a sin that I need to avoid?

Open answer – example: Peter often evidenced impatience. I need to avoid impatience – especially that kind of impatience which leads me to take things into my own hands and not wait on God.

c. How does Peter's life encourage me to trust in God?

Open answer – example: Peter's final years lived under the reign of Nero are a shining example to me of faith, trust, patience and hope. His focus on the greatness of our salvation needs to be my focus because, as he points out in 1 Peter, it is in grasping the greatness of our salvation that we can endure difficulties and trust in God.

d. In what way does Peter's life help me cope with a situation that I am going through?

Open answer – example: Peter's life of on-going learning, despite the failures along the way, help me cope with my own short-comings, failures and unresolved issues.

e. What personal strengths of Peter's do I want God to develop in me?

Open answer – example: I want God to develop boldness and courage in me.

5. Draw here the table from Lesson 5, question 4 which helps organize the essential steps to making good personal application. Choose one of your responses to parts a-e of question 4, above. Complete the table to explain your personal application.

Personal Application	Details: how and when	Faithful Friend
<i>I will take time to meditate on the greatness of my salvation</i>	<i>I will read and study over the next couple of months focusing on the greatness of my salvation.</i>	<i>My wife</i>

Take a moment to ask God to help you follow-through on this application and see real change in your life.

Conclusion

The Bible is full of stories, laws, events and letters lived and written by real men and women. The study of these men and women is a fruitful exercise to learn how biblical truths were lived out then and how they can be applied in our lives today. This study of Peter will hopefully encourage you to choose another biblical person and do the same sort of study following the guidelines in this lesson.

Lesson 10: Questions for Review and Evaluation

To wrap up this course, you will have an exam that will allow us to evaluate if you have grasped the contents of the course well.

A. Part I : Review question 15 points

The student should prepare answers to the following questions. As an evaluation of your comprehension of the material in this course, you will be given 4 of the following questions and asked to respond to three of them. The questions are taken from the material you have completed in this course in lessons 1-9.

Lesson 1:

1) Name the 7 biblical principles of biblical interpretation in one phrase per principle

2) Name the three steps of Bible Study.

Answer: Observation, Interpretation, Application

3) Name 3 obstacles to interpretation.

Answer: Language, Culture, Literature

Lesson 2:

The focus of this lesson is “observation”. For the following 5 phrases respond “T” for true or “F” for false. If the answer is false, re-write the phrase and correct it to make it true.

1) The first step in Bible Study is observation.

Answer: T

2) When observing a biblical passage you should only ask as many questions of the text as you feel like.

Answer: F – when observing a biblical passage you should ask as many questions as possible in order to identify as much as possible.

3) The type of observation questions that you can ask about a given biblical text depends upon the length of the text you are studying.

Answer: F – the type of observation questions that you can ask about a given biblical text depends upon the type of biblical literature you are studying (ie...letters, history, poems, prophecies, etc.).

4) There is no complete list of questions to ask when observing a biblical text.

Answer: T

5) You can ask the same questions about a passage in 1 Peter as you can of a passage in Acts.

Answer: F – In the case of the study of the book of Acts (a narrative), the major questions concern the principal actors and the action involved. In the case of the study of 1 Peter (a letter), the major questions concern what the writer is teaching.

Lesson 3:

1) What is the purpose of interpretation?

Answer: The purpose of interpretation is to discover what the writer of the text meant to communicate to his original readers back when he wrote it.

2) For the following 4 phrases respond “T” for true or “F” for false. If the answer is false, re-write the phrase and correct it to make it true.

a. Interpretation can be done more effectively by skipping over the observation step.

Answer: F – Interpretation can only be attempted after the observation step of Bible study is complete.

b. Interpretation never involves the use of Bible study tools such as a Bible Dictionary or a concordance.

Answer: F – The work of interpretation includes making use of the tools of Bible study to define key words, understand geography and the customs/traditions of the original readers, and discover what other students of the Bible have thought about the passage under study.

c. Defining key terms is an important first step in interpretation.

Answer: T

d. When writing a summary interpretation of a passage once the work of interpretation is completed, it is best to ignore what you think the writer meant when he wrote this passage to his original readers.

Answer: F – When writing a summary interpretation of a passage once the work of interpretation is completed, you should make your best effort to conclude what the original write meant when he wrote it to his original readers.

Lesson 4:

- 1) The work of interpretation is not finished until you complete the exercise of _____ *Validation*.
- 2) _____ *Validation* keeps the Bible student from coming to interpretive conclusions which are disconnected from the Bible and, as a result, protects the Bible student from moving to _____ *Application* which is not biblically justified.
- 3) Checking the “context” means making certain that the interpretation makes sense in light of the _____ *Literary*, _____ *Historical*, _____ *Theological* , _____ *geographical* and _____ *Cultural* information which affects the biblical text being studied.
- 4) After checking your interpretation against the contextual information, what is the next step necessary to validate your interpretation?

Answer: The next step is to find other biblical passages which talk about the same things as the text you are studying.

- 5) Explain what is meant by the “closeness” of one verse to another.

Answer: The “closeness” of one verse to another refers to textual or theological proximity. In other words, the use of a similar word or idea by the same writer in the same book represents the highest level of “closeness”.

Lesson 5:

1) What is the purpose of the application step of Bible study?

Answer: The application step of Bible study is intended to determine how the biblical text applies to your life. It answers the question, "what does this text mean to me?"

2) Determining appropriate application can be helped by asking 10 application questions. List 5 of these questions.

Answer: Any 5 of the following...

Is there an example for me to follow (or a bad example to avoid following)?

Is there a sin for me to avoid?

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a prayer for me to pray?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is there a condition for me to meet?

Is there a verse for me to memorize?

Is there an error (doctrinal/theological) for me to avoid?

Is there a challenge for me to face?

Is there something that helps me cope with a situation that I am going through?

Lesson 6:

The focus of this lesson is the study of a book of the Bible.

1) What is the objective of studying an entire book of the Bible?

The study of an entire book of the Bible is concerned with trying to uncover the structure that the writer used to organize his thoughts in order to communicate his message.

2) From what you learned about making a schematic table as a means to study a book of the Bible, complete the following (partial) table of 1 Peter.

Live holy lives	Learn to submit with joy	Learn to suffer with hope
<i>Be holy because you were bought with a price (13-21). Love one another (22-25). Desire God's Word (3:1-3). Behave in such a way to show that you are a spiritual dwelling of God (4:12).</i>	<i>Submit to the government to silence foolish men (13-17). Submit to (unjust) employers to find favour with God (18-25). Submit in marriage so that your spiritual life is not hindered (3:1-7). Submit your desires to the good of others in order to inherit a blessing (8-12).</i>	<i>Suffering for doing the right things puts to shame those who hate you (13-17). Christ is our example of one who suffered for doing the right things (18-22). Do not let the fear of suffering tempt you to live like the World (4:1-6). Serve each other in the face of suffering (7-11). Suffering for the right things is honourable, suffering for the wrong things is not (vvs. 12-19)</i>
1:13-2:12	2:13-3:12	3:13-4:19

Lesson 7:

The focus of this lesson is the study of the chapter from a book of the Bible. For the following 3 phrases respond "T" for true or "F" for false. If the answer is false, re-write the phrase and correct it to make it true.

- 1) When studying a chapter of a book of the Bible, it is a good idea to have in mind what application you want before you begin to study.**

Answer: F - When studying a book of the Bible, the application follows and is a result of the work of observation and interpretation.

- 2) A chapter study does not require the use of observation, interpretation or application.**

Answer: F – A chapter study is no different than a study of a verse or theme from a book and requires observation, interpretation and interpretation to understand the text and determine appropriate application.

3) Studying the chapters of a book of the Bible should come before the study of the book.

Answer: F – The study of a chapter of a book of the Bible normally follows the overall study of a book. Once the structure of the Book is laid out and the themes of the writer are defined, then a chapter by chapter study of the book should be undertaken.

Lesson 8:

This focus of this lesson is the study of a theme from a book of the Bible. For the following phrases respond “T” for true or “F” for false. If the answer is false, re-write the phrase and correct it to make it true.

1) In the Bible, the chapter breaks always correspond with a change in themes.

Answer: F – In the Bible, the chapter breaks do not always correspond with a change in themes. In order to not miss what the writer is saying about a theme, the Bible student needs to make certain to include all that the writer says in a passage of Scripture even if it extends across chapter breaks.

2) It is important to study the same theme in various books of the Bible, because each writer may emphasize different aspects of the theme.

Answer: T

3) To study a theme in a book of the Bible you need to make use of observation and application only.

Answer: F – To study a theme in a book of the Bible you need to make use of observation, interpretation and application.

Lesson 9:

The focus of this lesson is the biographical study of a biblical character.

1) Studying a character from the Bible involves 6 steps. Name them.

Answer:

Choose the person you want to study.

With the help of a Bible concordance or Bible dictionary, make a list of all the biblical references you can find concerning the person.

Make a chronological profile of the events of his/her life

Note the important events of his/her life

Identify the traits of his/her character that you observe over the course of his/her life

Identify and describe a personal application for your own life

2) When selecting a biblical character to study, is it a good idea to study someone who was a bad example? Why or why not?

Answer: Studying someone in the Bible who was a bad example (ie... Nebuchadnezzar, Jezebel) can provide spiritual benefit as such a study may help the Bible student understand the things that lead to disobedience, a bad reputation or lack of faith.

Furthermore, the apostle Paul says that, "...all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished for every good work." 2

Timothy 3:16-17

B. Part II : Assessment questions 15 points

You will be given 2 of the following questions during the exam. You will choose one question to answer.

1. Study of John 3:16. Present the study of this verse using the following steps:

a. Write down all that you observe in this verse making use of the appropriate observation questions.

b. To interpret this verse, you need to understand what the writer means by the following key words:

- a) "world"
- b) believes
- c) perish

c. Using the definitions of the word "world" taken from a Bible dictionary, check the box which best describes what the writer meant by the term in John 3:16.

- ☐ The universe
- ☐ The inhabited earth
- ☒ ✓ Humanity that God loves and desires to save
- ☐ The evil and sinful population of the Earth
- ☐ The current era or century

d. What other clues in the verse confirm that your answer is correct?

Answer: The verse says that God "loves" the world and that those who believe will not perish. These seem to indicate that John is talking about people and not just the physical "things" that God created.

e. Read the following verses and summarize what John means by the word "believe".

- a) John 1:12
- b) John 4:41-42
- c) John 6:28-29
- d) John 6:67-69
- e) John 20:30-31

Answer: Believe means..... to understand and accept that Jesus is who He says he is and who His miracles and teaching declare Him to be – the Son of God, the Messiah, the Savior of the World.

f. Read John 3:16 again

g. Does the word “perish” mean physical death, as in, “those who believe in Christ will not die physically?”

Answer: No

h. Read John 11:24-26. What clues from this text confirm your answer given to part a) above?

Answer: In John 11 Jesus says that He is the “resurrection” a word that means to bring back to life again. In verse 25 he says that whoever believes in Him will live even if he dies. Jesus here acknowledges that men and women will continue to die, but because Jesus is the resurrection, he will resurrect those who believe in him. In verse 26 Jesus says that they who believe will never die. Clearly if he is not talking about physical death in verse 26 (because he just mentioned it in verse 25 and without physical death the whole idea of resurrection makes no sense) then he must be talking about spiritual death.

i. Write out an interpretive summary of John 3:16. (What did the writer mean to say when he wrote this verse to his original readers?)

Answer: answers may vary...

j. Using the 10 application questions (see lesson 5), write out a personal application for John 3:16.

2. Using a Bible concordance, complete a character study on the life of Barnabas (only consider the verses from the book of Acts which speak of him).

Step 1: Character to study: Barnabas

Step 2: Identify the verses that speak of the events of his life. Give a brief summary of the verse(s).

Answer:

Acts 4:36-37: Barnabas sells property and donates money to the church

Acts 9:27: Barnabas presents Saul/Paul to the Apostles in Jerusalem

Acts 11:22-26 : Barnabas sent to Antioch to confirm the work of God

Acts 11: 27-30 : Barnabas is sent to Judea with a gift for the church

Acts 12:25 : Barnabas and Saul return from their mission to Judea

Acts 13:1-7 : Barnabas is to be sent out from the church

Acts 13:43-50 : Barnabas testify publicly of God's grace

Acts 14:12-20: Barnabas attempts to turn the people of Lystra to God

Acts 15:2-12: Barnabas speaks to the Jerusalem council about Gentile believers

Acts 15:22-35: Barnabas teaches and preaches in Antioch

Step 3: Make a chronological profile of the events of his life

Answer: Because the book of Acts is arranged chronologically, the above list is accepted to be in chronological order.

Step 4: Note the important events of his life

Answer:

Acts 4:36-37: Barnabas sells property and donates money to the church

Acts 9:27: Barnabas presents Saul/Paul to the Apostles in Jerusalem

Acts 11:22-26 : Barnabas sent to Antioch to confirm the work of God

Acts 13:1-7 : Barnabas is to be sent out from the church

Acts 13:43-50 : Barnabas testify publicly of God's grace

Acts 14:12-20: Barnabas attempts to turn the people of Lystra to God

Acts 15:2-12: Barnabas speaks to the Jerusalem council about Gentile believers

Acts 15:22-35: Barnabas teaches and preaches in Antioch

Step 5: Identify the main traits of his character

Answer:

Acts 4:36-37, says that the name “Barnabas” means, “son of encouragement”.

Barnabas lives up to this when he presents and defends Paul before the Apostles in chapter 4.

Barnabas also exhibits boldness and skill to preach/teach. He shows this in chapter 13, 14, and 15 when he is sent out to accompany Paul on his missionary trips.

Barnabas also demonstrates faithfulness in being selected to represent the church in chapters 11, 13 and 15.

Step 6: Identify and describe a personal application.

Application	Action plan (what I will do and when)	Trustworthy brother or sister
<i>Open answer</i>	<i>Open answer</i>	<i>Open answer</i>

3. Prepare an inductive Bible study on the text of your choice (length should be between 5 and 10 verses). Follow the 3 steps and note some Bible interpretation principles that you apply in your study.

Appendices: Bible Dictionary, Commentary and Concordance Entries; 1 Peter Outline

I. Bible Dictionary excerpts

PETER (PE' TER) PERSONAL NAME MEANING, "ROCK."

Four names are used in the New Testament to refer to Peter: the Hebrew name Simeon (Acts 15:14); the Greek equivalent Simon (nearly fifty times in the Gospels and Acts); Cephas, most frequently used by Paul (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal. 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14) and occurring only once outside his writings (John 1:42). Cephas and Peter both mean rock. Simon is often found in combination with Peter, reminding the reader that Simon was the earlier name and that Peter was a name given later by Jesus. The name Peter dominates the New Testament usage.

Family of Peter

The Gospels preserve a surprising amount of information about Peter and his family. Simon is the son of Jona, or John (Matt. 16:17; John 1:42). He and his brother, Andrew, came from Bethsaida (John 1:44) and were Galilean fishermen (Mark 1:16; Luke 5:2-3; John 21:3), in partnership with the sons of Zebedee, James and John (Luke 5:10). Peter was married (Mark 1:29-31; 1 Cor. 9:5) and maintained a residence in Capernaum (Mark 1:21, 29). Before becoming disciples of Jesus, Peter and Andrew had been influenced by the teaching of John the Baptist (John 1:35-42).

Role of Peter

Among the Disciples Peter is credited with being a leader of the twelve disciples, whom Jesus called. His name always occurs first in the lists of disciples (Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Matt. 10:2). He frequently served as the spokesman for the disciples (compare Mark 8:29) and was usually the one who raised the questions which they all seemed to be asking (Mark 10:28; 11:21; Matt 15:15; 18:21; Luke 12:41). Jesus often singled out Peter for teachings intended for the entire group of disciples (see especially Mark 8:29-33). As a member of the inner circle, Peter was present with Jesus at the raising of the synagogue ruler's daughter (Mark 5:35-41), at the Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-8), and at the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane (Mark 14:43-50). As representative disciple, Peter frequently typified the disciple of little faith. His inconsistent behavior (see Matt. 14:27-31) reached a climax with his infamous denial scene (Mark 14:66-72). Peter was, however, rehabilitated in the scene where the resurrected Jesus restored Peter to his position of prominence (John 21:15-19; compare Mark 16:7).

Peter's Role in the Early Church

Despite Peter's role among the disciples and the promise of his leadership in the early church (see especially Matt. 16:17-19), Peter did not emerge as the leader of either form of primitive Christianity. Though he played an influential role in establishing the Jerusalem church (see the early chapters of Acts), James, the brother of Jesus, assumed the leadership role of the Jewish community. Though Peter was active in the incipient stages of the Gentile mission (see Acts 10-11), Paul became the "apostle to the gentiles."

Peter probably sacrificed his chances to be the leader of either one of these groups because of his commitment to serve as a bridge in the early church, doing more than any other to

hold together the diverse strands of primitive Christianity. The Legacy of Peter Tradition holds that Peter died as a martyr in Rome in the 60's (1 Clem. 5:1-6:1). His legacy, however, lived on long after his death. Both 1 and 2 Peter in the New Testament are traditionally attributed to the apostle Peter. Significant also was the presence of a group of devotees of Peter who produced several writings in the name of the apostle - the Acts of Peter, the Gospel of Peter (and some would include 2 Peter). To a great extent, subsequent generations of the church rely on the confession, witness, and ministry of Peter, the devoted, but fallible follower of Christ.

(Mikeal C. Parsons, *Holman Bible Dictionary*, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1991, pages 1098-1100)

1 PETER (Pe' ter) Twenty-first book of the New Testament.

Authorship

The book was written from Rome (called Babylon in 5:13 for an unknown reason) by the apostle Peter. The opinion that the apostle Peter is the author is sustained by both history and careful investigation. Arguing from presuppositions about the character and background of Peter, some critics have emphatically rejected Petrine authorship. The opinion that the very fine quality of the language cannot be from a Galilean fisherman ignores the long history of Greek language in Galilee and the fact that Peter had preached for some thirty years by the time he wrote this book. Considering both style and church history, there is no compelling reason to reject Peter's authorship.

Canonicity

While some modern critics have rejected it, 1 Peter was not among the disputed books by the early church. Its omission in the list of accepted books in the Muratorian Canon is due to the incomplete nature of that text, not because there was any early doubt as to 1 Peter's acceptance.

The Date

During Nero's reign there was great persecution of believers, hence the most likely time period for the composition is around A.D. 62-64.

The Destination

The address is to churches of the provinces in northern Asia Minor which is modern Turkey (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia). When this area was evangelized, and what part Peter had in it is unknown unless one believes Paul worked this far north.

The Readers

They were converted Jews and Gentiles. Jewishness is implied in the use of the Old Testament and factors cited in 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2:4-9, 11-12. That some were Gentiles is supported in 1 Peter 1:14,18-19; 2:10. It is likely that the majority were Gentiles.

The Style

The Greek is much more literary in both vocabulary and syntax than one would expect from an ignorant fisherman, but Peter was likely well educated, although not in formal schools (Acts 4:13). His preparation for this task included his background as a tradesman, requiring

conversation with Greek-speaking men, training at the feet of Jesus, and the various meetings with the infant church and her leaders (Acts 1:12-2:42; 11:1-18; Gal. 1:18; 2:1-14). The place of the amanuensis in early literary work was greater than a modern secretary, and Silvanus (1 Pet. 5:12) could have been responsible for some of the stylistic sophistication.

The Purpose

The persecuted believers in Asia were encouraged to hope in God's ultimate deliverance, and hence remain steadfast in their persecutions.

Theological Contributions

The vicarious atonement is stated more clearly in 1 Peter 3:18 (see also 1:18-19; 2:24) than anywhere else in Scripture. This leads to the most difficult passage in the book and one of the most difficult in the entire Scriptures.

First Peter 3:18-22 has the following problems: (1) the meaning of "preached unto the spirits in prison" 3:19; (2) the mention of Noah, 3:20; and (3) "baptism doth also now save us." Two common positions are held regarding Christ preaching to spirits in prison: (1) it is a descent of Christ into Hades to announce that He had died for sinners and victory over Satan is assured; (2) the spirit of Christ was in Noah as he preached to no avail to that hard-hearted generation. Peter was not teaching a second chance for salvation after death. The statement about baptism does not infer that the act of dipping in water accomplishes what Scripture affirms elsewhere is done by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9). It is "not a removal of dirt," but the response of a good conscience to God (1 Pet. 3:21 NRSV).

The appeals to holiness and personal Christian living are everywhere apparent (1:14-2:12; 2:24-25; 3:8-13), but it is the biblical theology of suffering which pervades the book (1:6-9; 2:18-25; 3:9-17; 4:1-6; 4:12-19). His advice to family members is typically Jewish, reflecting his background (2:18-20; 3:1-7). The doctrine of eschatology is often mentioned (1:4, 7, 11, 13; 2:12; 4:7, 13). It is the basis for the appeal to holy living and patiently suffering unjustly, knowing that God will finally establish His kingdom with justice.

The Theme: "The Believer is to stand in God's true grace."

Outline

Introduction (1:1-2)

- I. The Coming of Grace in Salvation (1:3-2:12)
 - A. The theme presented (1:3-12)
 - B. Worked into life by holiness (1:13-2:12)
 1. Positive: what to be (1:13-25)
 2. Negative: what to avoid (2:1-12)
- II. The Outworking of Grace in Living (2:13-3:7)
 - A. Submission to Government (2:13-17)
 - B. Submission to Leaders (2:18-25)
 - C. Submission to Spouses (3:1-7)
- III. The Testing of Grace in Suffering (3:8—4:19)
- IV. The Summary of Standing in Grace (5:1-10)
 - A. Instructions to Elders (5:1-4)
 - B. Instructions to the Congregation (5:5-10)

Conclusion (5:11-14)

(Duane A. Dunham, *Holman Bible Dictionary*, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1991, pages 1100)

II. Bible Commentary Entries

ACTS

Outline of the Book

The outline used in this study is the result of using two keys in Acts. The first and most obvious one is the theme verse, Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The second key is the use Luke makes of "progress reports" which are sprinkled throughout the book (cf. 2:47; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31). Because Luke does not use a precise formula there is some debate as to the location of other progress reports (cf. 2:41; 4:31; 5:42; 8:25, 40; etc.). However, these other statements either do not have the same sense of summary or they lack finality...

The Internment at Jerusalem (1:6-26)

The Ascension (1:6-11)

1:6. The disciples' question, 'Lord are You at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' is most illuminating.

The sentence is introduced by the connective *so (men oun)*, which associates the thought of verse 6 with verse 5. In the disciples' minds the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the coming of the promised kingdom were closely associated. And well they should be, because the Old Testament frequently joined the two (cf. Isa. 32:15-20; 44:3-5; Ezek. 39:28-29; Joel 2:28-3:1; Zech. 12:8-10). When Christ told the disciples of the soon-coming Spirit baptism, they immediately concluded that the restoration of Israel's kingdom was near in time.

1:7. Some conclude from the Lord's response that the apostles had a false concept of the kingdom. But this is wrong. Christ did not accuse them of this. If the followers of the Lord Jesus had an incorrect view, this would have been the time for Him to correct it. The fact is, Christ taught the coming of an earthly, literal kingdom (cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:11-27; 22:28-30). Acts 1:3 states that the Lord instructed the disciples about the kingdom; He certainly gave them the right impression as to its character and future coming. What Jesus discussed here (v. 7) was the time of the coming of the kingdom. The Greek word for times (*chronous*) basically describes duration of times, and the word for dates (*kairous*) refers to both length of times and kinds of times (as in, e.g., "hard times"). The disciples were 'not... to know' either the times or the critical periods the Father had 'set by His . . . authority'. Later, further revelation would be made concerning these (cf. 1 Thes. 5:1).

1:8. This verse contrasts (*alla*, but) with verse 7. Instead of knowing the times or dates, the apostles were to be Christ's witnesses to the ends of the earth. This they were to do after they had been supernaturally empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The meaning of the clause 'you will be My witnesses' is subject to question. Is this a command, or is it a simple statement of fact? Grammatically the words may be taken either way, but because of 10:42 (cf. 4:20) it is clearly an imperative in the future tense.

Probably “the ends (singular, ‘end’ in the Gr. text) of the earth” looks to Rome, the proud center of world civilization in the Apostolic Age, a significant distance from Jerusalem (more than 1,400 miles, as the crow flies).

1:9-11. These verses describe the Lord’s Ascension but they also anticipate His return. He will come back in a cloud, bodily, in view of people (Rev. 1:7), and to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4) - the same way the apostles saw Him go.

The Ascension of Christ marked the conclusion of His ministry on earth in His bodily presence. It also exalted Him to the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33-36; 5:30-31; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2). At the same time the Ascension meant that the continuing work of Christ on earth was now placed in the hands of His disciples (Acts 1:1-2, 8).

It was imperative that the Ascension occur so that the promised Comforter could come (cf. John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 2:33-36). The Holy Spirit would empower the disciples as they ministered the gospel and waited for the kingdom. (Walvoord and Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL, 1983, pages 352 and 354)

1 PETER

II. Chosen for New Birth (1:3-2:10)

Peter continued to present the theological basis for encouragement in persecution. The stress throughout this section is on God’s grace toward believers, evidenced by His sovereign call to salvation and its results in a believer’s life. In the midst of trials one’s new birth is the source of a living hope and a lifestyle of holiness.

A. The new birth’s living hope (1:3-12)

In a doxology of praise to God, Peter encouraged his readers by reminding them that the new birth gave them a living hope in an imperishable future inheritance. The inheritance is sure because believers are shielded by the power of God till it is ready to be revealed. Consequently, Christians may rejoice even when they face trials, since trials will prove their faith genuine and thus bring greater glory to Christ. Finally the new birth’s hope is based not only on a future inheritance and present blessings but also on the written Word of God.

1. THE FUTURE INHERITANCE (1:3-5)

1:3. The contemplation of God’s grace caused Peter to praise God, the Author of salvation and the Source of hope. The words ‘Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ’ are identical in 2 Corinthians 1:3. The phrase ‘in His great mercy’ refers to God’s unmerited favor toward sinners in their hopeless condition. He has given us new birth; people can do nothing to merit such a gift. The words “has given . . . new birth” translate *anagennesas*, from the verb “beget again” or “cause to be born again.” It is used only twice in the New Testament, both times in this chapter (1 Peter 1:3, 23). Peter may have been recalling Jesus’ interview with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). The “new birth” results in ‘a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead’. The “living hope” is based on the living resurrected Christ (cf. 1 Peter 1:21). The Christian’s assurance in Christ is as certain and sure as the fact that Christ is alive! Peter used the word “living” six times (1:3, 23; 2:4-5; 4:5-6). Here “living” means that the believer’s hope is sure, certain, and real, as opposed to the deceptive, empty, false hope the world offers.

1:4. The sure hope is of a future inheritance (*kleronomian*). This same word is used in the Septuagint to refer to Israel's promised possession of the land (cf. Num. 26:54, 56; 34:2; Josh. 11:23); it was her possession, granted to her as a gift from God. A Christian's inheritance cannot be destroyed by hostile forces, and it will not spoil like over-ripened fruit or fade in color. Peter used three words, each beginning with the same letter and ending with the same syllable, to describe in a cumulative fashion this inheritance's permanence: can never perish (*aphtharton*), spoil (*amianton*), or fade (*amaranton*). This inheritance is as indestructible as God's Word (cf. 1 Peter 1:23, where Peter again used *aphtharton*). Each Christian's inheritance of eternal life is kept in heaven or "kept watch on" by God so its ultimate possession is secure (cf. Gal. 5:5).

1:5. Not only is the inheritance guarded, but heirs who have been born into that inheritance are shielded by God's power. "Shielded" (*phrouroumenous*) is a military term, used to refer to a garrison within a city (Phil. 4:7 uses the same Gr. word). What greater hope could be given to those undergoing persecution than the knowledge that God's power guards them from within, to preserve them for an inheritance of salvation that will be completely revealed to them in God's presence. Believers possess salvation now (pres. tense) but will sense its full significance at the return of Christ in the last time. This final step, or ultimate completion of "the salvation of their souls" (1 Peter 1:9), will come "when Jesus Christ is revealed," a clause Peter used twice (vv. 7, 13). (Walvoord and Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL, 1983, pages 840-841)

III. Concordance Entries

Most concordances only give the most abbreviated form of the reference possible. References which do not give the book name or chapter mean that it is the same as the reference just above it. You must also be aware that each different translation of the Bible should have its own corresponding concordance, because the words used from one translation to the next may vary for many reasons. For example, one translator might use the word "protect" and a different translator might use the word "guard" instead, because, as synonyms, they are close to one another in meaning.

The sample given below is taken from the well-known *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, which was produced for use with the King James translation. Even though some of the verb forms and pronouns may be unfamiliar to the modern student, the references will send you to the right verses in whatever translation of the Bible you are using.

Cephas

Joh 1:42 thou shalt be called C, which is
1Co 1:12 and I of Apollos: and I of C
3:22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or C
9:5 as the brethren of the Lord, and C
15:5 he was seen of C, then of the
Ga 2:9 And when James, C, and John,

Deliver

Mt 5:25 adversary d thee to the judge
25 and the judge d thee to the officer
6:13 temptation, but d us from evil
10:17 will d you up to the councils
19 But when they d you up, take
21 the brother shall d up the brother
20:19 And shall d him to the Gentiles
24: 9 Then shall they d you up to the
26:15 and I will d him unto you

27:43 let him d him now, if he will have
Mr 10:33 and shall d him to the Gentiles
13: 9 they shall d you up to councils
11 and d you up, take no thought
Lu 11:4 temptation: but d us from evil
12:58 the judge d thee to the officer
20:20 that so they might d him unto the
Ac 7:25 God by his hand would d them
34 and am come down to d them
21:11 and shalt d him into the hands of
25:11 no man may d me unto them
16 to d any man to die, before that
Ro 7:24 who shall d me from the body of
1Co 5:5 To d such an one unto Satan
2Co 1:10 a death, and doth d in whom
10 we trust that he will yet d us
2Co 1:10 hope that he will continue to d
us
Ga 1:4 that he might d us from this
2Ti 4:18 the Lord shall d me from every
Heb 2:15 and d them who through fear of
2Pe 2: 9 The Lord knoweth how to d the

Deliverance

Lu 4:18 to preach d to the captives, and
Heb 11:35 were tortured, not accepting d

Delivered

Mt 11:27 All things are d unto me of my
18:34 and d him to the tormentors, till
25:14 and d unto them his goods
27:2 and d him to Pontius Pilate the
18 that for envy they had d him
26 Jesus, he d him to be crucified
68 commanded the body to be d
Mr 7:13 your tradition, which ye have d
9:31 is d into the hands of men, and
10:33 the Son of man shall be d unto
15: I him away, and d him to Pilate
10 chief priests had d him for envy
15 and d Jesus, when he had scourged
Lu 1:2 Even as they d them unto us
57 time came that she should be d
74 that we being d out of the hand
2:6 accomplished that she should be d
4:6 of them; for that is d unto me

17 was d unto him the book of the
7:15 And he d him to his mother
9:42 and d him again to his father
44 Son of man shall be d into the
10:22 things are d to me of my Father
12:58 that thou mayest be d from him
18:32 For he shall be d unto the Gentiles
19:13 d them ten pounds, and said unto
23:25 but be d Jesus to their will
24:7 must be d into the hands of sinful
20 and our rulers d him to be
Job 16:21 as soon as she is d of the child
18:30 we would not have d him up unto
35 chief priests-have d thee unto me
36 that I should not be d to the Jews
19:11 therefore he that d me unto thee
16 Then d he him therefore unto
Ac 2:23 Him being d by the determinate
3:13 whom ye d up, and denied him
6:14 the customs which Moses d us
7:10 And d him out of all his afflictions
12:4 and d him to four quaternions of
11 and hath d me out of the hand of
15:30 together, they d the epistle
16:4 d them the decrees for to keep
23:33 d the epistle to the governor
27: I they d Paul and certain other
28:16 the centurion d the prisoners to
17 yet was I d prisoner from
Ro 4:25 He was d over to death for our
sins
6:17 form of doctrine which was d you. '
7:6 now we are d from the law
8:21 shall be d from the bondage of
32 own Son, but d him up for us all
15:31 That I may be d from them that
1Co 11:2 ordinances, as I d them to you
23 which also I d unto you, that the
15:3 For I d unto you first of all that
24 when he shall have d up the
2Co 1:10 Who d us from so great a death
4:11 are always d unto death for Jesus
Col 1:13 d us from the power of darkness
1Th Jesus which d us from the wrath
2Th 3: 2 we may be d from unreasonable
1Ti 1:20 whom I have d unto Satan, that

Guard

Mk 13:33 Be on g! Be alert!
 Lk 12:1 Be on your g against the yeast
 12:15 Be on your g against all kinds
 Ac 20:31 So be on your g! Remember
 1Co 16:13 Be on your g; stand firm
 Php 4:7 will g your hearts and your minds
 1Ti 6:20 g what has been entrusted
 2Ti 1:14 G the good deposit that was

Inheritance

Mt 21:38 kill him and let us seize on his i
 Mr 12:7 kill him and the i shall be ours
 Lu 12:13 that be divide the i with me.
 20:14 kill him, that the i may be ours
 Ac 7:5 And he gave him none i in it
 20:32 to give you an i among all them
 26:18 i among them which are sanctified
 Ga 3:18 if the i be of the law, it is no more
 Eph 1:11 In whom we obtained an i
 14 is the earnest of our i until the
 18 of the glory of his i in the saints
 5:5 hath any i in the kingdom of Christ
 Col 1:12 be partakers of the i of the saints
 9:24 shall receive the reward of the i
 Heb 1: 4 as he hath by i obtained a more
 9:15 receive the promise of eternal i
 11:8 he should alter receive for an
 1Pe 1:4 an i incorruptible, and undefiled

Peter

Mt 4:18 And Simon called P, and Andrew
 10:2 The first. Simon, who is called
 14:28 P answered him and said. Lord
 29 when P was come down out of the
 15:15 Then answered P and said unto
 16:16 And Simon P answered and said
 18 That thou art P and upon this
 22 P took him. and began to rebuke
 23 said unto P. Get thee behind me
 17:1 Jesus taketh P, James, and John
 4 Then answered P and said unto
 24 received tribute money came to P
 26 P saith unto him, Of strangers
 18:21 Then came P to him and said
 19:27 answered P and said unto him

26:33 P answered and said unto him
 35 P said unto him, Though I should
 37 P and the two sons of Zebedee
 40 saith unto P, What could ye not
 58 P followed him afar off unto the
 69 Now P sat without in the palace
 73 said to P, Surely thou also art one
 75 P remembered the word of Jesus
 Mr 3:16 And Simon he surnamed P
 5:37 to follow him, save P. and James
 8:29 P answereth and saith unto him
 32 P took him, and began to rebuke
 33 he rebuked P, saying, Get thee
 9:2 Jesus taketh with him P, and
 5 P answered and said to Jesus
 10:28 P began to say unto him. Lo, we
 11:21 P calling to remembrance saith
 13:3 P and James and John...Andrew
 14:29 P said unto him. Although all
 33 he taketh with him P and James
 37 saith unto P Simon, sleepest thou?
 54 P followed him afar off, even into
 66 P was beneath in the palace, there
 67 when she saw P warming himself
 70 said again to P. Surely thou art
 72 P called to mind the word that
 16:7 tell his disciples and P that be
 Lu 5:8 When Simon P saw it. he tell down
 6:14 Simon, (whom be also named P
 8:45 P and they that were with him
 51 suffered no man to go in, save P
 9:20 P answering said. The Christ of
 28 he took P and John and James
 32 But P and they that were with him
 33 P said unto Jesus, Master, it is
 12:41 P said unto him. Lord. speakest
 18:28 Then P said, Lo, we have left all
 22:8 And he sent P and John, saying
 34 I tell thee P, the cock shall not
 54 house. And P followed afar off
 55 together. P sat down among them
 58 them. And P said. Man. I am not.
 60 P said. Man. I know not what thou
 61 Lord turned, and looked upon P
 61 P remembered the word of the
 62 And P went out and wept bitterly
 24:12 Then arose P and ran unto the

Joh 1:44 Bethsaida, city of Andrew and P
6:68 Simon P answered him. Lord. to
13:6 Then cometh he to Simon P : and
6 P saith unto him. Lord. dost thou
8 P saith unto him. Thou shalt be
9 Simon P saith unto him, Lord, not
34 Simon P therefore beckoned to
36 Simon P said unto him, Lord
37 P said unto him, Lord, why cannot
18:10 Simon P having a sword drew it
11 said Jesus unto P, Put up thy
15 And Simon P followed Jesus, and
16 P stood at the door without. Then
16 kept the door and brought in P
17 damsel that kept the door unto P
18 P stood with them, and warmed
25 And Simon P stood and warmed
26 his kinsman whose ear P cut off
27 P then denied again: and
20:2 runneth and cometh to Simon P
3 P therefore went forth, and that
4 the other disciple did outrun P
6 cometh Simon P following him
21: 2 together Simon P and Thomas
3 Simon P saith unto them. I go a
7 loved saith unto P, It is the Lord
7 P beard that it was the Lord
11 Simon P went up, and drew the
15 Jesus saith to Simon P, Simon
17 P was grieved because he said
20 P turning about, seeth the
21 P seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord
Ac 1:13 where abode both P and James
15 P stood up in the midst of the
2:14 P, standing up with the eleven,
37 unto P and to the rest of the
38 Then P said unto them. Repent
3:1 P and John went up together into
3 seeing P and John about to do
4 P, fastening his eyes upon him
6 P said. Silver and gold have I
11 which was healed held P and John
12 when P saw it lie answered unto
4:8 P, filled with the Holy Ghost, said
13 saw the boldness of P and John
19 P and John answered and said
5:3 P said. Ananias, why hath Satan

8 P answered unto her. Tell me
9 P said unto her. How is it that
15 the shadow of P passing by might
29 P and the other apostles answered
8:14 they sent unto them P and John
20 But P saith unto him. Thy money
9: 32 P passed throughout all quarters
34 P said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus
38 disciples had heard that P was
39 Then P arose and went with them
40 P put them all forth, and kneeled
40 and when she saw P, she sat up
10:5 one Simon, whose surname is P
9 P went up upon the housetop to
13 voice to him, Rise, P, kill and eat
14 P said. Not so. Lord; for I have
17 P doubted in himself what this
18 which was surnamed P, were
19 While P thought on the vision
21 P went down to the men which
23 morrow P went away with them
25 as P was coming in. Cornelius met
26 P took him up, saying, Stand up
32 Simon, whose surname is P
34 P opened his mouth, and said
44 P yet spake these words, the Holy
45 as many as came with P
46 magnify God. Then answered P
11:2 P was come up to Jerusalem
4 P rehearsed the matter from the
7 unto me. Arise, P, slay and eat
13 for Simon, whose surname is P
12:3 proceeded further to take P also
5 P therefore was kept in prison
6 P sleeping between two soldiers
7 he smote P on the side and raised
11 when P was come to himself, he
13 as P knocked at the door of the
14 told how P stood before the gate
16 But P continued knocking: and
18 soldiers, what was become of P
15:7 P rose up, and said unto them
Ga 1:18 I went up to Jerusalem to see P
2: 7 of the circumcision was unto P
8 he that wrought effectually in P
11 But when P was come to Antioch
14 I said unto P before them all

1Pe 1:1 P, an apostle of Jesus Christ

2Pe 1:1 Simon Peter

Peter's

Mt 8:14 Jesus was come into P s house

Joh 1:40 him was Andrew, Simon P s brother

6:8 Andrew, Simon P s brother, saith

Ac 12:14 And when she knew P s voice, she

Preserve

Lu 17:33 shall lose his life shall p it

2Ti 4:18 p me unto his heavenly kingdom

Preserved

Mt 9:17 into new bottles, and both are p

Lu 5:38 into new bottles; and both are p

1Th 5:23 be p blameless unto the coming

Jude 1 and p In Jesus Christ and called

Protect

Joh 17:11 p them by the power of your name

17:15 that you p them from the evil one

2Th 3:3 and p you from the evil one

Protected

Joh 17:12 p them and kept them safe

Protects

1Co 13:7 It always p always trusts

Simon

Mt 4:18 S called Peter, and Andrew his

10:2 The first, S, who is called Peter.

4 S the Canaanite, and Judas

13:55 and Joses, and S, and Judas?

16:16 S Peter answered and said, Thou

17 Blessed art thou, S Bar-jona, for

17: 25 What thinkest thou. S of whom

26: 6 in the house of S the leper,

27: 32 a man of Cyrene, S by name: him

Mr 1:16 he saw S and Andrew his brother

29 entered into the house of S and

36 S and they that were with him

3:16 And S he surnamed Peter;

18 Thaddeus, and S the Canaanite.

6:3 and Joses, and of Judah, and S?

14:3 in the house of S the leper, as he

37 saith unto Peter, S, sleepest thou?

15:21 they compel one S a Cyrenian

Lu 5:4 he said unto S, Launch out into

5 And S answering said unto him,

8 When S Peter saw it, he fell down

10 which were partners with S

10 Jesus said unto S, Fear not: from

6:14 S, (whom he also named Peter)

15 of Alpheus, and S called Zelotes,

7:40 S, I have somewhat to say unto

43 S answered and said, I suppose

44 unto S, Seest thou this woman?

22:31 S, behold, Satan hath desired

23:26 away, they laid hold upon one S,

24:34 indeed, and bath appeared to S

Joh 1:40 was Andrew, S Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother S.

42 Thou art S, the son of Jona: thou

6:8 Andrew, S Peter's brother, saith

68 Then S Peter answered him. Lord.

71 of Judas Iscariot the son of S: for

13:6 Then cometh he to S Peter: and

9 S Peter saith unto him, Lord, not

24 S Peter therefore beckoned to him.

26 it to Judas Iscariot, the son of S

36 S Peter said unto him. Lord

18:10 S Peter having a sword drew it

15 S Peter followed Jesus, and so did

25 S Peter stood and warmed himself.

20:2 runneth, and cometh to S Peter

6 cometh S Peter following him, and

21: 2 There were together S Peter, and

3 S Peter saith unto them, I go a

7 when S Peter heard that it was

11 S Peter went up, and drew the net

15 Jesus saith to S Peter, S, son of

16:17 S, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

Ac 1:13 S Zelotes, and Judas the brother

8:9 there was a certain man, called S.

13 Then S himself believed also: and

18 when S saw that through laying

24 Then answered S and said, Pray
9:43 days in Joppa with one S a tanner
10:5 for one S, whose surname is Peter
6 He lodgeth with one S a tanner
18 S which was surnamed Peter
32 call hither S whose surname is
32 in the house of one S a tanner by
11:13 call for S, whose surname is Peter
2Pe 1:1 S Peter, a servant and an apostle

Simon's

Mr 1:30 But S wife's mother lay sick of a
Lu 4:38 and entered into S house
38 S wife's mother was taken with a
5:3 into one of the ships, which was S
Joh 12:4 disciples, Judas Iscariot, S son
13:2 the heart of Judas Iscariot, S, son
Ac 10:17 had made enquiry for S house

Subject

Mt 5:22 angry with his brother will be s
Lu 2:51 Nazareth, and was s unto them
10:17 devils are s unto us through thy
20 not that the spirits are s unto you
Ro 8:7 for it is not s to the law of God
20 the creature was made s to vanity
13:1 every soul be s unto the higher
5 Wherefore ye must needs be s not
1Co 14:32 the prophets are s to the
prophets
15: 28 the Son also himself be s unto him
Eph 5:24 as the church is s unto Christ
Col 2:20 the world, are ye s to ordinances
Tit 3:1 in mind to be s to principalities
2:5 and to be s to their husbands
2:9 slaves to be s to their masters
Heb 2:15 all their lifetime s to bondage
Jas 5:17 Elias... a man s to like passions
1Pe 2:18 Servants, be s to your masters
3:22 powers being made s unto him
5:5 all of you be s one to another

Subjected

Ro 8:20 For the creation was s

Subjection

1Co 9:27 my body, and bring it into s
2Co 9:13 your professed s unto the gospel
Ga 2:5 To whom we gave place by s
1Ti 2:11 woman learn in silence with all s
3:4 his children in s with all gravity
Heb 2: 5 not put in s the world to come
8 Thou hast put all things in s under
8 in that be put all in s under him
12: 9 rather be in s unto the Father of
1Pe 3: 1 be in s to your own husbands
5 in s unto their own husbands

Submission

1Co 14:34 but must be in s, as the Law
1Ti 2:11 learn in quietness and full s

Submission

Jas 3:17 then peace-loving, considerate s
1Pe 3:1 in the same way be s
5:5 in the same way be s

Submit

Ro 13:1 Everyone must s himself
13:5 necessary to s to the authorities
1Co 16:16 That ye s yourselves unto such
Eph 5:21 S to one another out of
reverence
22 Wives, s yourselves unto your
Col 3:18 Wives, s yourselves unto your
own
Heb 12: 9 How much more should we s
13:17 rule over you, and s yourselves
Jas 4:7 S yourselves therefore to God
1Pe 2:13 S yourselves to every ordinance
18 s yourselves to your masters
5:5 S yourselves unto the elder

Submits

Eph 5:24 Now as the church s to Christ

Submitted

Ro 10:3 have not s themselves unto the

Submitting

Eph 5:21 S yourselves one to another in

Witness

Mt 15:19 thefts, false w, blasphemies
 19:18 steal. Thou shalt not bare false w
 24:14 preached in all the world for a w
 28:59 sought false w against Jesus
 62 is it which these w against thee?
 27:13 many things they w against thee?
 Mr 10:19 Do not bare false w. Defraud not
 14:55 sought for w against Jesus
 56 many bare false w against him
 56 but their w agreed not together
 57 and bare false w against him
 59 neither so did their w agree
 60 is it which these w against thee?
 15: 4 many things they w against thee.
 Lu 4:22 all bare him w and wondered at
 11:48 Truly ye bare w that ye allow the
 18:20 Do not bare false w. Honour thy
 22:71 What need we any further w
 Joh 1:7 The same came for a w to bear
 7 to bear w of the Light, that all
 8 was sent to bear w of that Light
 15 John bare w of him, and cried
 3:11 seen; and ye receive not our 10
 26 Jordan, to whom thou barest w
 28 Ye yourselves bear me w. that I
 5:31 If I bear w of myself
 31 my w is not true
 32 is another that beareth w to me
 32:1 know that the w which he
 33 and he bare w unto the truth
 36 have greater w than that of John
 36 works that I do bear w of me
 37 hath sent me, hath borne w of me
 8:18:1 am one that bear w of myself
 18 that sent me beareth w of me
 10:26 Father's name, they bear w of me
 15:27 ye also shall bear to', because ye
 18:23 spoken evil, bear w of the evil
 37 I should bear w unto the truth
 Ac 1:22 be a w with us of his resurrection
 4:33 the apostles w of the resurrections
 7:44 tabernacle of w in the wilderness
 10:43 To him give all the prophets
 14:17 he left not himself without W

15:8 knoweth the hearts, bare them w
 22:5 the high priest doth bear me w
 15 thou shall be his w unto all men
 23:11 must thou bear w also at Borne
 26:16 and a w both of these things
 Ro 1:9 For God is my w, whom I serve
 2:15 their conscience also bearing w
 8:16 Itself beareth w with our spirit
 9:I not my conscience bearing me w
 13:9 Thou shalt not bear false w
 1Th 2:5 a cloak of covetousness; God to w
 Tit 1:13 This w is true. Wherefore rebuke
 Heb 2:4 God also bearing them w both
 10:15 the Holy Ghost also is a w to us
 11:4 obtained 10" that he was righteous
 Jas 5:3 the rust of them shall be a w
 1Pe 5:1 a w of the sufferings of Christ
 1Jo 1:2 we have seen it and bear w
 5:6 And it is the Spirit that beareth w
 8 are three that Dear w in earth
 9 It we receive the w of men
 9 the w of God to greater
 9 this to the w of God which he hath
 10 Son of God hath the win himself
 3Jo 6 have borne w of thy charity
 Re 1:5 Christ, who to the faithful w
 3:14 the faithful and the true w, the
 20:4 beheaded tor the w of Jesus

Witnessed

Ro 3:21 being w by the law add the siw
 1Ti 6:13 Pontius Pilate w a good
 confession
 Heb 7:8 them, of whom it w that he liveth

Witnesses

Mt 18:16 in the mouth of two or three w
 23:31 be ye w unto yourselves
 26:60 though many false w came yet
 60 At the last came two false w
 65 What further need have we of w
 Mr 14:63 what need we any further w
 Lu 24:48 And ye are w of these things
 Ac 1:8 and ye shall be w unto me both in
 2:32 raised up. whereof we all are w
 3:15 from the dead; whereof we are w

5:32 And we are his w to these things
6:13 And set up false W. which said
7:58 and the w laid down their clothes
10:39 we are w of all things which he did
41 but unto w chosen before of God
13:31 who are his w unto the people
20:23 the Holy Ghost w in every city
1Co 15:15 and we are found false w of
God
2Co 13:1 In the mouth of two or three w
1Th 2:10 Ye are w and God also how holily

ITi 5:19 but before two or three w
6:12 a good profession before many w
2Ti 2: a hast heard of me among many w
Heb 10:28 mercy unto two or three w
12:1 about with so great a cloud of w
Re 11:3 I will give power unto my two w

Witnessing

Ac 26:22 w both to small and great, saying

IV. Outline of 1 Peter on following page

IV. Schematic Outline of 1 Peter using inverted parallel structure (chiasm)

1:1-2	1:3-25	2:1-12	2:11-3:9	3:8-4:19	5:1-11	5:12-14
Title: Address	Title: The Hope of the New Birth	Title: The privilege of our calling to belong to God	Title: Submission as a good testimony	Title: Willing to suffer for righteousness	Title: Final Exhortations to the Church	Final Greetings
Main Points: 1) Address v1 2) Triune Action in Election v2a 3) Salutation: Grace & Peace v2b	Main Points: 1) Our New Birth in light of a living and imperishable hope 1.3-4 2) A glorious faith, producing joy and love in light of future salvation 1.5-9 3) Salvation in Christ long expected but now revealed for you 1.10-12 4) A wise and pure conduct as children born of God 1.13-17 3a) Redemption by the precious blood of Christ is revealed in these last days for you 1.18-20 2a) Purifying faith in God and love for the brothers 1.21-22 1a) Our New Birth by the living and permanent Word of God 1.23-25	Main Points: 1) As newly born children seek the pure word, refusing wickenness v1-2 2) Experiencing the goodness of the Lord v3 3) Identity: Living Stones, a priesthood to offer sacrifices v4-5 4) The Cornerstone believed, protection from shame v6 5) Honor for you 7a 5a) Not for unbelievers 7b 4a) The Cornerstone rejected, a cause of stumbling v7b-8 3a) Identity: a priesthood to announce his attributes v9 2a) Experiencing the mercy of God in belonging to him v10 1a) As foreigners, Have a good conduct, abstaining from desires 11-12	Main Points: 1) Exhortation to conduct ourselves well as sojourners, to give a good witness 2.11-12 2) Submission to the king, Honor to all For the Lord's sake 2.13-17 3) Servants, submit yourselves to your masters v 2.18-20 (in the example of Christ v21) 4) Christ's example of suffering for our salvation 2.21-25 3a) Wives, submit to your husband In the example of Sara (& Christ) 3.1-6 2a) Husbands, Honor your wives as co-heirs (inheritors) to not block access in prayer 3.7 1a) Exhortation to be united in love and compassion, to fulfil our blessed calling 3.8-9	Main Points: 1a) Exhortation: Have the same mind: Love and humility, blessing those who insult us 3.8-9 b) Motivation/Exhortation : The promise of blessing for doing good 3.9b-13 c) Exhortation: Be happy to suffer for righteousness 3.14-17 <u>2) Motivation: Christ's example. Unjust death bringing salvation. Resurrected & glorified 3.18-22</u> 1a) Exhortation: Be armed with the same thought, forsaking lusts, Ready to suffer maligning from those who will be condemned 4.1-6 b) Motivation/Exhortation: the End is near; Have a conduct that glorifies God 4.7-11 c) Exhortation: Be ready for trials, joyful to suffer for Christ for doing good, confident in face of judgement 4.12-19	Main Points: 1) To the Elders: Shepherd the flock, As examples v1-4 2) To the Youth: Be submitted and humble v5-7 3) To all: Beware of the devil's attacks v8-11 -	Main Points: 1) Comments about the epistle; Standing in Grace v12 2) Greetings v13-14a 3) Final Benediction: Peace v14b

Endnotes

ⁱ With regard to the “future inheritance” that is yours, reserved in heaven; Peter’s point is that you were saved in order to receive this inheritance. In other words, your salvation had from the very beginning an eternal perspective. You were not just saved to have a better life on earth, or to get relief from pain and suffering. Rather the goal of your salvation is, and has always been, an eternal inheritance.

With regard to “God’s protection”, Peter seems to be making the point that God’s salvation also involves His effort, coupled with your faith, to protect and preserve you from those things that might prevent you from arriving in Heaven to receive your inheritance.

ⁱⁱ When we speak of the “closeness” of one verse to another we are speaking about textual and theological proximity. In other words, we look first for other uses of the idea in the same book by the same writer, then in another book by another writer, or in a similar type of literature (i.e. a different Gospel, another epistle), then elsewhere in the same testament (i.e. New Testament or Old Testament). Obviously the more support we can find for our interpretation in passages “close” to ours, the more we can be sure that our interpretation is justified.

ⁱⁱⁱ a verse or verses that seem(s) to best summarize the message of the section of the Bible you are studying

^{iv} The Epistles are New Testament letters and include: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 and 2 and 3 John, and Jude