

I & II PETER

Bible Study Guide

Welcome to another series of Home Bible Studies

Your participation is an important part of the program. The leader of your group will be encouraged by your regular attendance, and you will have the opportunity to share the results of your personal study. The Bible studies will be of greatest benefit to you if you commit yourself to:

1. *Reading the assigned Scriptures*
2. *Answering the questions in your study guide BEFORE YOU COME TO THE GROUP STUDY*
3. *Identify the problems you have with the assigned passage and be prepared to ask questions*
4. *Share the insights gained in your personal study with the group*

This year we have included a question which requires you to make a personal application of the passage being studied. You will not be asked to share your response with the group, but your answer will help you to put your knowledge to work.

The Scriptures chosen for this study are the First and Second Epistles of Peter, with two preliminary studies on Peter's life. We would ask you to remember during the study that Peter's stated purpose is:

"TO STIMULATE YOU TO WHOLESOME THINKING." II Peter 3:1

The study will be divided as follows:

- Study 1 - The Life of Peter the Disciple - The Gospels
- Study 2 - The Life and Ministry of Peter the Apostle - Acts
- Study 3 - I Peter 1:1 -12
- Study 4 - I Peter 1:13 -2:3
- Study 5 - I Peter 2:4 -12
- Study 6 - I Peter 2:13 -3:7
- Study 7 - I Peter 3:8 - 22
- Study 8 - I Peter 4:1 -19
- Study 9 - I Peter 5:1 -14
- Study 10 - II Peter 1:1 -11
- Study 11 - II Peter 1:12 -2:3
- Study 12 - II Peter 2:4 - 22
- Study 13 - II Peter 3:1 - 9
- Study 14 - II Peter 3:10 -18

Study 1

Peter the Disciple

READ: John 1:35—50, Luke 5:1—11, Mark 1:14—20, Matthew 4:18—22

1. Write a paragraph describing the order of events and identify the people involved in Peter's call to discipleship. (Use back of page)

There are many other references to Peter and the other disciples in the four gospels. In this study, we will use primarily the Gospel of Matthew. For further study, the parallel passages are listed in parenthesis.

READ: Matthew 10:1—42 (Mark 3:13—18, Luke 6:12—16, Luke 9:1—6)

2. List the instructions, warnings and rewards which Jesus offers to His disciples in this chapter.

READ: Matthew 16:13—20 (Mark 8:27—30, Luke 9:18—21)

3. Why is Peter able to identify Jesus as the Christ?

READ: Matthew 16:21—23

4. Why do you think Peter makes the mistake recorded in this chapter?

READ: Matthew 17:1—13 (Mark 9:2—9, Luke 9:28—36)

5. What does Peter learn about Jesus from this experience?

READ: Matthew 19:23—30 (Mark 10:27—31, Luke 18:28—30)

6. a) Why does Peter ask this question?

b) What is promised to Peter? to us?

READ: Matthew 26:30-35 (Mark 14:27-31, Luke 22:31-34) Matthew 26:69-75 (Mark 16:66-72, Luke 22:54-62, John 18:15-27)

7. What do you learn about Peter from these Scriptures?

What lesson is there for us in this experience of Peter's?

READ: John 21:15—25

8. In this passage, Jesus challenges and commissions Peter.

a) What is the challenge?

b) What is the commission?

9. Is there some action or activity that your Bible study group could take to strengthen your commitment to discipleship?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

10. Which of these lessons in discipleship do you most need to appropriate to yourself this week?

Study 2

Peter the Apostle

Peter is much loved by Christians for his forthrightness and courage. However, part of his appeal may be his frequent failures observed in the Gospels. Peter is not perfect in the Acts but the key word that describes him after the ascension of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit is change. We want to note that change, and experience it through this lesson.

READ: Acts 1:12—23

1. What similarities can you discover between Peter in Acts and Peter in the Gospels. Are there any differences?

READ: Acts 2:1—41

2. List the differences you discover between Peter in Acts 2 and Peter in the Gospels. Are there any similarities?
3. Explain the change you observed? Is this experience available for us?

READ: Acts 3:1—10 and 4:5—11

4. What is the prominent characteristic being demonstrated in Peter?

READ: Acts 5:17—32

5. What is the prominent characteristic being demonstrated in Peter and the apostles?

READ: Acts 10:1—27

6. Comment on the lessons God is teaching Peter in this section.

READ: Acts 10:24—48

7. Peter's experience with Cornelius is often considered to be part of his commission given in Matt. 16:17—19; what do you think?

READ: Acts 11:1—18

8. List the characteristics displayed by Peter as he faces the objections of the church at Jerusalem.
9. Review the characteristics observed in answering questions 4, 5 and explain how each one could be an asset to ourselves as Christians.

READ: Gal. 2:1—16

10. A) What point is Paul making in v.1—10?
B) Explain Paul's objection to Peter's action v.11—13.
C) Why do you think Peter the Apostle reacted like he did?
D) Is this a common failure among Christians? Explain.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

11. What specific characteristic observed in Peter could be most useful in facing your present experiences? Trust God for its development.

Study 3

I Peter 1:1-10

READ: I Peter 1:1—2

1. Who is the author of this letter?
2. To whom is it written - how does the author identify those to whom he writes?
3. How does verse 2 define the term " *God's elect*"?
4. What conclusions can you come to regarding the Christian life on the basis of these verses?

READ: I Peter 1:3—9

5. Why is praise offered to God?
6. How does faith work for us, according to vs. 5?
7. What results when faith is tested?
8. What is the aim of this paragraph? (vs. 3—9)

READ: I Peter 1:10—12

9. Who are the prophets spoken of in v. 10?
10. How was their message revealed to them?
11. What was the subject of their revelation?
12. Do you think that any part of the experience of these Christians is missing in our Bible study group?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

13. What steps will you take to make joy a consistent part of your experience?

Study 4

I Peter 1:13 - 2:3

READ: I Peter 1:13—21

1. Note “therefore” (wherefore) in v.13; which fact presented in the foregoing section does it refer to?
2. List the three commands found in v.13.
3. What is the standard for Christian holiness?
4. Define holiness.
5. How do you think the commands of v.13 can help us observe holiness?
6. In what practical ways can a believer demonstrate holiness?
7. Explain why a believer is to “live his life as a stranger”. How does this concept fit the context of the passage?

READ: I Peter 1:22 — 2:3

8. How would you describe the cost of personal salvation as presented in v.18—21?
9. What is the result of obedience to truth?
10. Holiness is one outcome of the Gospel, what is a second outcome given in v.22? Discuss the relationship and relative value of the two characteristics.
11. Suggest some practical steps that will encourage obedience to v.1 of Chapter 2.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

12. Consider prayerfully the level of your craving of pure spiritual milk Ch.2:2 and develop ways and means of increasing your desire this week.

Study 5

I Peter 2:4 - 12

READ: I Peter 2:4—8

1. How is the living stone described in this passage?
2. The writer uses the same analogy (living stone) to describe the recipients of this letter. What does this tell us about them?
3. What are the activities in which these people can now engage?
4. From what source does Peter take his analogy?
5. a) What promise is given in these quotations?
b) What warning is given in these quotations?
6. What makes the difference between the two groups of people described in vs. 6—8?

READ: I Peter 2:9—12

7. List the descriptions given in vs. 9 and explain their meanings as you understand them.
8. How do Christians actually fulfill the purpose of their commission to declare the praises of Him who called them out of darkness?
9. Explain why sinful desires are detrimental to the soul.
10. Come prepared to discuss practical ways in which you can fulfill the command of vs. 12.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

11. Identify the activity from this passage which you most need to work on this week.

Study 6

I Peter 2:13 - 3:7

READ: I Peter 2:13 — 3:7

1. What three spheres of life require a submissive attitude on the part of the Christian?
2. List the reasons given for submission in each case. v.15, v.19, v.3:1.
3. How can the behaviour of a believer produce talk or halt talk among Non-Christians?
4. What does Peter mean when he says “live as free men” v.16?
5. In v.16, Peter warns against the use of liberty as if it were licence. Discuss how this would be done and give some illustrations..
6. Why does Peter introduce the example of Christ in this context, v.21—25?
7. List some of the ways a Christian may suffer for doing good.
8. Discuss today’s attitudes about rights in view of I Peter 2:18—20. Could this be relevant for today?
9. List the things that are considered to be an appropriate witness to the non—Christian husband in ch.3:l—6.
10. What do you think is meant by the statement in 3:7, “husbands in the same way.” What does the statement refer to?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

11. What steps could be taken to beautify our inner selves?

Study 7

I Peter 3:8-22

READ: I Peter 3:8—12

1. List the activities recommended in vs. 8 and 9.
2. The quotation in verses 10—12 is taken from Psalm 34:12—16. Read the passage in its context. Does Peter's use of this passage agree with the psalmist's? Explain.

READ: I Peter 3:13—22

3. Explain vs. 14 taking into consideration the first part of vs. 15.
4. How do you prepare yourself to implement the second part of vs. 15?
- 5.a) By what is the Christian's witness to be characterized?
- 5.b) Why?
6. What is the purpose for the reference to the death of Christ in vs. 18?

Verses 19 and 20:

".... The patristic exegesis of iii. 19f. regarded the 'disobedient' of Noah's day as typical of sinners who before the incarnation had no chance of hearing the gospel and repenting. The interval between the death and resurrection of Christ came later to be regarded (and especially in the Eastern Church) as the occasion when Jesus, by His descent into their 'prison', offered these 'spirits' life. Another suggestion for the meaning of this phrase refers to the proclamation of Christ's victory after His passion (with or without His offer of life) to the angels who fell by the unqualified use of pneumata, 'spirits', which is used elsewhere in the Bible only of supernatural beings, never of departed human beings."

New Bible Dictionary

7. Why is baptism said to be a means of salvation in vs. 21?
8. What is the significance of Christ's authority as described in vs. 22?
9. What are some practical suggestions for your Bible study group to fulfill the exhortation of vs. 8 and 9?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

10. Choose the activity from this passage which you most need to practice with God's help this week.

Study 8

I Peter 4:1-9

READ: I Peter 4:1—6

1. What results from "suffering in the body," v.1?
2. Explain what Peter means in v.1 when he says, "He who has suffered in the body is done with sin."
3. Describe in your own words the attitude of non—Christians to the changed life of former friends.
4. Conversion results in change, how does this change affect the Christian and the non—Christian? Is there enough emphasis on change among Christians today? If not, how should we increase the emphasis?
5. State v.6 in your own words.

READ: I Peter 4:7—11

6. List the things which should become very important to the Christian as the end time draws near? vs.7—11
7. Explain the statement "*love covers a multitude of sins.*"
8. Suggest ways by which we could help each other to fulfill v.7-11.

READ: I Peter 4:12—19

9. How does a Christian "*participate in the suffering of Christ*"?
10. What two kinds of suffering are possible for the Christian?
11. Overt persecution is not an experience of many North American Christians. How do we "*suffer as a Christian*"? Give an example.
12. Explain the statement "For it is time for judgement to begin with the family of God."

PERSONAL APPLICATION

13. Verse 10 says "each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others," are there ways you could obey this command more effectively this week?

Study 9

1 Peter 5:1-14

READ: 1 Peter 5:1-7

1. For whom are elders given responsibility?
2. How are they to serve?
3. What are elders to avoid as they serve?
4. What are elders' responsibilities?
5. To what temptation are young men susceptible regarding leadership?
6. What remedy for the above is recommended?

READ: 1 Peter 5:8—11

7. a) Why is it necessary for Christians to be self—controlled and alert (sober, vigilant — KJV)?
b) How do we resist?
8. What encouragement does the writer offer?

READ: 1 Peter 5:12—14

9. Why are we to stand fast (vs. 12)?
10. What could your group do to encourage the elders at Bethel?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

11. In what area of your life does the command to be self—controlled and alert need some work this week?

Study 10

II Peter 1:1-11

READ: II Peter 1:1-11

1. What is received through the righteousness of God?
2. What is received through the knowledge of God?
3. List the gift of God to the Christian from v.3—4.
4. Explain what it means to "*participate in the divine nature.*" What is a direct result?
5. In what practical ways should the truth of v.3 affect the progress .of our lives?
6. List what is to be added to faith in vs. 5—7
7. Consider your list from question 6 and suggest some logical relationship between each characteristic.
8. What results do these characteristics guarantee?
9. List some ways the lack of the characteristics of vs. 5—7 are apt to make us "ineffective and unproductive" in our knowledge of Christ.
10. In what way would a Christian who has not developed his Christian character be "*nearsighted and blind*"? We usually think of a person being either one or the other.
11. According to vs.10, what is the prime responsibility of a Christian?
12. What does it mean to "*make your calling and election sure*"? Does this statement question the fact of eternal security?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

13. What steps can you take this week to enrich your welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

Study 11

II Peter 1:12-20 & II Peter 2:1-3

READ: I Peter 1:12—20

1. Peter does not hesitate to write to these people who already know the truth.

a) What is his motivation in writing?

b) What does he hope to accomplish?

2. What claim does Peter make about his ministry?

3. Why is he a credible witness for the Lord Jesus Christ?

4. What did this experience confirm to Peter?

5. How do the words of the prophets affect us? (vs. 19)

6. Explain in your own words the meaning of vs. 20.

7. Why are the Scriptures reliable?

READ: II Peter 2:1—3

8. Peter contrasts false prophets with the prophets who were inspired by God. How are false prophets to be identified?

9. Provide an example of the way in which truth is brought into disrepute (*is evil spoken of* KJV).

10. a) What motivates false prophets?

b) What results to those who follow them?

11. How do you think a believer protects himself against false teachers?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

12. Peter had a convincing witness and sought to confirm the truth to those to whom he wrote. How can this study help you to improve your witness for Christ?

Study 12

II Peter 2:4-22

READ: II Peter 2:1—16

1. List the results of false teaching in v.1—3
2. What three illustrations does Peter use to show God's attitude to sin?
3. What is the similarity between each historical incident used as an illustration in v.4—8? You may want to review these stories in Genesis.
4. List the main identifying characteristics of false teachers in the passage.
5. Review your answer to question 3. Are there similarities with cult leaders today? Can you give a specific example?
6. What can we learn from this section about God's care for the righteous?

READ: II Peter 2:17—22

7. What can we learn about false teachers from the 2 metaphors in v.17?
8. Explain v.19—22 in your own words.
9. Are the false teachers Peter describes in our passage born again believers? Explain your answer.
10. What encouragement do we receive here as we witness the rapid development of false religion today?
11. List some facts which can help us to identify and overcome the forces of error.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

12. Do you occasionally find yourself tempted to turn back, if so, identify what is the usual cause and take steps to overcome. It may help to share your discovery with someone for prayer support.

Study 13

II Peter 3:1-9

READ: II Peter 3:1—9

1. For what purpose is this letter written?
2. How does Peter accomplish this?
3. Can you give an example from your own experience where the Scriptures have had this effect?
4. The last days will be characterized by a denial of ____?
5. What argument is used to support this position?
6. Is the argument valid? Why or why not?
7. What makes certain the fulfillment of God's promise?
8. Why has God's promise not been fulfilled so far?
9. How can we as a group counteract criticism of the teaching of Christ's

PERSONAL APPLICATION

10. How can you strengthen your expectation of Christ's return?

Study 14

II Peter 3:10-18

READ: II Peter 3:10—13

"The Day of the Lord is a protracted period commencing with the second advent of Christ in glory and ending with the cleansing of the heavens and the earth by fire preparatory to the new heavens and the new earth of the eternal state... The Day of the Lord thus comprehends specifically the closing phase of the Tribulation and extends through the Millennial Kingdom." - Unger's Bible Dictionary.

1. Why is the Day of the Lord "like a thief"?
2. How should the Day of the Lord affect our present life?
3. Explain what a holy and godly life is.
4. Comment on the relationship between the upcoming destruction and the present behaviour of Christians. How are the two things interrelated?
5. In what practical ways can we show that we are looking forward to the second coming of Christ?
6. In what practical ways can we "speed his coming" v.12?

READ: II Peter 3:14—18

7. What does v.14 mean when it asks us to be "spotless, blameless and at peace with him"?
8. What are the similarities between Paul's and Peter's writings?
9. Explain Peter's concern expressed in v.17 in your own words.
10. We are asked to "be on guard" in v.17. What suggestion can be given to help the bible study group fulfill this command.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

11. Assess your own present growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, plan how you can be active this week in further development.