



BIBLE-BASED
FELLOWSHIP
CHURCH
TAMPA BAY

MIDWK LOCKED-IN

Remaining Focused under Pressure
A 12-Week Study of 1 and 2 Peter.

— WEEK ONE —

Rejoice in Suffering

1 PETER 1:1-12

PASTOR ANTHONY C. WHITE

Icebreaker

Introduce yourself to someone in the room you do not already know. Share briefly about a time when you walked into a room, a school, a job, or a city where you did not know anyone and did not seem to fit in. How did you feel, and what did you do to overcome that feeling?

Setting the Scene

Peter calls his readers “elect exiles” in his very first line. That phrase holds two truths in tension. They are exiles, displaced, unsettled, and out of place. But they are also elect, chosen, known, and claimed by God before any displacement ever occurred. Before Peter ever asks anything of them, he grounds everything that will follow in the truth of their identity. He does not open with commands. He opens with who they already are.

Originally a fisherman by trade, Jesus called Simon to follow him and later called him Peter. Jesus prepared him to become a leader in the early church. Although Peter famously denied Jesus three times, Jesus restored him and he became a bold witness and apostle. Peter’s own experiences with failure, restoration, persecution, and perseverance gave him a unique perspective on remaining faithful under pressure.

The letter is written from Rome around 64 AD and is addressed to Gentile believers scattered throughout regions of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), living in pagan cultures that did not share biblical values. The Roman emperor Nero ruled during the time of Peter’s letter. In the wake of the Great Fire of Rome 64 A.D., fierce persecution broke out against Christians because Nero made them a scapegoat for the fire. Consequently, many endured great hardship, social pressure and were even executed just because of their faith.

Peter wrote to encourage believers to remain focused despite their suffering and pressure to compromise. He reminds us that our identity in Christ is secure, and our present trials do not alter God’s plan of salvation ready to be revealed to us.

Study Objectives

1. Discover four foundational truths about their identity in Christ.
2. Recognize how identity shapes our faith in times of testing.
3. Leave encouraged to live confidently as God's chosen people.

1 Peter 1:1-12 ESV

Greeting

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Born Again to a Living Hope

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Table Discussion

Working together as a group, discuss the following questions.

1. Peter calls his readers “elect exiles.” What does it feel like to be chosen by God but still feel out of place in your everyday life?

2. What “inheritance” described in verse 4 are you tempted to trade for something that feels more immediate?

3. In verses 6–7 trials prove and refine genuine faith. What is the difference between a trial that is refining you and one that is simply wearing you down?

4. Verses 8–9 describe a joy rooted in faith in Christ, even though we have not seen Him. What visible circumstances, possessions, relationships, or outcomes might you be relying on for joy instead of finding your joy in Christ?

5. Knowing that prophets and angels longed to understand this salvation, how does that change the weight you give to what you are living through right now?

In Summary



Before reacting to your challenging circumstance, disappointment, or trial, pause and ask yourself:

How do my responses to life's circumstances reflect my rejoicing in suffering?

Review the verses given in each box and identify one foundational truth in 3-4 words max for each section that instructs us in how to rejoice in suffering. Circle the one truth that affords you the most opportunity for growth.

1 Peter 1:1-2

1 Peter 1:3-5

1 Peter 1:6-9

1 Peter 1:10-12

Looking Ahead

Read the entire letter of 1 Peter and identify what you believe are recurring themes in the book. Write out the Bible memory verse below and commit it to memory.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Peter 2:9(ESV)

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of the darkness into his marvelous light.

Notes:





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If tonight was your first MDWK with us, thank you for being here. We don't take lightly that you chose to spend your Wednesday with us. We pray you felt welcomed, encouraged, and strengthened. We'd love to see you again soon, you're always welcome at The Base!