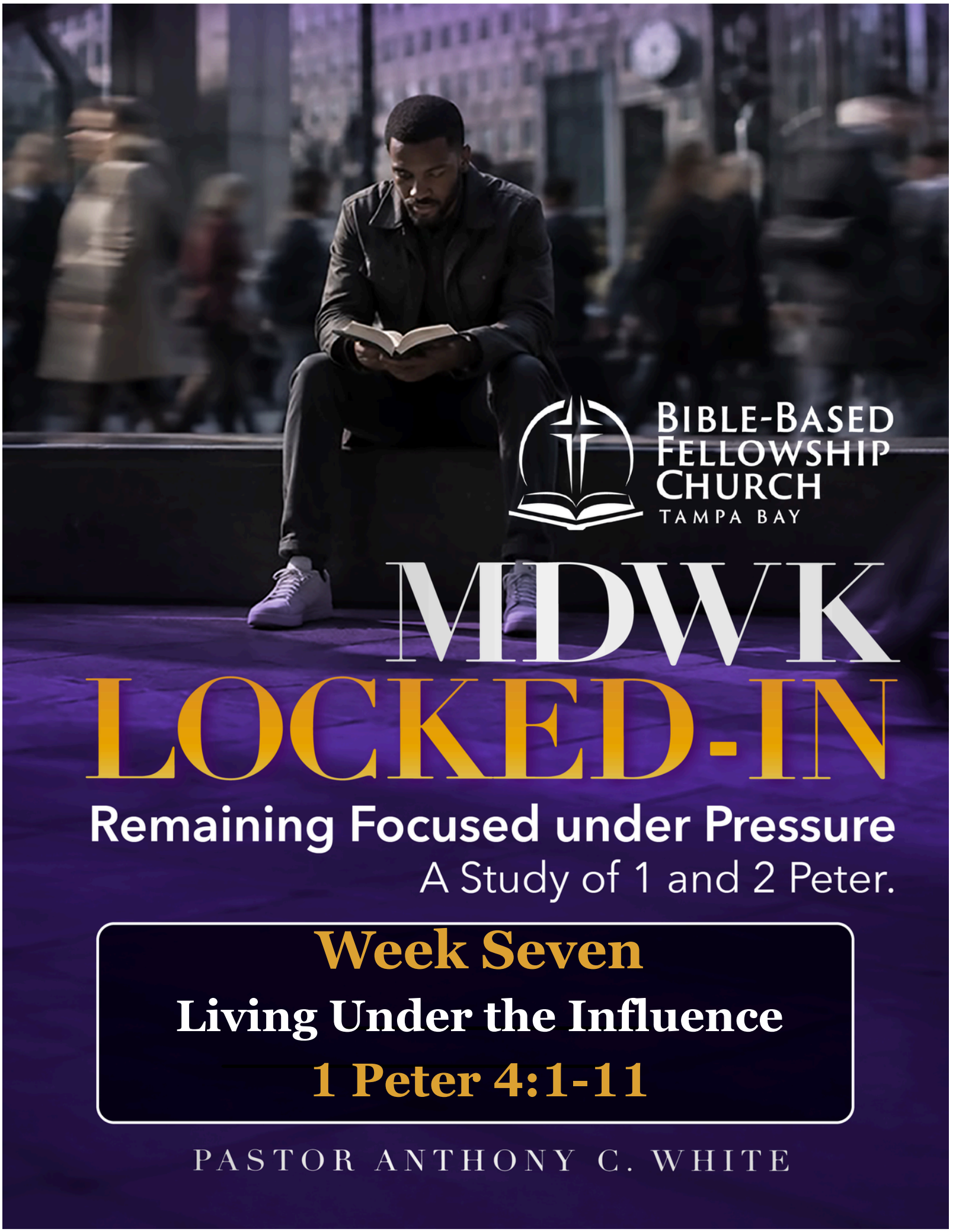
BIBLE-BASED
FELLOWSHIP
CHURCH
TAMPA BAY
MDWK
LOCKED-IN
Remaining Focused under Pressure
A Study of 1 and 2 Peter.
Week Seven
Living Under the Influence
1 Peter 4:1-11
PASTOR ANTHONY C. WHITE

Living Under the Influence

One of the most dangerous signs of being intoxicated is that you think you're fine when you really are not. You'll swear you can drive even though you have lost normal use of your faculties.

Physical and mental control becomes diminished because alcohol, drugs, or other substances interfere with how the central nervous system and brain process signals. It also affects a person's mood and impairs judgment such that a person may do things he/she would not otherwise do if not intoxicated.

People today are making decisions about relationships finances, health, and life while under the influence of something we often don't recognize. Besides alcohol or other substances, but it could be the influence of social media, cultural norms, television, fear, rage, or friends. These things may represent drivers behind how we view the world that influence the choices we make.

Many of Peter's readers were Gentiles who had come to Christ out of a pagan culture. In the cities of Asia Minor, social life, business, and religion were woven together. Merchants held regular banquets in honor of their patron gods, and those gatherings often included heavy drinking and sexual immorality. Showing up was simply part of how you kept your job, your clients, and your friends. When these believers stopped showing up, people noticed. Old friends were confused, then offended. Peter says they "are surprised when you do not join them" (v. 4). The word means they found it strange, foreign, like you had become a stranger in your own hometown.
Peter is writing to people paying a real social price for a sober mind.

Tonight, we press ahead to chapter four where Peter calls the believer to change their mental framework. He doesn't start with an outward action, but an inward attitude that then shifts our influence. What might it look like to live spiritually intoxicated under another influence? If the mind continues to be intoxicated with the world, we will never be able to stay locked in to God's will.

Study Objectives

1. Recognize other influences in our lives that we may not be aware of.
2. Renew our mental framework to change what drives our decisions.
3. Responsibly steward God-given gifts by using them to serve others and glorify God.

1 Peter 4:1-11 ESV

Stewards of God's Grace

4 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the
same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased
from sin, 2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for
human passions but for the will of God. 3 For the time that is past suffices
for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions,
drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. 4 With respect
to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of
debauchery, and they malign you; 5 but they will give account to him who
is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this is why the gospel was
preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the
way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.
7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-
minded for the sake of your prayers. 8 Above all, keep loving one another
earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Show hospitality to one
another without grumbling. 10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve
one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: 11 whoever speaks, as
one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the
strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be
glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever
and ever. Amen.

Table Talk

Discuss the following questions at your table and be willing to share.

1. Share a time when you decided to stop participating in something you once enjoyed because you realize it no longer reflects your walk with Christ. What did it cost you? What did it add?

   _____

   _____

2. What is the "flood" in our culture right now? What is everybody flowing with that is hard to swim against?

   _____

   _____

3. Share a short, honest story about a time you realized you had been under the influence of something that was *not* a substance: anger, fear, a relationship, an ambition, or someone's approval. Tell how God sobered you up. Keep it to two or three minutes so others have room.

   _____

   _____

3. When you think about the end being near, does it make you want to panic, check out, or get to work? Explain?

   _____

   _____

4. Of the three actions in verses 8–11 (love earnestly, open the door, use your gift), which one comes easiest to you? Which one do you avoid?

   _____

   _____

Summary

As we close, Peter reminds us that being a steward of God's grace is not simply about recognizing what God has given us; it is about allowing His grace to shape what we do with what He has given us.

First, grace changes how we _____. We are called to leave behind ways of living that no longer reflect Christ and intentionally pursue the will of God.

Second, grace changes how we _____. We demonstrate God's grace through earnest love, forgiveness, prayer, hospitality, and the way we respond to people—even when doing so is difficult.

Third, grace changes how we _____. God has given each of us gifts, abilities, opportunities, and resources. We are not owners of those gifts; we are stewards. We are called to put them to work serving others in the strength God provides.

Looking Ahead

What Am I Doing With What God Has Placed in My Hands?

As you reflect on 1 Peter 4:1–11, ask yourself:

- My Life: Am I living according to God's will?
- My Love: Am I extending grace to others?
- My Gifts: Am I using what God has given me to serve?
- My Attitude: Am I serving willingly and without complaining?
- My Purpose: Does what I do ultimately bring glory to God?

Final Challenge:

- What has God placed in your hands, and how will you use it this week to serve someone else?

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:

Black Sea
BITHYNIA and PONTUS
N
GALATIA
ASIA
Antioch
CAPPADOCIA
Ephesus
Colossae
Iconium
Lystra
Derbe
PISIDIA
Tarsus
CILICIA and SYRIA
Antioch
Asia Minor in the First Century
Salamis
Paphos
CYPRUS
Mediterranean Sea
0 200 Miles
0 200 Kilometers
Damascus
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GIVE

NEW HERE?

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!