

Session 1 Temporary Residents

1 Peter 1:13-25

Leader notes:

- The author is the Apostle Peter, but some have questioned whether a fisherman could have written such an eloquent letter. However, 5:12 indicates that Silas helped him draft the letter. It was written between 64-68 AD.
- The letter is an answer to Christians who are asking how to respond to the intense persecution Emperor Nero is placing on the early church. The Christians were being blamed for the massive fire that destroyed much of Rome in 64AD.
- It was during this period that Paul was beheaded, and Peter crucified. Peter wrote this letter to be circulated through most of the churches in Asia Minor.

Open:

- What did you do as a child that got you into real trouble?
- What toy or game did you enjoy most when you were 12 or younger?

Dig:

- Read 1 Peter 1:13-25
- From the 5 commands Peter gives in vv.13-15, how would you define “holy”?
- What reasons does Peter give for his commands? How can those reasons move us to obey?
- What does that OT imagery teach you about Jesus (vv.18-21)?
- Now that these people have put their faith in Jesus, what difference will that make in the way they think and act (1:22-2:2)?

Reflect:

- Are you more like a pilgrim, an explorer, or a land owner on this earth? Why?
- How does Peter’s call to holiness challenge you at home? Work? In Community? Church?
- In terms of time, effort, and money spent, which comes first for you: perishables or “forever” items? How can you verify that?
- Under stress, what helps you to “set your hope fully on the grace of God,” rather than to rely on your own wits to solve the problem?

Session 2 Temporary Residents

1 Peter 2:1-12

Leader notes:

- The author is the Apostle Peter, but some have questioned whether a fisherman could have written such an eloquent letter. However, 5:12 indicates that Silas helped him draft the letter. It was written between 64-68 AD.
- Many regarded Christians as strange, superstitious, and disloyal to Roman society. They often refused to serve in the Roman army because they would not take an oath to the emperor. Christians were often discriminated against and accused of misbehavior and were even brought into court on trumped up charges.
- Rather than retaliate in kind, Peter writes this letter encouraging followers of Jesus to live differently than those around them.

Open:

- What is your “dream house” like? Where would it be?

Dig:

- Read 1 Peter 2:1-12
- What similarities does Peter show between Christ’s experience and that of these people?
- How is Christ a cornerstone? Why would people stumble over the stone rather than build their lives on it?
- How could you reword in practical terms what Peter meant by his pictures in verse 5 and 9? In what ways would it be difficult for Peter’s readers to think of themselves in these terms?
- How is their new status with God to influence the way they live (vv.11-12)?

Reflect:

- If you were a war correspondent reporting from the front, how would you describe the war going on within yourself (v.11)?
- In what dark rooms of your life has God turned on a light?
- How does it make you feel to be chosen, royalty, and God’s possession? When is it most difficult to remember what God has made you?
- If you were to build a spiritual house from the living stones in your group, where would each member be positioned (walls, roof, telephone line, etc.) to realize his or her gifts? How does this fit who you are in Christ?

Session 3 Temporary Residents

1 Peter 2:13-3:12

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Open:

- When you were growing up, what authority figure was hard for you to respect? Why?
- As a child, how did you picture the man/woman of your dreams?

Dig:

- Read 1 Peter 2:13-3:7
- With government persecution, why is submission to authority a concern for Peter?
- What does Peter mean by “submit” in this context? What equivalent verbs do you see here?
- How does their relationship with God influence their regard for human authority?
- How is the submission here similar in purpose to that in 2:13-15? What qualities are singled out? What does Sarah’s example add?
- In what way are husbands to treat their wives?

Reflect:

- What “authorities” are over you? How do you apply these verses in those relationships?
- Peter wrote to a people who had no civil or employee rights. How would his advice be different to people in a country where their legal rights were being violated by authority gone bad?
- Married or not, what qualities here would you like to build into your friendships with the opposite sex?
- What would a marriage build on mutual submission look like?
- Is Peter advocating that spouses stay in cruel situations? Why or why not?

Session 4 Temporary Residents

1 Peter 3:8-4:19

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- Rather than retaliate in kind, Peter writes this letter encouraging followers of Jesus to live differently than those around them.

Open:

- Are you more of a doer, thinker, lover, pray-er, or sleeper?
- When at the dentist, do you: refuse anesthesia, use local anesthesia, get knocked out?
- Besides the dentist what else reminds you of pain?

Dig:

- Read 1 Peter 3:8-4:19
- How does the quote from Psalm 34 sum up all Peter has said in 2:11-3:9? What does he mean by setting apart Christ as Lord (v.15)? How will this affect their fears and hopes?
- What hope does Christ's life and death provide? How does the example of Christ encourage those who suffer?
- How are the realities of judgement (vv.5-7) and Christ's glory (v.11) to influence our daily behavior?
- What does this redemptive love look like in action (vv.8-11)? How would this benefit suffering people?
- In what sense is the Christian's suffering part of Christ's suffering? Why should the Christian find joy in this?

Reflect:

- What fears motivate people today? How does following Jesus free you?
- How does hope change your everyday behavior?
- What thinking hinders your prayer life? What helps?
- When you feel like giving up, what keeps you going?
- If you are honest, what would you tell new believers to expect in the Christian life?

Session 5 Temporary Residents

1 Peter 5:1-14

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- Rather than retaliate in kind, Peter writes this letter encouraging followers of Jesus to live differently than those around them.

Open:

- What is one of the most unruly groups you have had to “shepherd”?

Dig:

- Read 1 Peter 5:1-14
- What good & bad motives does Peter give for being in leadership? What qualities does he encourage shepherds to cultivate? Why would these qualities & proper motivation be important in times of persecution?
- What connections do you see between submissiveness, humility, and anxiety? What anxieties do these people face? What would replace their fears as they followed vv. 6-7?
- What sources of opposition has Peter spoken to already? How do these related to verse 8? What is the Christian’s defense in this battle? The Christian’s hope?
- How do vv. 10-13 sum up the pressures these believers were facing, as well as Peter’s advice on this matter?

Reflect:

- What area of your life would you like God to restore & make you strong, firm and steadfast?
- What leadership responsibilities do you have? How do you score on Peter’s leadership test? How can you improve?
- What pictures of Christ has Peter drawn in this letter? How do those pictures bring peace to you?

