

1 Peter 1:1-2

What do these verses say about who this letter is written to?

How might we fit this description (i.e., what's similar between them and us)?

What are the three things which describe the exiles?

What does it mean to be elect?

How might obedience to Jesus make us aliens in this world?

What is good about being an alien in this world? What is difficult about it?

How does the sprinkling of Jesus blood help us in our alien lives?

How might our world appreciate us living as 'aliens' among them?

Pray...

That you would live as an alien/stranger in this world, but in doing that, pray also that we would be seeking to reach the world with the great news of Jesus.

Pray for 3 people you would like the opportunity to talk with about Jesus. Pray for an opportunity to do this and invite them to church.

Pray that through your life and conversation others would know that you are a follower of Jesus and that you belong to his kingdom and not this world.

1 Peter 1:3-12

What are some things which define you as a person?

In vv1-3 how does Peter define us?

What are the things Peter lists in vv3-9 that are encouraging to us as strangers in this world?

Verses 6-9 describe trials of various kinds. Thinking about trials...

What sort of trials will come?

What is their immediate purpose?

How long will they last?

What is the end result of trials?

According to vv10-12 what is the privileged position we have?

How does the section vv. 1-12 describe who we are?

From these verses, how can we live out who we are in Christ?

What are some things that need to change in your life, thinking, attitudes, etc., that you may live out who you are more effectively?

1 Peter 1:13-21

What have we learned about hope so far? What are Peter's readers looking forward to?

What accompanying actions or commands in verse 13 fill out what is meant by "set your hope fully"?

Why is this necessary?

Verse 16 appears three times throughout Leviticus. What do each tell us about holiness?

Leviticus 11:44-45

Leviticus 19:1-2

Leviticus 20:7-8

How do you feel pressured to conform to the evil desires you once ignorantly had? (v14)

What things in your life tend to prevent or distract you from setting your hope fully on the coming grace? What can you do about this?

What specific areas does being holy put you at odds with our society?

How do you think is it possible to both fear God (v. 17) and yet to have faith and hope in him (v. 21)?

Peter's audience were exiles in their homeland, how is it that we are all exiles? How does an understanding of this change the way we relate to outsiders?

1 Peter 1:22-2:10

What is worldly love usually based on? Is this permanent or temporary?

What reason do verses 23-25 provide for loving each other deeply from the heart?

What is the opposite of craving pure spiritual milk? (2:1-20)

What sustenance do you take in order to “grow up in your salvation”? What do you crave for spiritual growth?

Read 2:4-12

A “living stone” is a strange idea, since a stone is usually about the most lifeless thing you could imagine. Why do you think Peter describes Jesus as a “living stone”?

What function does this particular stone have? What part of the building is it? What sort of building will the finished project be?

What reactions do different people have to the stone? What is the result for them?

How might this help how you relate to others in your neighbourhood, community, world?

1 Peter 2:11-25

Because we are aliens, what is the new perspective we are to have according to vv11-12?

What is the war going on? Who does this war affect? V11

What is the tension between vv9-10 & 11-12? When will this tension be resolved?

Why are we to live good lives? v12

What reasons are we given for submitting to authority?

Take note that Peter is telling us **why** we are to live this way. What reasons does he give? (2:15, 2:19-21, 2:23)

How does Peter outline the mindset of the alien? How is it different to the world's?

Do you see yourself as an alien in this world? Does your life reflect it?

1 Peter 3:1-12

As Christians, we believe that God created marriage and families, and that he knows how they ought to function. We turn to his wisdom and his law for guidelines we can use to frame our marriages. But sometimes, of course, his guidelines are radically different from everything we have absorbed in our own upbringing, and different from what is regarded as normal and good in our society. In fact, the Bible itself would lead us to expect this to be the case; our ways are not his ways.

List the different aspects of the wife's behaviour or conduct that are taught here. What is she encouraged to be, to do or not to do? Why?

Compare 1 Peter 3:1-7 with 1 Timothy 2:9-10. What is the opposite of getting dressed in fancy clothes?

We would normally take "quiet" in verse 4 to mean 'not making a noise'. The Greek word does mean that, but it also contains other ideas not usually associated with our English word 'quiet'. Look at these other verses that use the word (highlighted in italics):

Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they *rested* according to the commandment. (Luke 23:56)

When they heard these things they *fell silent*. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life." (Acts 11:18)

And since he would not be persuaded, we *ceased* and said, "Let the will of the Lord be done." (Acts 21:14)

How do these verses illuminate the meaning of "a gentle and quiet spirit"? How do you think it is related to submission?

How do these verses challenge your own marriage? How do they affect your behaviour, attitudes and prayer life?

How might 3:8-9 be seen as a summary of Peter's discussion so far?

List the encouragement and warnings in this passage...

How are these directing your interactions, prayers, conversations and lifestyle?

1 Peter 3:13-4:11

What are some of the things you fear, worry about, etc.?

Peter's readers have reason to fear, why should they not fear according to v12?

Verses 14-15 are a quote from Isaiah, where God's people are fearful of an attack from the enemy. Read Isaiah 8:11-15, how does this relate to the situation Peter's readers are in?

How might applying v15 to our lives influence the conversations we have?

Why is it better to suffer for doing good than rather than suffering for doing evil? (3:17)

What about the "spirits in prison"? There are numerous difficulties here, and again, the issue is clouded by subsequent controversies, such as the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory. What is it all about? There are numerous options that have been presented by interpreters and commentators down the centuries. The three most popular views are as follows:

1. That by the Spirit, Christ was in the person of Noah (who is described as a "herald of righteousness" in 2 Peter 2:5), and through him, he preached repentance to the generation of disobedient humans in Noah's day, who are now spirits locked up in prison (i.e. in hell).
2. That after his death, Christ went and preached to those who had disobeyed in the time of Noah, and who were now locked up as spirits in Sheol or hell, proclaiming his triumph to them (and the vindication of God's plans and salvation).
3. That after his death, Christ went and preached his victory to fallen angels, who had sinned in the time of Noah by marrying human women (Gen 6:1-4).

Each of these three options has its merits and problems. The second and third options seem to have the most going for them. What is clear, and what needs to be emphasised as the main point of this difficult passage, is that the spirits in prison/Noah reference is being used by Peter as an example to his readers from the past. It shows that God will vindicate his people and save them out of the midst of judgement. (*Straight from a commentary*)

1 Peter 3:13-4:11

How is Jesus' suffering...

Similar to ours?

Different to ours?

What was achieved by Jesus' suffering? What happened after his suffering?

What ways does Peter direct us to be different in this world? How might these things make a difference to people who know you?

1 Peter 4:12-19

Share with the group a time where you have felt out of place because you are a Christian and stood up for what you believed.

Is Peter talking about any sort of suffering or a particular type of suffering?

What are the reasons for rejoicing when we suffer this way?

How is being insulted, because of Jesus, evidence of God's spirit within us?

What is the main message of vv15-18?

What is the household of God that he is referring to here?

When do you experience pressure to act in an immoral way with the people around you?
How do you normally react to this pressure?

How does this passage help and encourage you to live for Jesus at all times?

1 Peter 5:1-14

Do you have an item you own which has value because of who it belonged to?

What are some of the ways we have been described in 1 Peter so far?

Peter describes us in these ways because he wants us to see the importance of being people who belong to God. In this chapter Peter sums up by telling us that we are a part of God's flock therefore we should act in a certain way. What does Peter have to say to the elders/leaders of God's flock? Why? (vv1-5)

What things hinder serving God's flock?

Read v5. Are these things **only** applicable to elders?

Who is it who cares for us? (vv6-7)

What does this mean to you?

Read Psalm 23 and John 10:14-15; 28-29. What does it mean to be in God's flock?

What are we to do as a result? (vv6-7)

In light of these things, how does Peter encourage us to live? (vv8-9)

What reason does Peter give us to stand firm? (v10)

1 Peter 5:1-14

How do you struggle to stand firm? What lies of the devil are you tempted to believe?

How have you been encouraged to stand firm and deny the lies of the evil one?