

Studies in 1 Peter - Discussion Guide for Community Groups

Session 1: Salvation (1 Peter 1:1-9)

Background

According to Church Tradition, the Epistle of 1 Peter was written by Simon Peter, who was one of the original twelve disciples of Christ. Peter was the disciple noted for being impetuous and headstrong. He was the only disciple to get out of the boat and walk to Jesus in the midst of a storm. He was the disciple that declared, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!" He was the disciple that turned to violence when the temple guards came to arrest Jesus. Peter was also the disciple who stood and preached to the city of Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit filled the Church with power. In the Epistle of 1 Peter, Peter writes with the same kind of passion with which he lived his life.

Peter starts his letter to the pilgrims of the Dispersion with a short greeting. He immediately turned his attention to the important and critical doctrine of "Salvation."

Bible Text: 1 Peter 1:1-9 NKJV

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, [2] elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. [3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, [5] who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. [6] In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, [7] that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, [8] whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, [9] receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Digging Deeper:

- Peter uses the word "salvation" in verse 5 and again in verse 9. The word "salvation" is derived from the Greek word "soteria." (σωτηρία – pronounced *so-tay-ree'-ah*)
- Salvation is defined by "that" which we are saved from; and "that" which we are saved to. Christian salvation means that we are saved from sin and the ultimate consequences of sin. Christian salvation also means that we are saved to worship and love God; saved to serve the purposes of God; and saved to enjoy the blessings of God.

Read Verses 1 and 2: Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, [2] elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.

- Peter starts with a greeting. He identifies the recipients of his letter in two distinct manners. Firstly, he identifies them as pilgrims. These are Believers in Christ who have been displaced by persecution. Secondly, Peter identifies them as people who have been elected by God the Father.
- How much persecution or the threat of persecution would it take for you to move?
- How can we “find” or maintain our joy in a time of severe persecution?
- One of the much-debated subjects in the ranks of Evangelical Christians concerns the subject of “election.” Do we embrace predestination or free will?
- The Believer’s Commentary speaks brilliantly to this question: *The doctrine of divine election is not always popular, but it does have this virtue-it allows God to be God. Attempts to make it palatable to man only succeed in detracting from the sovereignty of God. Any difficulty in reconciling God’s election and human responsibility lies in man’s mind, not in God’s. The Bible teaches both doctrines, and we should believe both. The truth lies in both extremes, not somewhere between them.*

Read Verses 3-5: [3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, [5] who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- How has the resurrection of Jesus Christ filled the lives of Believers with living hope? (What future hope would even be possible without the resurrection?)
- Peter speaks of the Believer’s inheritance as being incorruptible, undefiled, that does not fade away, and is reserved. How is a Christian assured that this claim is true? (Read Ephesians 1:11-14 NKJV *In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, [12] that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. [13] In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, [14] who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*)
- How are we saved? (Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, [9] not of works, lest anyone should boast.*)

Read Verses 6-9: [6] In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, [7] that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor,

and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, [8] whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, [9] receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

- What are some of the trials that you have endured in your sojourn as a Believer?
- How do trials refine our faith?
- What is the “joy” set before us that enables us to persevere through difficult times?

Wrap-up: *I need to remind myself that this world is not my home. I want to build a “nest” that is comfortable, secure, and everlasting. (Which is impossible!) We live on a planet under the curse of sin. That means the unsinkable Titanic will sink. It means that the American Dollar will inflate. It means that bad things will continue to happen to good people. This is the reason that we need Jesus to save us! 1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*