



Canford PARISH CHURCH

CANFORD MAGNA CHURCHES

Life Group & Bible Study Groups Study Booklet

1 & 2 Peter

1 PETER

HOPE FOR THE GHOST OF SUFFERING

- GOD'S PEOPLE ARE A MINDERSTOOD MINORITY, LIVING UNDER THE RULE OF A DIFFERENT KING
- PERSECUTION OFFERS A CHANCE TO SHARE OTHERS THE GENEROUS LOVE OF JESUS.

1:1-2:3 GREETINGS

WELL, GOD'S PEOPLE WHO ARE **CHERISHED & EXILED** (1:1-2)

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES → ABRAHAM • ISRAEL

GENTILES WHO WERE BELONGING TO THE EMPIRE OF AROMA

1:3-12 SONG OF PRAISE

TRUSTE GOD CAN CAUSE US TO BE **BORN AGAIN** INTO A LIVING HOPE (1:3)

NEW HOPE
NEW IDENTITY
NEW FAMILY

SUFFERING AS A **PURIFYING FIRE** THAT CAN REFINER OUR TRUST IN JESUS (1:6-7)

1:13-2:10 A NEW FAMILY IDENTITY

OLD TESTAMENT IMAGES → GENTILE CHRISTIANS

THE NEW TEMPLE: GOD'S PEOPLE (2:5)

2:11-4:11 SUFFERING AS A WITNESS TO JESUS

THE PROBLEM: INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCE PAIN IN THE PRESENCE OF A GOD WHO IS LOVE (4:1)

THE RESPONSE: CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO LOVE THEIR OPPRESSORS TO LOVE THEIR GOD (4:8)

PERSECUTION = PAIN

4:12-5:9 SUFFERING & FUTURE HOPE

RESOLVE GAIN PEOPLE PERSECUTE YOU BECAUSE OF JESUS (4:12)

RESIST EVIL WITH FIRM FAITHFULNESS (5:9)

5:10-14 CLOSING

PRAY GOD STRENGTHEN YOU (5:10)

BABYLON

RECALCITRANT THE GENTILE RULERS (5:13)

LET THEM TAKE THEM FROM THEIR OWN HOUSES (5:14)

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Introduction

The Christian Church has not always had an easy ride through history. Darkness will always try to snuff out the light of the world. And this was the world that Peter and the first apostles found themselves in as the church matured from 120 strong on the Day of Pentecost to a network of possibly of around a million by the end of the first century scattered around the Mediterranean.

Despotic leaders love to scapegoat minorities and that went for the emperor Nero who saw his power slipping due to corruption in government, breakdown in moral and civil society, and plague. With all these issues, the Christian had an answer in the life and teaching of Christ, and many Romans were attracted towards this new way of life. Caesar's response was to persecute the minority Christian communities, arrest their leaders and drive the church underground, and this is the situation we find as Peter wrote these two letters.

We think Peter is writing as the first Christian Bishop of Rome, in around AD 62-64. Peter dictates to a scribe 'Sylvanus' (Silas), hence the excellent Greek rather than a fisherman's Aramaic, from the city of Rome.

The Church experiencing persecution Peter reminds his readers is exactly what our Lord expected when he predicted his own death at the hand of evildoers, saying 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me' (Luke 9:23)

Peter was actually there when Jesus said this and had lived another 30 years living that way. And yet he hadn't given up, and he was prepared to continue until his death, predicted by Jesus, and recorded in John 21, in a similar manner to that of Jesus.

So, what drove Peter to believe what he did? Why was he prepared to die for his faith? Where did his enthusiasm and passion to keep going come from? Well, it is all here in these two letters. And in this uncertain

Growing into the likeness of Christ...

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age, when the tide could easily turn against society's benevolent attitude towards the church, we may one day be called upon to be and do the same.

How would we fare? Let us put ourselves into the shoes of those early Christian disciples and see what we can learn.

Take care and God bless



Chris Tebbutt

7 June 2021

Summary by week

1 Peter – to encourage and strengthen Christians in the face of suffering and

2 Peter – to urge Christians to live lives that please God

1	6 June	1 Peter 1:1-12	Hope
2	13 June	1 Peter 1:13-2:17	Holiness
3	20 June	1 Peter 2:4-3:7	A chosen people
4	27 June	1 Peter 3:8-4:19	Suffering
5	4 July	1 Peter 5:1-12	Leadership
6	11 July	2 Peter 1:1-21	Living to God's glory
7	18 July	2 Peter 2:1-22	False teaching & deceit
8	25 July	2 Peter 3:1-17	The return of the Lord

Thanks to our preachers who have provided study notes to help me put this guide together. *CT*

About Canford and our Life Groups

Canford's vision is 'To become a vibrant, overflowing, multi-generational Church growing in the likeness of Christ'. Our values are that we will be 'Authentic, Joyful, Compassionate and Intentional'.

As an evangelical charismatic Anglican church, we place a high priority on Bible-based ministry, together with a commitment to be open and give space for the work of the Holy Spirit to transform our lives.

We believe that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." and so we see studying the Bible, individually and in groups, a vital part of growing in our faith in Jesus Christ.

Consequently, we strongly advise all our members to join a Life Group. In Life Groups we pray and worship, study the Bible, discuss and debate, enjoy fellowship and mutual pastoral support. We also encourage Life Groups to think about supporting one of our Mission Partners in prayer and practical ways. We also see belonging to a Life Group as a sign of unity within the church. There will be times when we are encouraged to study and work through issues together.

If you are not in a Life Group, or Bible Study Group, and you'd like to be, please have a word our Life Group co-ordinator, Nicky Smart, churchwarden@canfordparish.org **Please don't fret over the technology – we can help you engage with whatever media suits you.**

There is not a mass of information in each study – the reason being that we want the Holy Spirit to prompt discussion at each Life Group meeting, rather than give each member information overload. If you want more background think about getting one of the excellent books listed in the next section. But remember, the best commentary is the

Bible itself, especially if you pray and ask God to reveal his precious Word to you through the Scripture.

6 June 21

Hope

1 Peter 1:1-12

Preparation

Read the passage then listen to the Karen's sermon by clicking on our YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/S7Ko6OUt8W4> (see about 24 minutes in)

As you meditate on each line of our passage, pray to God to open the Scriptures so that you might stand in the shoes of those early disciples and understand the pressure and the passion of being a follower of Christ in that time.

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. What do we know about Peter? Who was he? Consider some of his encounters with Jesus, especially Mark 8: 27-30. Contrast John 18: 15-27, with John 21: 15-19 and then the transformation in Acts 2:14. (Denial, reinstatement and proclamation)
2. The epistle, written around 62-64AD, is to the elect. How do you feel about being the elect?
3. Read verses 3,4 and 8. Where else do we find these words? On which topics do Peter and Paul agree and where do they differ? Acts 15: 6-21
4. Peter speaks about new birth – into what? (Back to the original state in the garden of Eden). Can you think of other examples where Jesus or others have spoken about new birth? Karen talks about how the world tries to define us as who we are by what we do, what we earn, who our parents were. How does

Peter describe a different identity for Christian believers?

5. Faith is worth more than gold. Even gold perishes if the temp is high enough, but we have an inheritance that can **never** perish. Our faith may be tried in the refiner's fire in the intense heat of life. Our life span is in eternity, not just here and now. When we go through difficulties, we learn patience.

In this light, do you agree with the statement, 'When our lives are considered in the perspective of eternity immediate problems are only part of the whole spectrum'.

Witness

Loving Jesus and belief in him mean that we shall be filled with inexpressible and glorious joy as we receive the goal of our faith – salvation of the soul. Today, how are we to witness to these truths?

The back page For any notes you want to make, or words and pictures you might have received.



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13 June 21

Holiness

1 Peter 1:13-2:17

Preparation

Read the passage then listen to the Andrew's sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our [YouTube channel](#) : (see about 20 minutes in) As you meditate on each line of our passage, pray to God to open the Scriptures so that you might stand in the shoes of those early disciples and understand the challenge of being following Christ authentically then and now..

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. Peter says that we are 'a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession' (2.9). Andrew explained that 'holy' means 'set apart'. Did that definition surprise you? What does it mean to be set apart for God? What does it mean to be a priest (whether or not you are ordained)?
2. Peter says 'Therefore, prepare your minds for action' (1.13) – literally it says 'Therefore girding up the loins of the mind for you'. What part does the mind play in the way we live our calling as God's holy people?
3. Peter gives 12 top tips for living out our lives – which do you find helpful?
4. Peter was writing to a group of people who knew what it was to suffer for their faith. How does our situation in a post-Christian society compare to the lives of the early followers of Jesus to whom Peter's letter was written?

Growing into the likeness of Christ...

Witness

The function of the Old Covenant priests was to intercede for the people (that is to stand between them and God). As new Covenant priests we also need to intercede for our unsaved friends and family. Who are you praying for? Why not share this with the group and pray for them now.

Growing into the likeness of Christ...

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The back page For any notes you want to make, or words and pictures you might have received.



20 June 21**A chosen people****1 Peter 2: 4-12**

Preparation

Read the passage then listen to the John's sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our [YouTube channel](#) : (see about 20 minutes in) As you meditate on each line of our passage, pray to God to open the Scriptures so that you might stand in the shoes of those early disciples and understand the challenge of being following Christ authentically then and now..

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. What does it mean to you to be one of 'God's chosen people'? discuss with your group when you knew you were chosen by God to be his disciple?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose Peter to be his No.1 leader, 'on this rock I will build my church'. (Matthew 16:18)
3. The Bible talks much about the Jews being God's chosen people, but the good news for Gentiles is that we can also become chosen. Just like different and younger varieties of vine are grafted on to a venerable root stock so we become grafted into God's people. Discuss our relationship as Christians with the Old Testament people of God.
4. What are the responsibilities of being one of God's chosen people?
5. We've seen how Peter was the rock on which Jesus would build his church. What similarities can we see in this analogy to the one Peter quotes from Isaiah 28:16 when he compares Jesus with the builder's cornerstone.

Reflection

For what purpose have you been chosen? Do you feel God is pleased with what you have done in him and through him today? Ask for God's Holy Spirit to renew a sense of his calling within you.

27 June 21**Suffering****1 Peter 4: 12-19**

Preparation

Read the passages about suffering in 1 Peter.

- 1 Peter 1:10-11, 2:18-25, 3:8-17, 4:12-19

What do you see as the one 'big idea' Peter is trying to leave us with?

If you have time, listen to the Chris's sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our [YouTube channel](#) : (see about 20 minutes in)

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. Why does God allow suffering?
2. What do we say about God to those who are suffering?
3. How do the Psalms of Lament in the Bible help us deal with the reality of suffering? (Apparently, 70% of psalms are laments. Start with 10, 13, 22 and 77 and then reflect on 88)
4. Does Jesus' experience of suffering help or hinder your acceptance of suffering in the world?
5. Has the recent pandemic made people more open or closed to God?
6. How does the promise of redemption in a life hereafter help you?

Witness

Pray for someone who you know is suffering. Be prepared to phone them or meet them (safely) and just try listening to their situation. Take with you Kay and Rick Warren's words 'the greater the pain, the fewer the words'.

4 July 21

Leadership

1 Peter 5: 1-12

Preparation

Read the passage which focusses on Christian leadership. Reflect on times you have had a good leader; at work, at school, and at church. What attributes did these great leaders have?

Listen to the Anne's sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our [YouTube channel](#) : (see about 20 minutes in).

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. Discuss what makes a great leader. List the attributes in your group. Can leadership be taught or is it just 'caught'?
2. After a shaky start, Peter seems to have learnt what it means to be a humble leader, using the example of the shepherd. What are the key attributes of shepherd leadership and where else do we see it in the Bible? (look up John 10, Psalm 23 and Ezekiel 34, amongst others)
3. The Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst trains officers for the British Army – its motto is 'Serve to lead'. In an organisation like this, where soldiers are taught to obey orders without question, why is a servant hearted leadership model so important?
4. In verse 7-8 Peter recognises that leadership is hard work. What does Peter recommend to leaders to do when it becomes too much. Do we see our leaders in the church exercising this discipline? How could we help them in this?

5. In verses 8 and 9, Peter recognises that there is bigger opposition to the work of God and his church than just the civic authorities. Do you remember any situations where you have experienced opposition to the work of our church which indicates a malign evil working through people outside it?

Witness

Peter points to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, as the true servant leader. How can we become more like Jesus in the little things we control or lead this week?

11 July 21 Living to God's glory 2 Peter 1: 1-21

Preparation

Read the passage which focusses on Living in God's glory.

Listen to the Anne's sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our YouTube channel: (see about 20 minutes in).

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. Do you agree that this may be a late (100 AD) writing of this epistle? This later date is suggested because it mirrors closely some of Paul's letters. Check out 1 Peter 1: 5-7 with Romans 5: 3-4 and Galatians 5: 22.
2. Take a look at 2 Peter 1: 3 and compare it with Ephesians 1: 3. Can you spot any other similarities?
3. The promise of God is to participate in the divine nature. Does this affect you personally in your morality and behaviour towards others? If so, how?
4. In the early days of Christianity baptism was a positive step away from the old life. The promises are to fight the world the flesh and the devil. What are the major temptations facing us as Christians today?
5. V 12-15. What do you hope will be your legacy when you have departed this earthly life?

6. V 16 onwards serves an introduction to the next chapter about false prophets. Refresh your minds about the transfiguration, demonstrating the glory of God in Jesus, in Mark 9:2-13. Why do you think it is included here?

Witness

How can we use our mountain top experiences to share the good news of Jesus in a positive way?

18 July 21**False Teaching****2 Peter 2**

Preparation

*Read the whole of 2 Peter 2 through slowly – it is a ‘heavy’ passage!
Read it through again, picking out the key words that strike you.*

Listen to the Chris’s sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our YouTube channel: (see about 20 minutes in).

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

1. Discuss as a group a situation, maybe a conference, a Christian event, or a church sermon, when you felt the speaker was in error. What did you do to challenge the talk?
2. Peter talks about three key clues to identify false teachers:
 - denying the sovereign Lordship of Christ
 - permissive immoral behaviour
 - the desire by the speaker to profit from their ministry.

When have you experienced these and how should we confront this false teaching?

3. What does Peter say the fate of false teachers is? (vv 13–16, 21). Can they be redeemed? How should we pray for false teachers and prophets? (v22)

4. Where do you see false promises of 'freedom' in our culture today? (vv17-21)

Witness

5. As we approach 'Freedom Day' on Monday, 19th July reflect on the promises of 'freedom' which are in fact enslaving our culture. Share your thoughts as a group and how you might witness by behaving differently. vv17-21

25 July 21 The Day of the Lord 2 Peter 3**Preparation**

Read 2 Peter 3. As we come to the end of this study on 1 & 2 Peter, reflect on what you have learned. What are the 2 or 3 key lessons that you are taking away from the study and how might it change your walk with Jesus?

Listen to the Chris's sermon on the Livestream Service by clicking on our YouTube channel: (see about 20 minutes in).

Discussion in Groups or Private Study

6. Peter puts into perspective the wait between the first coming and the second coming of Jesus (v8) drawing on the Psalm 90:4. Talk about when you've been impatient with God and how he eventually acted.
7. Why do you think the Coming of the Day of the Lord was such an important hope for the people Peter was writing to? (Clue – one of the key themes of 1 Peter)
8. Have we so become obsessed in living in the comfort of the present that we have lost that same hope that Jesus might suddenly appear 'like a thief in the night'? v10
9. What is your hope for a 'new heaven and a new earth'? v13. How do Peter's thoughts of how this might happen differ to our classic impression of renewal rather than destruction and starting again? And why might be?

Witness

As we reflect on the study of 1 & 2 Peter in the middle of a global pandemic which doesn't seem to be getting better any time soon, how can we use what we've learned to prepare for Jesus' second coming and to serve our community better.