



**ST LUKE'S**  
**LIVERPOOL**  
a church for all people

# **Outsiders**

**Bible Studies**  
**in 1 Peter**



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chosen .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Knowing God's Plan.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A Foreign Lifestyle .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Discarded Treasure .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Doing Good in the Face of Evil.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Upside-Down Family Values .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Mercy in a World Bent on Revenge.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Leaving the World Behind .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Walking through Fire .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Standing Firm Together .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Final Reflections .....</b>	<b>34</b>

## Introduction

The First Epistle of Peter was written by the Apostle Peter to God's people scattered throughout modern day Turkey in the first century AD. Almost two thousand years later, 1 Peter continues to feed Christians due to its presentation of how the gospel of Jesus Christ is the foundational principle by which the Christian life is lived out within the larger unbelieving society.

The Apostle gives the purpose for his own letter in 1 Peter 5:12:

*I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.*

This 'grace of God' interacts with every part of the Christian existence: their hope in suffering, their self-understanding, their relation to society, their family values, and their speech and conduct in a world that is passing away. No sphere of their life is untouched by the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Living in a society where Christians are increasingly marginalised as a minority, God has much to say about our faith, identity and conduct as we live as outsiders to the general community. As we understand who we are before God, we truly understand who we are in society.

We pray that God might use this Bible study series to help you stand firm in a world that stands against God.

## Chosen

### 1 Peter 1:1–9

1. Why are most people unsure about the possibility of getting to heaven?

Read verses 1–2.

2. How are the recipients of the letter described?
3. Who has chosen them? How?

Read verses 3–5.

4. Is being born something you do or something done to you?
5. How does this 'new birth' happen?
6. How secure is this new hope?
7. What part do we play in guarding this hope?

Read verses 6–9.

8. Does God's shielding mean Christians will be protected from life's troubles?
  
9. What is Peter's attitude to suffering?
  
10. How long does it last?
  
11. What is the end result?
  
12. What makes you doubt that you might ever make it to heaven?
  
13. How is the truth that Christians are chosen by God a source of comfort and joy?
  
14. What sort of trials are you going through? How are they refining you?

Thank God choosing us to be reborn into a living hope through Jesus. Ask God to help us glorify him despite our grief in this world.

# Prayer Points

# Knowing God's Plan

## 1 Peter 1:10–16

1. How would you feel if a movie you were watching ended just before it got interesting?

This is how the Old Testament prophets might have felt.

Read verses 10–12.

2. What were the Old Testament prophets speaking about?
3. What were they trying to find out?

Read Isaiah 52:13–53:12, written centuries before Jesus.

4. If you didn't know about Jesus, how might you understand this passage?
5. The prophets served God's people Israel as God's mouthpieces, but who were they really serving?
6. Did they fully understand what they were speaking about?
7. Who were the first to understand what they were speaking about?

8. Why could they finally understand?

Read verses 13–16.

9. List how Peter expects those who are not ignorant to respond.

10. Can you know God and not look forward to Jesus? Why?

11. Can you know God and not be holy? Why?

12. In what ways do you feel pressured to 'conform to the evil desires you had'?

13. How does this passage help you appreciate the Old Testament?

14. How does this passage help you appreciate the Holy Spirit?

15. Think of some specific areas in which being holy puts you at odds with our society's way of life.

Thank God that he has revealed to us our salvation through his Spirit. Ask God to help us respond to this revelation with hope and holiness.



# Prayer Points

## A Foreign Lifestyle

### 1 Peter 1:17–25

1. Where do people get their morals? What shapes people's values?

Read verses 17–21.

2. What does it look like for Christians to 'live out their time as foreigners here in reverent fear'?
3. What are the motivations for this?
4. How do you think it is possible to both fear God and yet have faith and hope in him?
5. Does the fact that God will judge each person's work undermine a Christian's security in their new birth? (see 1:4–5, 18–21)
6. What have we been redeemed from?
7. How costly was the redemption?

8. When was the redemption planned?

9. In what ways are you conducting yourself with an appropriate fear of God?

Read verses 22–25.

10. Why should Christians love one another deeply?

11. What do 'imperishable', 'living', 'enduring' have in common?

12. Is the kind of love Christians give temporary or permanent?

13. How does permanent love look like compared to temporary love?

14. What should shape the lifestyle of a Christian?

Thank God for his justice in holiness and mercy in sacrifice.  
Ask God to help us live out our time in reverent fear of God expressed in enduring love for one another.

# Prayer Points

## Discarded Treasure

### 1 Peter 2:1–10

1. How special do you feel as a Christian? Why?

Read verses 1–3.

2. Why do newborn babies need milk?
3. What are Christians supposed to be grow out of?
4. What are Christians supposed to grow up in?
5. What is the pure spiritual milk? (see 1:23–25)
6. What sustenance do you take in order to 'grow up in your salvation'?

Read verses 4–6.

7. Draw the image Peter uses to describe the relationship between Christ and his people.
8. What is the significance of using this image?
9. Who is responsible for building this house?

10. What is special about the living Stone and the living stones?

11. What are these 'spiritual sacrifices'? (see Hebrews 13:15–16; Romans 12:1; Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 4:18)

Read verses 7–8.

12. What two reactions do people have to the living Stone?

13. In your experience, how have you seen these reactions to Jesus?

Read verses 9–10.

14. List the special statuses and roles given to God's people.

15. How are these a burden?

16. How are these a privilege?

17. How does the way you live or the things you say declare God's praises?

Thank God for making you one of his chosen people so that you can be part of his spiritual house.

Ask God to help us declare his praises as outsiders in the world.

# Prayer Points

# Doing Good in the Face of Evil

## 1 Peter 2:11–25

1. How do you tend to react when you are treated unfairly?

Read verses 11–12.

2. What are foreigners and exiles to do? Why?
3. How does Peter stress the difficulty of this task?

Read verses 13–17.

4. Why is submitting to someone else so difficult?
5. To whom are Christians to submit?
6. What two reasons are given for why we should submit?
7. Who gave these people authority? For what purpose?
8. 16<sup>th</sup> century German theologian Martin Luther once wrote, 'A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.' How does this passage affirm both of these statements at the same time?



9. How can you freely submit to those God has put over you?

Read verses 18–20.

10. To whom are slaves to submit themselves? (slavery in the first century was more about bond service rather than the violent and lifelong slavery of particular ethnicities)

11. Are slaves only to submit to good masters? Why?

12. To whom do you find difficult to submit?

13. What does it say about someone who willingly bears unjust suffering?

Read verses 21–25.

14. What example did Christ leave?

15. What did he do instead of fighting back?

16. What was the reason he suffered?

Thank God that Jesus gave up his own life for our salvation and example. Ask God to help us relinquish our desire for justice so that those observing us would glorify God on the day he visits us.

## Prayer Points

# Upside-Down Family Values

## 1 Peter 3:1–7

1. What do you think makes a good marriage?

Read verses 1–6.

2. What are wives to do?
3. What are some reasons you've heard told for wives to submit to their husbands?
4. What is the reason given in this passage?
5. Given that the wife was expected to follow the religion of her husband in the first century, what is unusual about Peter's instruction?
6. What challenges do Christian women with unbelieving husbands face?
7. What does this passage say about true beauty?
8. How do Christian wives become daughters of Sarah?

9. How is the Christian understanding of submission different from the world's understanding of submission?

Read verse 7.

10. What are husbands to do?
11. Given that the husband was expected to be the domineering patriarch of the family in the first century, what is unusual about Peter's instruction?
12. According to this passage, are wives and husbands equal?
13. What does it look like to be considerate and respectful?
14. If a Christian husband fails to be considerate and respectful of his wife, what relationship is at stake besides his marriage?
15. How is this view of marriage different from other views of marriage and sexuality?

Thank God for the love and equality found in a God-centred marriage. Ask God to help wives and husbands to submit to God in their roles.

## Prayer Points

# Mercy in a World Bent on Revenge

## 1 Peter 3:8–22

1. When was the last time you wanted revenge?
2. Why does revenge come naturally to humans?

Read verses 8–12.

3. Say the five commands of verse 8 in your own words.
4. What are Christians called to do instead?
5. According to the quoted Psalm 34:12–16, what is so good about doing good rather than evil?
6. What does this passage have to say about the saying, 'nice guys finish last'?

Read verses 13–17.

7. Whenever suffering comes, it's easy to feel like God isn't on your side. When is suffering actually a sign of God's approval?
8. What are you afraid people will say or do to you if you revere Christ as Lord?

9. Give an example of a time when you have suffered for doing good.
10. What answer will you give when someone asks you why you willingly suffer for doing good? Does it revere Christ as Lord?

Read verses 18–22.

11. How did Jesus repay evil with blessing? What did it achieve?
12. How does the event of Christ's 'proclamation to the imprisoned spirits' encourage us to persevere in doing good and endure suffering?
13. How is God's rescue of Noah from an evil world similar to God's rescue of us from an evil world? How is it different?
14. How does the fact that Christ is victorious encourage you to do good in an evil world?
15. If you are not suffering now, why is it still good to think about these things?

Thank God that he repaid the greatest evil in the world in his own murder so that those who believe in him might be blessed for eternity.  
Ask God to help us point to Jesus as we suffer for following him.

## Prayer Points



# Leaving the World Behind

## 1 Peter 4:1–11

1. How would you like people to treat each other in heaven?
2. How would you like people not to treat each other in heaven?

We will find that this heaven-like behaviour is what Christians are to adopt now. Read verses 1–6.

3. For the person who follows Jesus, what attitude to sin are they to take?
4. What evil human desires should be left in the past?
5. Are there any you still need to be done with?
6. When do you feel pressured from people around you to join in their godless behaviour?
7. How do you normally react to this pressure?

8. How does the coming judgement help us deal with being abused for doing God's will?

Read verse 7–11.

9. When is the end of all things?
10. What is this urgency a motivation for?
11. How does this way of life compare to the pagan behaviour of verses 3–4?
12. Why does God give these gifts? What is the ultimate goal?
13. Do you 'love each other deeply'?
14. How can you be using hospitality and your gifts to serve others?

Thank God for being a just and fair judge.

Ask God to help us leave the filth of the world behind to adopt habits fit for heaven.

## Prayer Points

# Walking through Fire

## 1 Peter 4:12–19

1. What makes you give up?
2. What makes you keep going?

Read verses 12–19.

3. What should the Christian expect in life?
4. Why do we 'participate in the sufferings of Christ'? (see John 15:18–19)
5. Is Peter speaking about any sort of suffering or a particular type of suffering?
6. How is being insulted because of Christ evidence that God's Spirit is with us?
7. What is God's household? (2:1–10)

8. Why can Christians rejoice in their suffering and count it a blessing?
  
9. Given that those who God has called have a secure inheritance (chapter 1), how might suffering or persecution be judgement on God's household?
  
10. If the righteous must endure a fiery ordeal in this life, what must the ungodly and sinner endure?
  
11. How is that an encouragement to Christians?
  
12. What should those who suffer as Christians do?
  
13. What good do you need to continue to do?

Thank God that we who obey the gospel of Christ will survive his judgement.

Ask God to help us do good while we endure the fiery ordeal of persecution and suffering as Christians.

## Prayer Points

# Standing Firm Together

## 1 Peter 5:1–14

1. What do you think the church needs to do to survive in a hostile world?

Peter gives instructions to the church leaders. Read verses 1–4.

2. How does Peter describe himself?
3. What imagery does Peter use of elders?
4. Make a list of what elders should be and should not be.
5. How is the 'leadership style' of the elders an imitation of Christ, 'the Chief Shepherd'?
6. What challenges and temptations do you think elders face?
7. What will be the outcome for faithful elders?

Peter gives instructions to the rest of the church. Read verses 5–7.

8. What is your natural attitude to leaders in the world? Why?
9. How is the instruction for those who are 'younger' and 'all of you' similar to the behaviour of the elders?

10. Why is humility crucial for the Christian? How is this expressed?

11. What can you do to be humble in relation to:

a. Those who lead you?

b. Others in church?

c. God?

Humility and trust in God doesn't lead to inaction. Read verses 8–14.

12. What are Christians to do?

13. How much danger are Christians in?

14. How do you think the devil might devour those who aren't alert and of sober mind?

15. What things in your life are currently a threat to you standing firm?

16. What do these verses tell us about the devil's power and God's control?

17. As a church, how can we stand fast in the grace of God?

Thank God that he calls, restores and strengthens his people.  
Ask God to give us humility to stand firm together in the grace of God.



## Prayer Points

## Final Reflections



What shines out from what I've learnt?



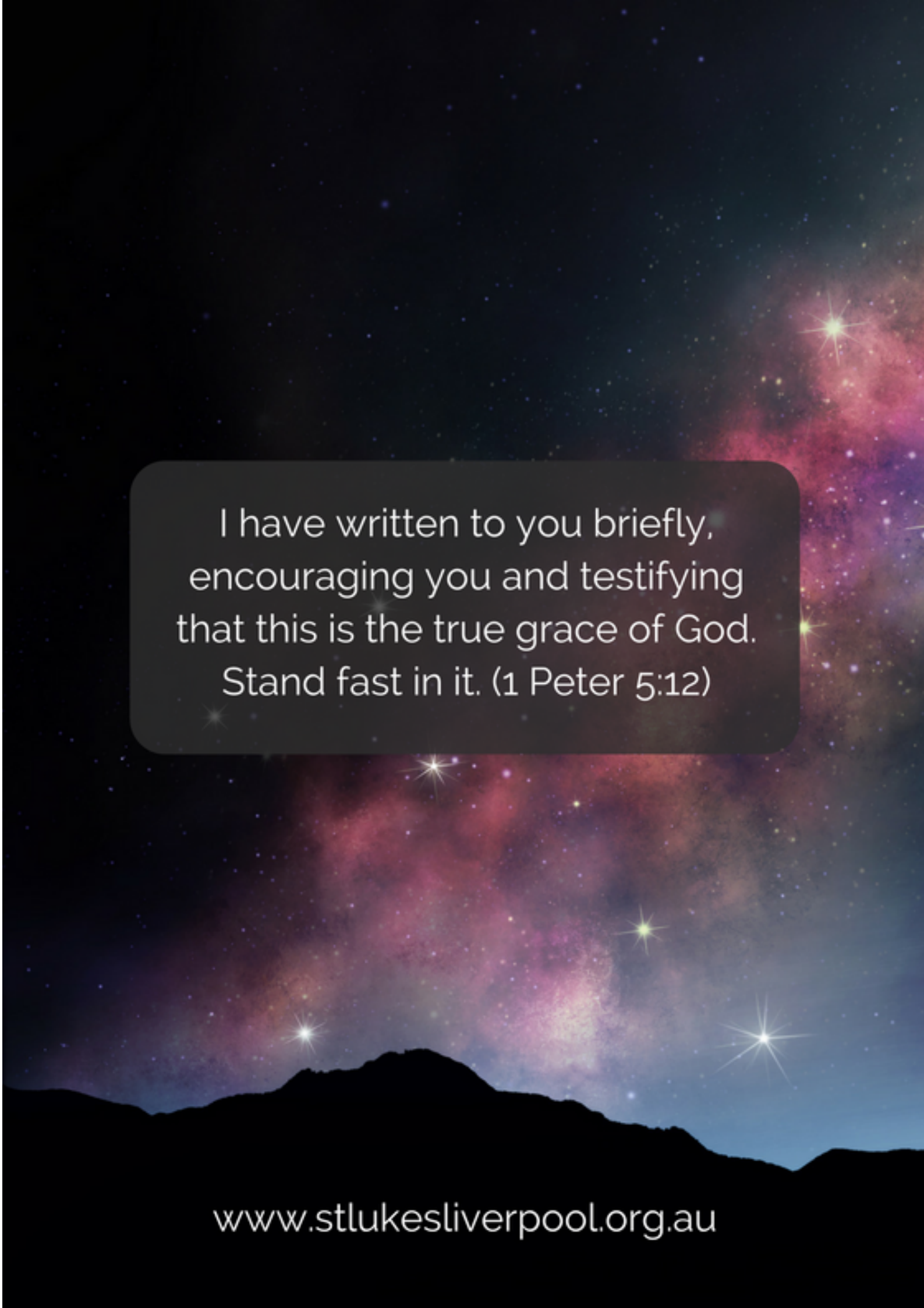
What questions do I still have?

How can I find answers to these questions?



How will I apply what I've learnt to my life?





I have written to you briefly,  
encouraging you and testifying  
that this is the true grace of God.  
Stand fast in it. (1 Peter 5:12)

[www.stlukesliverpool.org.au](http://www.stlukesliverpool.org.au)