

If these notes are useful to you, and you've enjoyed them, or if you have observations or questions feel free send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net.—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.

(This is written to give you good things to enjoy, because look again at what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-18)! I think he was thinking of us at the time: **17 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be conceited and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in God, WHO RICHLY PROVIDES ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share...**)

The following ice breaker is just a starter for your group. The message comes after the bar. Please be obedient and enjoy!

CROWD BREAKER What is the difference in benefits between attending church live and watching online? Is there a benefit to watching a second time online?

Note: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to proclaim fearlessly the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time. BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study. This study is also a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions Pastor Mark has raised this week 7/31. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.**

Peter's Epistles

Key questions to address in this series from Peter's letters:

1. Who is God?
2. What is He saying to us?
3. What does that say about humanity?
4. How should we respond to this?
5. Whom should we tell?

Mark says whenever we hear from God, there is always the question that arises, “Whom should I share this with? To whom do I need to talk?” **Do you agree? Do you have an experience where something struck you so deeply, you had to share with someone else, by text, email, or conversation, and corroborate what you heard?**

Mark relates why he chose Peter’s epistles. He says, “They are so rich, first of all. And in a world that appears so confusing...in a world that is getting increasingly darker, Peter reminds us, he’s reminding the very early church that was also facing a dark time (see notes below), and Peter was sending a letter with encouragement, not only on how to live and face the persecution, but also to remind them that God was indeed with them.” **What do you remember of these epistles?**

Look up 1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the elect who are exiles of the Dispersion throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen **2** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by His blood:

Who are these people? Why are they the “Dispersion”? (Scribe’s note: Every location mentioned is a province that had been previously visited by Paul in the book of Acts, and each is located in present-day Turkey.) **Is Peter writing to Jews, Gentiles, or both? How do they KNOW they’re “the elect”?** **What exactly did God foreknow? What does Peter say the purpose of their sanctification by the Spirit is? Why is this so important? What distinguishes a Christian from all the rest? What does a disobedient Christian look like? To whom do you look so you become obedient?**

Grace and peace be yours in abundance. **Are these mere words? What is the immediate result from a blessing like this?**

A Living Hope

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for you, **5** who through faith are shielded by God’s power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **Take a moment. Look very closely at this doxology. What exactly has He given us? What does this “living hope” come from? How sure, then is this hope? What role does the historic FACT of Jesus’ resurrection play in this hope? Where is this hope kept? What do we have as we wait? What are we shielded from? Look at the very last clause: Is there another salvation coming? When can that be expected? What do you think this salvation will look like? How soon can we anticipate this hope?**

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in various trials **7** so that the proven character of your faith—more precious than gold,

which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Look at Peter's words here. What does it involve? What is the result of this trial?

Compare this to James 1: 2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds, **3** because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. **4** Allow perseverance to finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. **What is the result of this trial according to James? How does this result in the "praise, glory and honor..." that Peter speaks of? What does the book of Revelation promise to the one who overcomes? What are they overcoming?**

(Note: This is James, Jesus' brother, not James the brother of John who grew up with Peter, traveled with the apostles and was beheaded. This James grew up in Nazareth, miles from the Sea of Galilee, and joined the apostles in Jerusalem. **How significant is this principle that both are teaching? How can a trial inspire joy? What is the result on the other side? Do you have a testimony?**)

Discuss this principle: Faith that is not tried is only theory. Is there a theory or any opinion that saves?

8 Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9** now that you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

(Note: In John 20:29, Jesus said to Thomas, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." **Look at what Peter is saying. What do you see? Why do we walk by faith and NOT by sight?**)

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who foretold the grace to come to you searched and investigated carefully, **11** trying to determine the time and setting to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. **How long have believers been speculating about the last days? What tools did the prophets of old have? Have our tools changed? Who has more tools, the prophets of old or we? What do we have that they did not have, if they had the same Spirit whom we enjoy?**

12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, when they foretold the things now announced by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things. **What is surprising about this revelation? Does prophecy serve the prophet? Who is gifted when the prophet speaks, the prophet or the listener? What do you learn of the angels and what they know and what they long to know? Why do you think they long to look into these things? Do angels have access to the Bible? Do they know what is written before it is written? For whose sake was the Bible written?**

When a preacher today speaks the words of the prophets by the Holy Spirit, who is served? What is the hoped-for response?

Comment on Mark's review: "So, who is God? He gave Jesus for salvation, to be born again, to move from darkness to light. We have trials that produce joy, because there is something that comes from that trial that brings us to Him. Faith in Him assures us of our eternity with him in heaven."

Pastor Mark moves on our response:

A Call to Holiness

[\(Hebrews 12:14-17\)](#)

13Therefore prepare your minds for action. Be sober-minded. Set your hope fully on the grace to be given you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Mark says, "So Peter tells us, 'Let's be intentional about what our mind is thinking.'" (Great preachers have said, "When there is a 'therefore' it's good to know what it is there for." This passage is our response to the previous promises revealed. **Is the "revelation of Jesus Christ" a momentary experience? Or is it an ever-increasing awareness of Him? How do you cultivate that awareness? Look at Philippians 4:**
8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable –if anything is excellent or praiseworthy– think on these things. **9**Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. **What does "intentional" mean? How are both Paul and Peter giving us practical advice to help us respond to their counsel? Why is it so important to study any biblical message more than once? Why do people so often binge on reruns? What is gained from the second time through?**

14As obedient children, do not conform to the passions of your former ignorance. **15**But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, **16**for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." **17**Since you call on a Father who judges each one's work impartially, conduct yourselves in reverent fear during your stay as foreigners. **Do you understand what Peter is talking about, when he mentions "...the passions of your former ignorance?" Have you ever thought of yourself as an obedient child? How is obedience instilled in the heart of a child? Did you once have habits that are even foreign to you today? Have you ever thought like this, about whom you are addressing in your prayers? How does it make you feel to know that He judges your works impartially? Why is "reverent fear" important? How important does what we watch on Netflix become?**

Look up Romans 12: **1**Therefore I urge you, brothers, on account of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. **2**Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. **Discuss the intentionality Paul encourages here. Does it encourage**

you that Paul, James and Peter seem to have the same heart for this message? How important is this then? Look again at what Paul, Peter and James have said about the "renewing of your mind" and the transformation process. What are we supposed to do? What are we supposed to think? Mark says, "You become what you consume." How does this fit? What are you filling your mind with? What does it take to renew your mind?

Think of Mark's illustration with the candle. Your light shines when you come to Christ...Then you conform to the culture...and the oxygen is withdrawn. The breath (Greek: pneuma/spirit) is withdrawn...the candle goes out. There is no light without the breath. ***What is Mark saying? What has inspired your thinking?***

18For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life you inherited from your forefathers, ***19***but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or spot. ***20***He was known before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in the last times for your sake. ***Talk about his...what is the difference? Why is the blood so important? What does the blood supply the body with, as it goes through the body?***

21Through Him you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him; and so your faith and hope are in God. ***How does the resurrection become the anchor for our faith?***

The Enduring Word ***(Isaiah 40:6-8)***

22Since you have purified your souls by obedience to the truth so that you have a genuine love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from a pure heart. ***23***For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. ***24***For,

*"All flesh is like grass,
and all its glory like the flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall,
25but the word of the Lord stands forever."*

And this is the word that was proclaimed to you. ***What purifies the soul? What is the result of that purification? What was the "new commandment" Jesus proclaimed in John 13? What is the intended fruit of the imperishable seed that was planted? What is the measure and proof of our Christianity?***

What did Jesus say about this: What will all men know by the love we have and maintain for each other? (John 13: 34A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. 35By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.)

Mark's review:

1. **You are what you consume.**
2. **You become whom you hang out with. (Are you changing them? Or are you conforming to them and their views? Is your light getting brighter?)**
3. **This world is trying to conform us to another image, other than the image of Jesus Christ. What image are you bearing?**
4. **Renew your mind...reread these notes and follow the guidelines of the apostles.**

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's notes:

Peter's epistles: Author. Peter, the fisherman from Galilee is the author of the book of 1 Peter. He's the one who cut off Malchus' ear at Jesus' arrest; the same one who said, "I'll never deny you," and then denied Him three times. He's also the one to whom Jesus gave the commission to "strengthen the others" once he had returned. It was to Peter (Greek: *Petrus* "stone" or "Rocky," Aramaic: *Kephas* or "stone.") that Jesus said, "Upon this Rock (Greek: *petra* or "rock") I will build my church."

The writer refers to himself as "Peter" in 1 Peter 1:1. Scholars agree on authorship as well as the early church leaders like Polycarp, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Origen who all quote from the book naming Peter as the author. When comparing the words and character of Peter the work is clearly his style.

Date. The book of 1 Peter was written during a great persecution happening to the church, because Peter mentions the "fiery trial" which the Christians were suffering under. Most likely it was the persecution under the Emperor Nero in 64 A.D. where Peter Himself was martyred. Most likely the book of 1 Peter was written in 63 A.D. just before his death.

Place of Writing. The epistle of 1 Peter was written from Rome. The apostle Peter was suffering the same persecution as all Christians in the Roman Empire, and especially in Rome. When Peter mentions "Babylon" as a place he was writing from, it was most likely a euphemism for Rome. Peter may not have wished to reveal that he was in Rome. It also would not have been wise for Peter or any Christian to speak of Rome in any way other than a great empire, especially during a time of great persecution. Any Christian would've understood Babylon is a symbol for Rome. Also, the fact that Mark (1 Peter 5:13) and Timothy (2 Timothy 4:11) were with him at the time of this writing, indicates that the book was written from Rome. [1 Peter - Bible History \(bible-history.com\)](http://1Peter-BibleHistory(bible-history.com))