

Life Group Notes 8/07/2022  
Mark Warren Peter's Epistles Week 2

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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](mailto: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 How many "junk drawers" do you have in your house? What is in your "junk drawer"?**

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.**

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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.**

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Mark says, "The church is made up of people who are on this journey to try to find meaning and purpose, and the church of Jesus Christ is a group of people who are pursuing Jesus Christ and His righteousness and His ways, and we know we fall short. We need a savior...He offers hope. He offers peace. He offers acceptance. He loves us so much and gives us a connection with the Father in Heaven." **What do you think? What strikes you again in these ideas? How simple is the gospel?** Mark says, "Our call is to go to places where people are hurting." **Can you name a place where people are not hurting? How aware are you of the people who are with you in, say, Walmart or Market Basket? Do you have a story of a recent encounter?**

## The Living Stone and Chosen People

*(Isaiah 28:14–22; 1 Corinthians 3:10–15; Ephesians 2:19–22)*

**1**Put away, therefore, all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. **2**Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, **3**now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. ***If Peter is saying these words, what can be said of believers? Have you ever seen “malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy or slander” in today’s church? Are you guilty of any of these? When you recognize these characteristics in others, what are your thoughts? What is your response? What is your response when you recognize any of these in something you said or did? What causes you to slander another person?***

***What are the steps Peter outlines to rid yourself of these characteristics? Peter suggests exchanging one craving for another. What is “pure spiritual milk?” What is it not? What do you crave most? Can other people see what you crave most by your behavior?***

**4**As you come to Him, the living stone, rejected by men but chosen and precious in God’s sight, **5**you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6**For it stands in Scripture:

“See, I lay in Zion a stone,  
a chosen and precious cornerstone;  
and the one who believes in Him  
will never be put to shame.” ***Mark says, “We should be modeling who Jesus is.” How like the cornerstone is the rest of the building? (See notes below.)***

**7**To you who believe, then, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone,” ***Why would the builders reject the cornerstone? (See notes below.)***

**8**and,

“A stone of stumbling  
and a rock of offense.” ***How can a cornerstone be a stone of stumbling?***

They stumble because they disobey the word—and to this they were appointed. ***Look up Romans 10:17 17***Consequently, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. ***What happens when they do not believe? Look at the rest of Romans chapter 10. What is the consequence of unbelief? How successful is the one who has to “make everything up” instead of believing?***

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**9**But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, to proclaim the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. **10**Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. **19**I ask instead, did Israel not understand? **Look again at how Paul quotes Moses in Romans 10:19-20** First, Moses says:

"I will make you jealous by those who are not a nation;  
I will make you angry by a nation without understanding.

**20**And Isaiah boldly says:

"I was found by those who did not seek Me;  
I revealed Myself to those who did not ask for Me." **When Peter says, we are "...a people for God's own possession, to proclaim the virtues of Him..." how does this relate to being living stones, whose cornerstone is Christ?**

**11**Beloved, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from the desires of the flesh, which war against your soul. **Note: This is the second time Peter exhorts us to examine our "junk drawer." Do "real" Christians have problems with the desires of the flesh? Can you think of other scriptures where perhaps Paul or James says the same words?**

**12**Conduct yourselves with such honor among the Gentiles that, though they slander you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us. **Does it help when you're accused, if there is NO evidence against you, but your behavior suggests the opposite? Mark says, "So...you should actually have good deeds." What good deeds can be seen of others? Have you ever been falsely accused? How did you feel? How did you respond? Can you think of an example where one was accused of wrongdoing, but he was exonerated by his own behavior?**

### **Submission to Authorities**

**(Romans 13:1-7)**

**13**Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to the king as the supreme authority, **14**or to governors as those sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. **15**For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorance of foolish men. **How practical are these suggestions? When you read, "This is the will of God..." does this answer the question, "What is God's will for me?" Have you ever asked that question? What does this answer involve in practical terms? Does it work, and "silence the ignorance of foolish men?"**

**Is there a time where you do not have to submit? Is there a time where it would be wrong to submit? Do you have any examples you know of in history?**

**16** Live in freedom, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. **17** Treat everyone with high regard: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the emperor. **Keep in mind, the emperor at the time Peter wrote this had him in prison in Rome, and he had a name: Nero. Morality in the empire at the time of this writing, was such that Paul said it is unwise to describe the behavior. (You can find every form of that behavior today on cable TV.) Explain why honoring the emperor is required? Must you accept the emperor's behavior as honorable? If his behavior is dishonorable what is the required response? What prayers do you pray? What expectations to you have when you pray, that your prayers are heard?**

**18** Servants, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but even to those who are unreasonable. **Do you have a testimony? How difficult is this exhortation? How difficult is it to submit to the unreasonable? How did David submit to Saul in the latter's madness? How did David pray to God (see Psalm 35 for example)?** **19** For if anyone endures the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God, this is to be commended. **20** How is it to your credit if you are beaten for doing wrong and you endure it? **Answer Peter's question.** But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. **Why? Notice that Peter is reviewing lessons from the previous chapter. How is it commendable? What did Peter say in chapter 1 about the various trials we suffer? What does James say the trial of our faith works? Why? (James 1)**

### Christ's Example of Suffering (Isaiah 53:1-8)

**21** For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His footsteps:

**22** "He committed no sin,  
and no deceit was found in His mouth."

**23** When they heaped abuse on Him,  
He did not retaliate;  
when He suffered, He made no threats,  
but entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.

**24** He Himself bore our sins  
in His body on the tree,  
so that we might die to sin  
and live to righteousness. **Compare these verses to verses 19 and 20 above. What good did "suffering for doing good" produce on our behalf? Is Peter inviting us to do the same? In Colossians 1:24, Paul says, "I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of His body, that is the church" How does that work?**

"By whose stripes you were healed." (See Scribes note on this verse below.)

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25 For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

**Reflect on Pastor Mark’s encounter with the police in Maine. Has this happened to you? How can we reflect Jesus “salt and light” in circumstances where our own seemingly innocuous comforts are inconvenienced by a scooter parking law?**

**Would you be safe saying, as Paul said, “Follow me as I’m following Christ?” Why? Or Why not? What would you think of someone in your life group who said that to you?**

**What belongs in your junk drawer?**

**Take the time to pray.**

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**Scribe’s notes (from last week, as a reminder):**

**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 to the Gentile churches of present-day Turkey. [1 Peter - Bible History \(bible-history.com\)](http://bible-history.com)

**Reflections on a “cornerstone”:** (Risky notes: proceed with caution.) Reverend Clarence Larkin, a staunchly dispensationalist Baptist pastor/teacher, and a graphic designer, wrote a book in 1920 humbly entitled *The Greatest Book on “Dispensational Truth” in the World*. I was given this book in the seventies, and, having never heard any “dispensational truths,” I read it, and studied its 115 charts, maps and wood cuts with avid interest. You might well have seen anyone of his now famous charts, maps and graphs. Larkin, 1850-1924, though not a Freemason, devoted a chapter to the Great

Pyramid in Egypt, with a profound discussion on the prophetic nature of the structure. In this chapter, he noted that there is only one building in the world, the pyramid, whose chief cornerstone is the head, and not at the base. He also observes that the Great Pyramid is missing this capstone. This observation was related to these verses Peter cites in this chapter of his epistle: The capstone will always be rejected by the builders, because, being pointed, it cannot be part of a structure that requires flat surfaces on the top and bottom. The capstone on the building site will always be a stumbling block standing in the way of the workers until the building on which it is destined to sit is completed and the stone itself is hoisted to its final resting spot at the head...and the capstone is the perfect shape and model of the finished building, which is being built in perfect proportion to it.

**Note: Clarence Larkin is not declaring new revelation. This is drawn from a simple observation of a structure in Egypt and not drawn from the Bible, but what does the illustration suggest? What does this make you think? Does it clarify a "rejected" cornerstone? Would be possible able to reject a cornerstone that is already part of the base of a building?**

**Very important note on healing:** 1 Peter 2:24 is often used to prove or disprove that there is "healing in the atonement" as prophesied in Isaiah 53. In verse 24 Peter reviews the gospel, recalling Isaiah's prophecies, and says, "24 He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness."

And then he paraphrases Isaiah 53 in the context of this review and says: "By whose stripes you were healed." The verb, "were healed" is written in the aorist tense, the simple past and in the passive voice. This was not a future healing in theory only. Peter was writing to those who had personally experienced the gospel, and had already been healed. Peter is reminding them of their experience. Healing in the atonement has only recently become controversial because faith is often based on theory explained through a personal lack of experience, and not on the expectations produced in the gospel by the promises of God. When we walk by faith and not by sight, our expectations are borne of the promises we see and read in the gospel. Our faith comes by hearing the Word of God.