

Sabbath School Lesson Notes

Lesson 13: "Major Themes in 1 and 2 Peter"

- I. Sabbath Afternoon: What is your favorite verse in 1st or 2nd Peter and why?

- II. Sunday's Lesson: Suffering, Jesus, and Salvation
 - **Read 1 Peter 1:18-19.** *What is the cost of salvation? (See Teacher's Comments p. 172 bottom)*
Why was Christ's life the only life adequate enough to pay the price of redemption for all humanity? (See Teacher's Comments p. 173 top)
 - **Read 1 Peter 2:21-24.** *What is the context of Peter's understanding of salvation here? (Jesus suffered as our substitute on the cross.)*
How does Peter's description connect to the Old Testament? (OT sacrifices, note phrase quoted in 1 Peter 2:24, "by whose stripes you were healed" from Is. 53)
 - **Read 1 Peter 3:18.** *What understandings about salvation are found in this verse? (2 Cor. 5:21)*

- III. Monday's Lesson: How Should We Live?
 - Read or highlight the opening paragraph.
 - **Read 1 Peter 1:15-17.** *What does Peter say about how a Christian should behave here? (Be holy)*
 - **Read 1 Peter 3:8-9.** *What does Peter expect of Christians in these two verses? (Holiness is not living in seclusion. It's showing compassion and love one to another. It's also loving your enemies.)*
 - **Read 2 Peter 3:11.** *While fear of destruction is a valid reason to live right, what are some better reasons or motives to do what is right? (Because God loves us and we love Him. Happiness comes from living right, treating others right; gaining self-respect by living by principle.)*
 - Discuss the question at the bottom of Monday's page.

- IV. Tuesday's Lesson: Hope in the Second Coming
 - **Read 1 Peter 1:4.** *How is this verse especially helpful to people under persecution? (narrative)*
 - **Read 1 Peter 4:17.** *Why does the judgment begin at the house of God? (More knowledge = more accountability.)*
 - **Read 2 Peter 3: 3-4.** *Why does it seem like there's a delay in Christ's coming? (Doubt, impatience, expectations from certain Bible verses.)*
How does Peter explain the apparent delay in a positive way? (See 2 Peter 3:9)
 - **Read 2 Peter 3:12.** *How does verse 12 explain the apparent delay? (Since God has given the opportunity to hasten His return, but we really don't, then in a real way the delay is on us.)*
*How may we hasten the return of Jesus? (#1. Reflect God's character – **COL 69**, and #2. Have enough love to get the gospel and present truth to everyone, and then Jesus will come – **Matt. 24:14**. In other words, we need to fully embrace/obey the Gospel Commission. We cannot reach the whole world by ourselves, but we can reach everyone in our own territory/neighborhood.)*

- V. Wednesday's Lesson: Order in Society and in the Church
 - **Read 1 Peter 2:13-17.** *Why might Peter's readers have been surprised with his words here? (See narrative – persecution)*

*How would you sum up Peter's view of the role of secular government? (To restrain evil doers)
Why did Peter say Christians should submit to governing authorities? (See vs. 15. Also see vs. 12)
How can a Christian follow Peter's counsel to honor government leaders when they make bad decisions, even persecuting Christians? (Jesus did it. Paul and Peter did it. They were ready to die or be delivered as God willed – fully trusted God's care for them.)*

Sum up highlights of 1 Peter 5:1-4.

****Read 1 Peter 5:5.** *How is verse 5 the key to orderly church governance? (Being truly humble keeps self from causing strife and disorder.)*

Discuss the questions at the bottom of Wednesday's page.

VI. Thursday's Lesson: The Primacy of Scripture

****Read 2 Peter 3:2.** *What are the two sources of authority that Peter points out here? (Prophets of the OT and Apostles of the NT – both Testaments of Scripture)*

****Read 2 Peter 1:16-21.** *Why is Scripture the final authority on God's will for the Christian? (It comes from God Himself – Holy Spirit)*

Comment: In **2 Peter 3:15-16** Peter talks of people who wrest or twist Paul's writings. (Note that Peter indicates that Paul's writings are Scripture.)

Is twisting the Scriptures and making private interpretations something people always do deliberately? If not, why does it happen so much? (People naturally read their own ideas into Scripture. It's mostly by accident rather than deliberate.)

So, how should we approach Scripture so that we don't twist it and end up with private interpretations? (#1. Rely on prayer and the Holy Spirit. #2. Be deliberate in reading the context of the passage. #3. Try to learn the historical context/setting and the author's original intent. #4. Be willing to obey the application to your own life).

VII. Conclusion:

What role does Scripture play in a person's spiritual life? Is it primarily a source for doctrinal truth, or is it primarily a revelation of Jesus Christ, leading one to know and love Him more?

[Be careful. In some ways this is a misleading question, but in another way it's a valid concern.]

It's true that people can become imbalanced and read the Bible only for doctrinal truth completely missing a real connection with Jesus. Such people easily become debaters, quick to correct and/or condemn others. Even if they are correct, without a real connection with Jesus, they fail to love and win people to the truth. These are modern day Pharisees.

However, when we read the Bible and really experience Jesus, growing daily in His grace, then the doctrinal truth of the Bible is a blessing. Then we hold it in balance with love and tact for others.