

Central Study Hour – Sabbath School Lesson Notes

“Feed My Sheep” First and Second Peter: Lesson Two, “An Inheritance Incorruptible”

SABBATH AFTERNOON: Read title. This title comes from 1 Peter 1:4. We’ll see this in Sunday’s and Tuesday’s lesson. Read the memory text. This verse is important in Thursday’s lesson. Share highlights from the narrative.

SUNDAY: TO THE EXILES

Read 1 Peter 1:1. *What can we learn from this verse that helps to give us a bit of context?*

Peter is the author and an apostle sent by Jesus (and the Holy Spirit). We also see that he is writing to believers in Asia Minor (Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia, and Bithynia are all part of Asia Minor or much of modern day Turkey). Galatia and Asia were significant areas of Paul’s missionary journeys. What we know from those stories from Acts 13-20 is that most of the converts to Christianity in this area were Gentiles with some Jewish converts.

In the bottom two paragraphs, the author of the quarterly shares arguments for thinking that Peter was writing mostly to Jews (“strangers” means resident foreigners or exiles. Thus the thought that they must be Jews of the diaspora), and arguments for thinking Peter was writing mostly to Gentiles (language that sounds like it’s referencing past Gentile pagan behavior). However, the stories of Paul’s missionary efforts there (mostly Gentile conversions), and **1 Peter 2:9-10** (read it) make the best arguments for Peter writing to Gentiles, especially **verse 10** (neither of these two points is made by the author).

It is most interesting to find that the *SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7*, at the top of p. 548 suggests that Peter, “who was the first to baptize Gentiles and to assert their equal status in the church, would no doubt regard all Christians, of both Jewish and Gentile origin, as one in Christ Jesus, without distinction in addressing them.” Therefore, the word “strangers,” meaning “resident foreigners;” instead of literally meaning Jews of the diaspora, is “used metaphorically of both Gentile and Jewish Christians [all believers] who viewed heaven as their permanent home,” seeing themselves as “strangers” in this world (7 BC 550).

Read 1 Peter 1:4. *Where is Peter’s focus for the inheritance incorruptible? It’s “reserved in heaven.”* Our real home is “reserved in heaven.” This world is not our home; we are just passing through. We are strangers and pilgrims, or exiles in this world.

Read Hebrews 11:13 which uses the same word with this meaning (“strangers and pilgrims on the earth”). Peter uses the word “strangers” the same way again in **1 Peter 2:11** (read it).

MONDAY: ELECTED

Read 1 Peter 1:2. *What else does this verse tell us about those to whom Peter had been writing? What does he call them?* He calls them the elect. Read the 2nd paragraph on being careful about erroneous predestination ideas.

Read 1 Tim. 2:4 and **2 Peter 3:9.** *How do these two verses help us to understand what Peter meant when he called these people the elect?* If God wants all to be saved as these verses say,

than He certainly doesn't predestine any to be lost.

Recite John 3:16 together. *What is the key word on who can believe and have eternal life?*

"Whosoever." Whoever will believe. It's our choice, isn't it? (If time, see Ezekiel 33:11.)

Read or share highlights from the narrative on the bottom half of the page.

Read the question in the box at the bottom of the page. The point is that God really wants us! He's there for us! If God wants me to be saved, surely, He gives every opportunity and assistance so that I will choose to follow Him!

TUESDAY: KEY THEMES

Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. Share highlights from verses 3-5. Then note highlights in verses 7-12. Put emphasis on God's grace, God's power, and God's actions in our salvation (The narrative notes several of these highlights). When noting that suffering refines our faith, it is a good time to ask and discuss Friday's Discussion Question #4.

Read 1 Peter 1:4. Read the box at the bottom of the page. *Does it sink in? Do we really believe it?* Ask Friday's Discussion Question #3.

WEDNESDAY: LIVING THE LIFE OF SALVATION

Read 1 Peter 1:13. *What does it mean to gird up the loins of your mind?* Prepare to use your mind in God's service. *What does it mean to rest your hope fully upon the grace revealed in Jesus?* There's no hope in self. The grace of God revealed in Jesus is where all the answers are. It's where all the power is?

Share highlights from 1 Peter 1:13-17. *According to this passage, what should motivate Christian behavior?* Go over the three motivations in the last three paragraphs of the page.

1.) We are to be holy because God is holy (verses 14-16). Share 5T 743 from p. 29.

2.) Our holy God "will judge everyone impartially, according to what each has done" (verse 17).

Read 1 Peter 1:18-21. *What is the third great motivation for living a good Christian life found in these verses?*

3.) "Christians are redeemed" by "the precious blood of Jesus."

Ask the questions from the box at the bottom of Wednesday's page.

THURSDAY: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Read 1 Peter 1:22-23. *What crucial point is Peter making here about what it means to be a Christian?* The narrative helps to answer this question especially in the bottom half of the last paragraph.

Conclusion: Ask the questions in the box at the bottom of Thursday's page.

If every good and perfect gift comes from above as James 1:17 says, then we can only love in the fullest sense of a pure heart if we are holy through God dwelling in us through the Holy Spirit. That means our daily choices to submit to God for prayer and devotional time, and to surrender every issue that comes to us throughout the day are the choices needed to be able to love with a "pure heart."