



# Hope Away From Home



**1 Peter**

Gympie Presbyterian Church

# Welcome - Term 3 2021

Welcome to Bible Study for term 3. Bible Study groups are a key part of fulfilling our church's vision to be followers of Jesus who *Know God, Love One Another, and Reach our Region*. In our Bible Study groups, we (as the name suggests) study the Bible. It's an opportunity to continue listening closely to God's Word, to grow in knowing him. But Bible Study groups are about more than Bible Study. They're an opportunity to grow in love for one another. We express this love by helping each other understand and apply God's Word, encouraging each other towards 'love and good deeds', and caring for each other by prayer and practical means. And being in a group is also a way to be encouraged in speaking of Jesus to our friends, family, and neighbours, and is a place you might invite a non-believing friend to come to meet other Christians, and God!

When times are tough, where can hope be found? That's what Peter's first letter is all about. For many of the believers Peter wrote to, their *tough times* came through direct persecution for following Jesus, though they also suffered 'all kinds of trials' (1 Peter 1:6)—grief, sickness, hunger, etc. In many ways, our situation is like theirs, and so we also wonder where to find hope. The hope Peter could offer his audience is the same hope we can have now: the hope that springs from how Jesus suffered in the past to win us a glorious future! And this hope can radically change our lives just as it did theirs.

## #hopestory

How have you experienced hope in Christ?

This term, as part of growing in *loving one another*, each week in there'll be an opportunity to share your #hopestory.

#hopestory is part of a campaign for Christians to speak about hope in Jesus, particularly using social media, during extended lockdowns. A #hopestory is a short (they suggest ~1 minute) retelling of how you've found hope in Jesus - what some people would call a *testimony*.

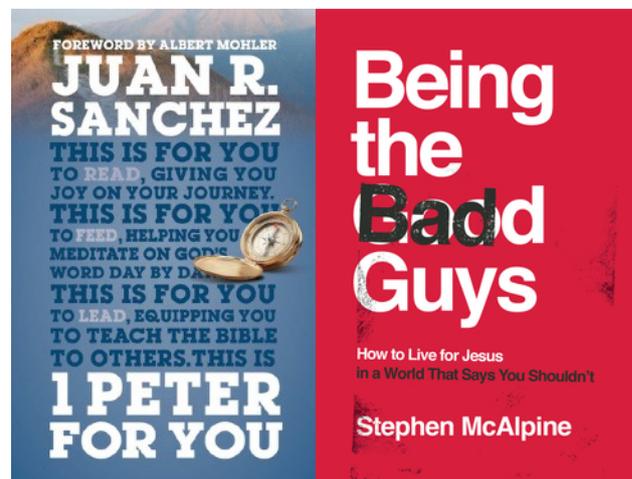
This term, we'll set aside a few minutes at the start of each study to hear one (or more) stories from people. It might be the story of how you first began trusting in Jesus, or it could be about how faith in Christ gave you hope in suffering - or over the term, you might do both.

You don't have to share your story, but we'd love to hear as many stories as we can, both to grow in our *love for one another* and also to be encouraged in the true grace of God (1 Peter 5:12).

## Resources

If you want to dig deeper into 1 Peter, The Good Book Company has a very readable commentary in their 'For You' series.

West Australian Stephen McAlpine has written a recent book encouraging us to live for Jesus in a world that says we shouldn't. It's not a 'commentary' on 1 Peter, but he spends a significant amount of time considering the relevance of chapters 3 and 4 for our cultural moment.



# Living Hope

*1 Peter 1:1-12*

## Getting Started

If you had to leave your home in a hurry, what three things (not including people!) would you grab on your way out?

## Observation

*Read 1 Peter 1:1-2*

Who wrote this letter? What does he tell us about himself?

Who is this letter written to?

What does the way the recipients are described tell us about (1) them/believers (2) God?

*Read 1 Peter 1:3-9*

What seems to be the situation in verse 6?

Despite this, why can believers have joy (vv6, 8)?

*Read 1 Peter 1:10-12*

How and when has the good news (gospel) of Jesus been revealed?

## Reflection

Which truth about God and the gospel gives you the most hope and joy right now?

In tough times, what promises can we offer each other? What promises must we not offer?

How would it affect you to read vv3-9 every morning, until you find yourself remembering its good news throughout the day?

1 Peter is a letter we desperately need to read, and wrestle with, and believe today. In these hardening times, some of us will be tempted to compromise what we believe in order to “fit in” or to avoid suffering, while others of us will be tempted to bemoan all that is wrong with our world and long nostalgically for a better time, long-forgotten (and that likely never actually existed). Peter will equip us to stand firm against both temptations as we look forward to a better future. Peter will repeatedly remind us that in spite of our status as exiles in this world, we have a secure standing before a sovereign and faithful God who will vindicate his covenant people on the last day. Peter will give us what we need to “stand firm” (5:12).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Juan Sanchez, *1 Peter For You*

# Transforming Hope

*1 Peter 1:13-2:3*

## Getting Started

Have one or two people share their #hopestory, telling about how Jesus has transformed them.

In our first study in 1 Peter we read about the *living hope* God's given to his people in Christ and by the Spirit. Starting at 1 Peter 1:13, really to the end, Peter is concerned with how God's salvation transforms his people.

## Observation

**Read 1 Peter 1:13-2:3**

Let's start with the main point of this passage. What must we leave behind? (1:14, 18,2:1) What must we put in its place? (1:15-16, 22, 2:2)

This passage begins with *therefore*. How does last week's passage motivate the life-change commanded by this one? (note also 1:19, 21, 23)

What further motivation for change does v17 provide?

Isaiah 40 is quoted in this passage. Read Isaiah 40:1-11. What did God promise through Isaiah? What does Peter's quoting of this passage say about its fulfillment?

What things does this passage say are temporary? What things are enduring?

## Reflection

Have you tasted that the Lord is good?

How can we train our hearts to value things that endure?

How do you set your hope on God's grace?

How firm is your belief in God's present discipline, future judgment, and hope in his future glory?  
Do these things motivate you to obey God in hard times now?

How could you be showing deeper love (1:22) for others right now?

When we were born again, we were born into a family that is characterised by gracious love. Our Father is love (1 John 4:7-8, 16). In love, Jesus, our elder brother, died in our place so that we may live. Love is in our DNA, and Jesus teaches us both what it looks like to treasure God above all and so love him as is fitting, and what it looks like to love the church. Because we have been born anew through the living and abiding word of God, and because we have set ourselves apart from this world of hate when we obeyed the gospel, we must, can and will love one another. Since Jesus loved the church, so also will we, even when that is hard or even seems impossible. And so we do not walk away from our brother and sisters—we walk toward them in sincere love, as God did to us in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Juan Sanchez, *1 Peter For You*

# People of Hope

*1 Peter 2:4-10*

## Getting Started

Can you think of a time when you were praised by someone (or you praised someone else)? How did you/they feel? How did it shape your relationship with that person?

## Observation

**Read 1 Peter 2:4-8**

Who is the *living stone*? Using the table below list how different people/groups responded to the living stone?

God	Non-believers	Believers

This passage is chock full of Old Testament quotations and allusions. So let's look up some of these quotations to more fully understand what God is saying.

Before we look up the quotations, based on what you know of the Old Testament, what do you think (1) stones/house, (2) holy priesthood, and (3) sacrifices refer to? (Hint: look up 2 Samuel 7:5 & 7:11 for *spiritual house*.)

**Read Isaiah 28:14-18**

How do the people of Isaiah's day think they will benefit from a 'covenant with death'?

What does God say he will do instead?

What do you think the promise of not being 'stricken with panic'/'put to shame' means?

How does Peter show Isaiah 28 being fulfilled?

***Read Psalm 118:19-29***

What is the 'house' of verse 26? How does your answer to this question help understand the 'cornerstone' image in v22?

How should we respond to God's making a 'rejected stone' into the 'cornerstone'?

How does Peter show Psalm 118 being fulfilled?

***Read Isaiah 8:11-15***

In Isaiah 8, who is the 'stone of stumbling'? Why does Isaiah say this stone will cause stumbling?

How does Peter show Isaiah 8 being fulfilled?

***Read 1 Peter 2:9-10***

To whom were these labels/titles originally given? (Cross references in your Bible will help.)

To whom does Peter say they now apply?

Why has God done this?

How does knowing this help believers to 'stand fast' (5:12)?

## **Reflection**

Take a few minutes to reflect on what this passage reveals about Jesus. *Pause and praise him* for who he is and what he's done.

How are followers of Jesus both rejected and chosen, similar to Jesus himself? Why would this be helpful to hear in the situation the letter addresses?

Which feeling is stronger for you: fear of rejection by people, or hope based on acceptance by God? Does this passage influence those feelings at all?

If you've been saved by Jesus, what have you been saved to do? (v9) What holds you back from that? In what ways could you be doing that more?

# Freedom Under God (1)

*1 Peter 2:11-25*

## Getting Started

Have you ever been wrongly accused of something you didn't do? How did you respond?

## Observation

*Read 1 Peter 2:11-12*

What are Christians urged to do? How does our identity as 'foreigners and exiles' shape our expectations for life?

What response should we expect from those around us (both positively and negatively)?

*Read 1 Peter 2:13-19*

How does our identity as 'foreigners and exiles' shape the way we respond to human authorities?

Why are we called to relate this way?

How do you think it would have been hard for those to whom Peter was writing to submit to their rulers and masters?

In 1 Peter 1:16, believers are called to be *holy* because they are children of a holy God—we're to imitate our Father in holiness. As Peter turns our attention to unjust suffering, we see again how imitation of God shapes our Christian life.

## **Reading 1 Peter 2:20-25**

What's a 'good' reason for a Christian to suffer?

How did Jesus respond to unjust suffering?

Why did Jesus do this? And how does it effect his people?

## **Reflection**

What accusations do Christians face today (vv12, 15)? How should such accusations be answered? Why is it tempting to answer in other ways?

As 'foreigners and exiles' our home is in heaven, we're not firstly citizens of any earthly nation (c.f. Philippians 3:20), yet we're called to submit to *every human authority*. Should there be limits to this? How so and why?

What kind of future hope is required to answer unfairness simply with goodness? Do you have that kind of hope?

If we are focused on Jesus, then we will not become self-entitled or embittered Christians who play the victim card and get angry when society pushes against us. We will instead be filled with joy. When we don't join in the cheers when our cultural enemies *lose* a battle, or when we don't shout angrily at them when they *win* a battle, it will only be because Jesus is our hope and joy—

and he is our example of what it looks like to entrust yourself to the One who judges justly (1 Peter 2 v 23).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Stephen McAlpine, *Being the Bad Guys*, 104 (Emphasis original)

# Freedom Under God (2)

*1 Peter 3:1-7*

## Getting Started

Think about the last wedding you attended. What vision or hope for marriage was most dominant?

## Observation and Reflection

Last week we looked at the first part of this section of 1 Peter which urges us to live 'good lives among the pagans' (2:11) for the glory of God, and particularly applies this to submitting to 'every human authority' (2:13). In this study we're slowing down to see how these principles play out in marriages.

In doing this, we recognise we have many different experiences of marriage and singleness; and many of us are not currently married. Our goal in this study is to both encourage those who are married in godliness, and also to help us all work towards godly relationships.

But before we do that, let's remind ourselves of the context.

### ***Read 1 Peter 2:16-17***

In Christ, what privileges have we received? How can they be misapplied?

### ***Read 1 Peter 3:1-7***

What are Christian husbands commanded to do in verse 7 and why? How can men fail to do this today?

Now, if your husband doesn't believe the word, you can't point him to the word in verse 7! What response to a husband who is not a believer is commended by verses 1-2? How does this relate to last week's passage (especially 2:12)?

What are the limitations of merely external adornment? What beauty should Christian wives pursue?

Tragically, some men who claim to be Christian have twisted this passage to make their wives submit to abuse.<sup>4</sup> Why is this an abuse of this passage?<sup>5</sup>

Both verse 1 and verse 7 begin “in the same way”, referencing Christ’s example in last week’s passage. How could you be more Christ-like in your closest relationships?

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<sup>4</sup> Gympie Presbyterian Church condemns all forms of abuse and violence. If this study raises any issues for you personally, or concerning someone you know, please ask one of the elders for help.

<sup>5</sup>See <http://www.gist.org.au/issues-papers/domestic-violence/> for detailed response to DV from the PCQ.

# Answering Hope

*1 Peter 3:8-22*

## Getting Started

Discuss: what's the role of 'good deeds' in evangelism (telling people the good news of Jesus)?

## Observation

*Read 1 Peter 3:8-12 and Psalm 34*

What is the context of Psalm 34? How did this Psalm encourage Israelites to respond to unjust suffering?

How should Christians relate to other believers (v8) and non-believers (v9)?

How does the quote from Psalm 34 urge us to respond to unjust suffering?

*Read 1 Peter 3:13-17*

What should believers not fear? Who should we fear?

How does right fear change the way we approach 'suffering for doing good'?

Why would doing this cause people to ask about our hope?

The final verses of 1 Peter 3 are famously tricky to understand. As we read this passage, write down or highlight the bits that are unclear. Although we might have time to discuss those bits, we'll be focussing on the main, clear teaching of this paragraph.

### ***Read 1 Peter 3:18-22***

What hope do believers receive because Christ 'suffered for doing good'?

To what hope does baptism point?

How does Jesus current heavenly reign give hope in the midst of unjust suffering?

### **Reflection**

How do we normally respond to unjust suffering? How does this passage challenge our attitudes?

Are you ready to give an answer for the hope that's in you?

# Hopeful Suffering

## *1 Peter 4*

### **Getting Started**

How would you spend your time if you know this was your last week on earth?

### **Observation**

#### ***Read 1 Peter 4:1-6***

What can be the result of suffering? Why do you think this is?

How should Christians stand out from ‘pagans’ and what might the result be?

How is God’s judgment an encouragement in this?

At the start of this chapter, we read some ‘thou shalt nots’—behaviours which aren’t fitting for those who follow the crucified and risen Christ. Following Jesus, however, isn’t just about saying ‘no’; it’s about replacing these with a bigger ‘yes’.

#### ***Read 1 Peter 4:7-11***

It’s been around 2000 years since this letter was written. How can the Bible say the end is *near*?

Knowing the end is near, how should Christians live? How could facing abuse (v4) make it hard for Christians to live this way?

#### ***Read 1 Peter 4:12-19***

Why should Christians not be surprised, but rather rejoice, in suffering?

What are 'good' reasons to suffer? What are 'bad' reasons'?

## Reflection

What are some practical ways to show deep love? Which of these do you think you'd be best at? How could our church grow in this?

Have you experienced abuse or insults as a result of living for Jesus? What encouraged you to *stand fast* in Christ?

There are both right and wrong reasons Christians suffer insults and abuse. How can we learn to discern the difference (especially '*even as a meddler*')? How should we respond when our suffering is not because of the 'name of Christ'?

If Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords, why does he allow his people to suffer unjustly?

How are you tempted to live for 'evil human desires'?

There is a right way to suffer, and it is infused with joy. There is a wrong way to suffer, and it is infused with shame. From murderer to meddler, Peter works his way down through a list of sins that bring shame from the culture. This time, the shame is thoroughly deserved. And he holds out the possibility that Christians could suffer for these sins if they are not careful to avoid them.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Stephen McAlpine, *Being the Bad Guys*, 42

# Standing in Hope

## *1 Peter 5*

### **Getting Started**

What is the role of leadership in a church? What examples good and bad examples have you experienced, and what made them good or bad?

### **Observation**

#### ***Read 1 Peter 5:1-7***

How does Peter instruct to his fellow elders? How do these commands encourage humility? How is this different from non-Christian leadership?

What does Peter say to those who are younger? How is this *in the same way* as elders?

Why should all Christians humble themselves?

#### ***Read 1 Peter 5:8-11***

How do we resist the devil? How does this prowling enemy add to our understanding of why Christians suffer? (You might also like to look at 1 Peter 3:20, 21, 4:1, 17 for other reasons for suffering.)

What encouragement is there for believers to stand fast?

#### ***Read 1 Peter 5:12-14***

Why did Peter write this letter? How have we seen this in our studies in 1 Peter?

Look back at 1 Peter 1:1. Who was this letter written to? How might this help explain who/what *Babylon* refers to?

## **Reflection**

How can we encourage our leaders to live out their calling in vv2-3?

What does it mean to *submit ourselves to our elders*? How do you find this hard/easy? How does this fit keeping Christians leaders accountable?

How have these studies helped you to be *encouraged* and to *stand fast* in God's grace? What's one thing you want to particularly remember from these studies?

## Acknowledgement

Thanks to the ministry teams of [Mitchelton Presbyterian Church](#) and [Lakeshore Church of Christ](#) whose Bible studies on 1 Peter were used in producing these studies.

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