

Schedule: January 10–April 24

Date	Text
1/10	1 Peter 1:1–12
1/17	1 Peter 1:13–25
1/24	1 Peter 2:1–12
1/31	1 Peter 2:13–20
2/7	1 Peter 2:21–25
2/14	OFF
2/21	1 Peter 3:1–12
2/28	1 Peter 3:13–22
3/6	Review 1 Peter 1–3
3/13	1 Peter 4:1–11
3/20	OFF
3/27	1 Peter 4:12–19
4/3	1 Peter 5:1–5
4/10	1 Peter 5:6–14
4/17	Review 1 Peter 4–5
4/24	End of Year Party

Date: 1/10/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 1:1–12 **Preparation:** John 21:15–19; Acts 10:1–11:18

Key Words

- *reside as exiles* (v1): the sovereign scattering of believers around the world
- *Pontus ... Bithynia* (v1): the region that makes up modern day Turkey
- *elect/chosen* (v2): from the Greek word that means “called out ones”; the idea is selection by God for salvation, a comforting concept to those facing persecution
- *foreknowledge* (v2): no just an awareness of future events but a predetermined relationship; God’s planning before the fact, not His mere observation before the fact
- *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ* (v2): an allusion to Moses’ sprinkling sacrificial blood on the people of Israel as a symbol sealing their covenant to obey God, as well as a reminder that Christ’s blood completely atones for sin and brings the believer in the New Covenant
- *caused us to be born again* (v3): a reference to the new birth (see John 3) whereby a believing sinner is born anew into God’s family and receives a new nature
- *hope* (v3): not wishful thinking but confident optimism based on the promise and person of God
- *inheritance* (v4): as God’s beloved children, we stand to inherit the great riches of salvation—life, righteousness, peace, joy, perfection, God’s presence, eternal rewards, etc.
- *incorruptible* (v4): these heavenly riches are not subject to passing away or undergoing decay
- *greatly rejoice* (v6): the Christian who truly understands his or her future can experience an exuberant jubilation unrelated to the circumstances of life
- *receiving ... salvation* (v9): “Receiving” can literally be translated “presently receiving for yourselves” so that the idea is an immediate deliverance from the power of sin. Ultimate salvation will further deliver us from the presence of sin
- *the Spirit of Christ who was in them* (v11): Jesus Christ, in the person of the Holy Spirit, took up residence within the writers of Old Testament Scripture, enabling them to reveal the glorious salvation to be consummated in the future

Discussion Questions

- General
 - What is interesting or noteworthy to you about this passage? Why?
 - What questions does this passage raise? Based on the context, what are potential answers to these questions?
 - What does this passage contribute to the entire letter?
 - What does this passage teach?
- Specific
 - How does the identity of believers as “exiles” frame the message of the letter?
 - For children: Illustrate being an exile waiting to go back home by asking what kinds of things they would miss about not being at home for a long time. Make the connection to not being at home in heaven with God.
 - How does election serve to encourage these believers in their circumstances?

- How would you describe the contrast between vv3–5 and vv6–7. How does this contrast encourage you or challenge you?
 - For children: Explain the blessings of salvation in vv3–5 in terms of the past, present, and future acts of God.
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Date: 1/17/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 1:13–25

Key Words

- *gird up the loins of your mind* (v13): a word picture taken from the ancient practice of gathering up one's robes so as to be able to move in a hurry without tripping; here the metaphor is applied to one's thought process and conveys the need to carefully focus on God's future grace
- *be sober* (v13): spiritual steadfastness, self-control, clarity of mind, and moral decisiveness rather than intoxication by the world's allures
- *be holy* (v15): Christians have a new nature that enables them to be imitators of God, thus they are commanded to be like God
- *redeemed* (v18): to buy back someone from bondage by the payment of a price; Christ paid the ultimate price to free believers from bondage to sin
- *last times* (v20): the times of the Messiah, from His first coming to His second coming
- *love one another from the heart* (v22): the love of choice (not sentimentality) that meets others at their point of need and stretches to the limits
- *not of corruptible seed* (v23): the permanent, unchanging, supernatural spiritual life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the word of God

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 - What does this passage contribute to the entire letter?
 - What does this passage teach?
- Specific
 - There are three areas of response to God's salvation that Peter highlights. What are they? Why would Peter choose these responses?
 - For children: Holiness, faith, and love for believers are our general responses to God's salvation. Explain these concepts and explore different ways they can live this way.
 - In what ways does our expectation of future salvation inform how we live today?
 - For children: Birthday present illustration. If you knew you were going to be given the best birthday present ever, how would you prepare for it? Make the connection to Jesus's return and how we should live today.
 - In what ways does Jesus's sacrificial death inform how we live today?

Date: 1/24/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 2:1–12

Key Words

- *desire the pure milk of the word* (v2): those with a new nature are marked by a craving for and delight in the truth of God
- *coming to Him* (v4): the sense here carries the idea of remaining
- *a living stone* (v4): an Old Testament phrase (see Isa 8:14; 28:16; Ps 118:22) that is both metaphor and paradox—a normal foundation is inanimate, but Christ is very much alive—the cornerstone of God’s new “spiritual house”
- *built up a spiritual house* (v5): God is engineering an eternal entity, integrating His people into an organic whole
- *a stone of stumbling ... a rock of offense* (v8): Christ is either the means of salvation (to those who believe) or He is the means of judgment (to those who reject the gospel). He is like a stone in the road that causes a traveler to fall.
- *they also were appointed* (v8): the same word translated “appointed” is translated in v6 as “lay” or “set,” and refers to Christ as the choice stone (v4). That same stone is rejected by builders in v7, which Peter identifies as unbelief and disobedience (v8). The verb “appointed” is also 3rd person plural, which refers to those who reject and disobey Christ. The verb is also in the passive voice, which means the appointment was acted upon them (i.e., they did not appoint themselves). Following this in vv9 and 10 are references to “you” as chosen and elect. With these considerations from the context in mind, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that God appoints *who* stumbles over Christ. This is difficult to reconcile with human responsibility, but it is not impossible (see Romans 9–10). See also Rom 9:22–23; 1 Cor 1:23; Gal 5:11.
- *a chosen generation* (v9): chosen for salvation
- *a royal priesthood* (v9): Israel temporarily forfeited its privileged calling to be a nation of priests. Presently, the church is fulfilling a priestly role in the world.
- *sojourners and exiles* (v11): the Christian’s true home is heaven
- *abstain from fleshly lusts* (v11): avoid all desires of the fallen nature (not just illicit sexual urges)
- *war against the soul* (v11): a picture of the destructive nature of sin
- *day of visitation* (v12): an Old Testament phrase that describes God’s coming near either to judge or bless (see Isa 10:3)

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- Specific
 - Peter ties spiritual growth to dependence on God’s word (v2) and attachment to Christ (v4–5). What are some dangers involved in severing this tie of spiritual growth between God’s word and Jesus?
 - For children: Becoming strong in body requires physical exercise. Becoming strong in spirit requires spiritual exercise. Identify ways that we grow spiritually.
 - Verses 5 and 9 refer to “spiritual sacrifices” and “proclaiming God’s excellencies.” As you flip through the rest of 1 Peter, what are some examples of these sacrifices?
 - For children: Discuss the OT animal sacrifices and grain offerings (see Lev 1–5). Identify the ways believers offer spiritual sacrifices in how they live (e.g., subject to different kinds of authority, in marriage, in church life).
 - What are the logical and emotional obstacles to receiving what is taught in verse 8 about God’s appointment of some to stumbling? Which obstacles are legitimate? How does the Bible address these obstacles?
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Date: 1/31/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 2:13–20

Key Words

- *Be subject* (v13): a military term meaning to subordinate oneself under another. It is not a command of absolute obedience since there may be times when obedience to governing authorities contradicts obedience to God (see Acts 5:28–29). Nevertheless, this command does not allow for revolution against governing authorities since the command to be subject entails submission to the consequences for disobedience to the governing authority’s command (see Acts 5:40–42)
- *silence ... foolish men* (v15): our obedience and humility shuts the mouths of those who are looking for reasons to criticize Christians
- *freedom as a covering for evil* (v16): Christian freedom is never to be an excuse for self-indulgence or license
- *honor* (v17): to demonstrate esteem that flows from inner respect
- *also to those who are crooked/unreasonable* (v18): our submission is not contingent on the attitude or behavior of superiors

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- Specific
 - What excuses of our sinful flesh keep us from subjecting ourselves to “human institutions” that have authority (v13)?
 - What kinds of scenarios are involved for disobedience to governing authorities? What biblical principles and passages should be employed when making the decision to disobey?
 - For children: As an illustration of how 1 Pet 2:13–15 can be applied, read and summarize Dan 1:3–21; 6:1–23, emphasizing how Daniel subjected himself to the ruling authorities and did not disobey God.
 - What passages in 1 Pet 1:1–2:12 inform Peter’s assertion in 2:19–20 that enduring unjust suffering for the sake of a clean conscience before God finds favor with God?
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Date: 2/07/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 2:21–25

Key Words

- *to this you were called* (v21): Christians are sometimes called to suffer unjustly for their own maturity’s sake and for the greater glory of God
- *reviled* (v23): verbally abused
- *having died to sins, might live to righteousness* (v24): we were “in Him” when He died and when He rose, the result being that sin has no power over us and we now have the capacity to live holy lives

Discussion Questions

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 - What does this passage contribute to the entire letter?
 - What does this passage teach?
- Specific
 - What is the calling that Peter refers to in v21? Why do we hesitate at the thought to endure suffering because we are obeying God? How does Christ’s example help us to prepare to follow that calling?
 - What particular point in Jesus’s example of enduring suffering (v23) draws you the most?
 - For children: Read Luke 23:33–39 and talk about how Jesus could have responded and refer back to 1 Peter 2:21–23 for why He didn’t respond like we would.
 - In other places the Bible says the purpose of Jesus’s death was to grant eternal life or the forgiveness of sins. Peter points to a complementary purpose in v24. Why is that purpose an important element for what we believe and how we live?

- For children: Read Mark 14:32–36. Discuss how Jesus trusted God the Father and obeyed even when He knew that obedience would lead to His death. Take them through an example where they need to decide between obedience and disobedience, using Jesus’s example of obedience as encouragement to choose to obey.
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Date: 2/21/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 3:1–12

Key Words

- *Wives ... be submissive* (v1): Just as there is a God-ordained civil order, so there is a divine domestic order; neither implies any sense of superiority or inferiority
- *won by the conduct of their wives* (v1): Loving, gracious submission is often the most powerful evangelistic tool a wife possesses
- *outward* (v3): Not a condemnation of external adornment but a warning against preoccupation with it
- *not afraid with any terror* (v6): An encouragement to women who might naturally be anxious about submitting to an unbelieving husband
- *weaker vessel* (v7): Women are, by God’s design, physically weaker and in need of protection, provision, and strength; thus husbands need to be attentive and responsive to their wives’ needs, fears, and desires. Failure to do so can hinder a man’s spiritual growth
- *be of one mind* (v8): be like-minded or unified in heart

Discussion Questions

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 - What does this passage contribute to the entire letter?
 - What does this passage teach?
- Specific
 - Marriage is dealt with in the context of a section about subjection to authorities even if those authorities oppress believers in various ways (1 Pet 2:13–3:22). What are some reasons that Peter would address wives in difficult marriages at this point in the letter?
 - For children: Have the children make a list of things that they find pretty or cool, essentially things they value. Then make a list of things that God values based on v4. Use passages like Gal 5:22–23 and Col 3:12–17 to help fill out the list. Look at 1 Pet 3:8–12, too.
 - How does the instruction to husbands differ from those given to wives? What reasons can you give for the difference?
 - The summarizing passage in 1 Pet 3:8–12 seems to sum up all of 1 Pet 2:13–3:22. What kinds of things does Peter identify as accompanying a blessed life?

- For children: A blessed life is a life that pleases God and that God honors. Talk about examples of speech and actions that reject lying and wickedness and embrace peace-making.

Date: 2/28/2024

Text: 1 Pet 3:13–22

Key Words

- *blessed* (v14): privileged or honored
- *sanctify the Lord God in your hearts* (v15): better translated “set apart in your hearts Christ as Lord,” meaning to live in submissive communion with the Lord Jesus, loving and obeying Him always
- *ready to give a defense* (v15): The Greek word translated “defense” is the word from which we get our English term “apologetics”; the idea is that Christians must understand what they believe and why and be able to articulate this truth humbly and thoughtfully
- *a good conscience* (v16): A life free of ongoing and unconfessed sin will result in a clear conscience void of any sense of guilt
- *For Christ also suffered* (v18): Not even Christ was exempt from suffering, and His faithful perseverance is a great example for every Christian
- *once for sins* (v18): In contrast to the Old Covenant rituals of repeated sacrifices for sin, Christ offered Himself as the complete and final satisfaction for sin
- *bring us to God* (v18): spiritually in this life, and fully in the next
- *preached* (v19): Between Christ’s death and resurrection, His living spirit went to the demon spirits (that is, fallen angels) bound in the abyss, and He proclaimed that He triumphed over them through His death
- *disobedient ... in the days of Noah* (v20): These bound demons had run amuck through the earth during the time of Noah, overstepping the bounds of God’s tolerance. They had filled the world with their wicked, vile, anti-God activity, resulting in both its and their judgment
- *saved through water* (v20): rescued despite the watery flood
- *an antitype which now saves us* (v21): also translated “corresponding.” In the NT, an antitype is an earthly expression of a spiritual reality; hence Noah’s ark (with his family aboard, riding to safety) is analogous to Christians who are saved by being in “the ark of Christ”
- *baptism* (v21): not a reference to water baptism but to being brought into union with Christ; following the analogy, remember that the occupants of Noah’s ark were kept out of the water
- *right hand of God* (v22): Christ was exalted to a place of prominence, honor, majesty, and power, after accomplishing His work on the cross and being raised from the dead

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- What does this passage teach?
- Specific
 - Compare “hope” in v15 with “living hope” in 1 Pet 1:3. What is our hope? Why does that help us respond to others?
 - For children: The resurrection of Jesus is a big deal! Read John 20:1–18 and discuss why it is so.
 - Based on the flow of thought in vv17–19, how did Jesus accomplish His victory? What does this mean for believers?
 - For children: Ball game illustration. The team with the most points wins the game. But Jesus wins by losing (read 1 Cor 1:18). Lead the children to be amazed and grateful for God’s wisdom and power.

Review 1 Peter 1–3

Date: 3/06/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 1–3

Discussion Questions

- What one passage best helped you understand the message of 1 Peter 1–3?
- Has your view of life changed or matured in any way as a result of the study? How so?
- If 1 Peter 1–3 was not included in the Bible, what would you struggle with because it’s missing?

Date: 3/13/2024 **Text:** 1 Peter 4:1–11

Key Words

- *the same mind* (v1): Like their Master, Christians need to realize that one can be triumphant in suffering, even suffering to the point of death.
- *has ceased from sin* (v1): The worst that can happen to a suffering believer is that he or she suffers an unjust death; yet that is actually the best that can happen because death means the complete and final end of all sins!
- *lewdness* (v3): unbridled, unrestrained indulgence in sensual pleasure
- *revelries* (v3): orgies
- *they think it strange* (v4): Unbelievers do not understand and often resent the Christian’s lack of interest in ungodly pleasures.
- *give an account* (v5): literally “to pay back” to God the debt of sin they have amassed
- *to those who are dead* (v6): Peter had in mind believers who had heard and accepted the gospel when they were still alive, but who had died before he wrote this letter.

- *the end of all things* (v7): not a chronological termination, but a consummation or achieving of God’s goal
- *is at hand* (v7): is imminent; that is, could be at any moment
- *be serious and watchful* (v7): a command to not be carried away by passions or emotions but, rather, to have an eternal perspective in this life
- *fervent love* (v8): love that is literally stretched or strained, meaning love that seeks the good of others first and without concern for the cost
- *“love will cover a multitude of sins”* (v8): a quote from Proverbs 10:12 that underscores the need for Christians to practice forgiveness and overlook insults and unkindnesses
- *Be hospitable* (v9): The Greek word means love of strangers and meant, practically, to open one’s home to travelers and strangers.
- *received a gift* (v10): A spiritual gift is a God-given ability granted to every believer by which the Holy Spirit ministers to and builds up the body of Christ; every believer has something to contribute.
- *minister it to one another* (v10): Gifts are to be used to benefit and serve others, not to enhance one’s own position or prestige
- *good stewards* (v10): A steward manages the resources of another, meaning that our gifts do not belong to us; rather, they are on loan from God.
- *speaks ... ministers* (v11): This implies that there are two categories of gifts: speaking gifts and serving gifts.
- *oracles of God* (v11): the very words out of God’s mouth
- *God may be glorified* (v11): the goal of everything

Discussion Questions

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 - What does this passage contribute to the entire letter?
 - What does this passage teach?
 - Specific
 - Identify the differences in outlook between believers (vv1–2) and unbelievers (vv3–4). What does vv5 and 7 indicate is the reason why believers live this way?
 - For children: Sports teams wear different jerseys to identify who the players belong to. What kinds of things identify Christians as Christians?
 - How does vv 7–11 counter typical responses to fears about the end of the world?
 - For children: If you knew that Jesus was coming back tomorrow night, what would you do over the next day? Based on vv7–11, what does God want you to do?
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Date: 3/27/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 4:12–19

Key Words

- *the fiery trial* (v12): Peter is believed to have written this letter at about the time of the burning of Rome and at the beginning of a two-hundred-year period of Christian persecution.
- *some strange thing happened* (v12): “Happened” means “to fall by chance;” Christians must not think that persecution is an accident. God allows it and designs it for the believer’s testing, purging, and cleansing.
- *partake of Christ’s sufferings* (v13): When believers are persecuted for doing what is right, they enjoy a special camaraderie with Christ.
- *when His glory is revealed* (v13): Though He is presently glorified in heaven, Christ’s full glory will not be revealed on earth until the Second Coming.
- *be glad with exceeding joy* (v13): Exult and rejoice with rapturous joy, knowing that your reward is certain.
- *reproached for the name of Christ* (v14): insulted and mistreated because of one’s commitment to and association with Jesus
- *blessed* (v14): specific benefit, not a general, nondescript happiness
- *rests upon you* (v14): God’s presence rests upon and strengthens believers who are suffering.
- *busybody in other people’s matters* (v15): This is a command to not get involved in revolutionary or disruptive activity either in one’s workplace or in dealing with governing authorities.
- *Christian* (v16): originally a term of derision, this label came to be loved and adopted by followers of Jesus
- *judgment ... house of God* (v17): not condemnation, but purging, chastening, and purifying of the church by the loving hand of God
- *commit their souls to Him* (v19): a banking term meaning “to deposit for safe keeping”
- *faithful Creator* (v19): As Creator, God knows best the needs of His beloved creatures.

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 - What does this passage teach?
 - Specific
 - What is the purpose of suffering for Christians (v12–13)?
 - For children: Talk about the refining process of metals and relate it to how God uses trials to refine believers.
 - Keeping in mind the rest of 1 Peter, what kinds of things might Christians suffer for (v16)?
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Date: 4/03/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 5:1–5

Key Words

- *elders* (v1): An “elder” is the same leader as a “shepherd” (that is, pastor), verse 2, and “overseer” (that is, “bishop”), verse 2; the word emphasizes spiritual maturity, and the plural indicates the need for a plurality of leaders to oversee and shepherd God’s flock.
- *I exhort* (v1): Peter motivated these leaders in several ways: (1) by referring to himself as a fellow-elder (hence, he would be experienced and qualified to give relevant exhortation); (2) by appealing to his apostolic authority as an eyewitness of Christ’s sufferings; (3) by reminding them of the reward they would one day receive in exchange for their faithful service.
- *partaker of the glory* (v1): a reference to Peter’s experience observing the transfiguration of Christ
- *Shepherd the flock* (v2): A primary role of a shepherd is to feed the sheep (thus God’s leaders must be able to teach); another is to protect the flock.
- *of God* (v2): The flock belongs to God, not to the pastor.
- *not by compulsion, but willingly* (v2): a warning against laziness and indifference
- *not for dishonest gain* (v2): a warning to not be like the false teachers (so prevalent in every era) who are motivated primarily by financial gain
- *nor as being lords* (v3): God-honoring leaders will not attempt to use their position to dominate others, to intimidate, or to manipulate situations.
- *Chief Shepherd appears* (v4): a reminder that pastors will be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ
- *crown of glory* (v4): literally, the crown which is eternal glory; a symbol of victorious achievement and perseverance, granted to the faithful
- *elders* (v5): pastors and other spiritual leaders of the church; church members (especially those young in the faith) are to give honor, deference, and respect to their spiritual leaders
- *be clothed with humility* (v5): To “be clothed” means to tie something on oneself with a knot or a bow, as in putting an apron on; “humility” is literally “lowly-mindedness,” the idea that one is not too good to serve.

Discussion Questions

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 - What does this passage contribute to the entire letter?
 - What does this passage teach?
 - Specific
 - What motivation does Peter offer to elders for shepherding God’s flock in the ways that he commends (see v4)? Why does he offer this as motivation?
 - For children: Who are the elders of our church? What kinds of things do elders do and why?
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Date: 4/10/2024 **Text:** 1 Pet 5:6–14

Key Words

- *under the mighty hand of God* (v6): an Old Testament symbol of the power of God working in human experience; to be impatient with God in His work of humbling believers is to demonstrate a lack of submission and humility
- *exalt you in due time* (v6): God will lift up the suffering, submissive believers in His wisely appointed time.
- *casting all your care upon Him* (v7): literally, to throw one's discontent, discouragement, and despair onto the Lord in trust that He knows what He is doing
- *Be sober* (v8): the clarity of mind to resist worldly allurements and to have an eternal perspective
- *be vigilant* (v8): Be alert, careful, wary, mindful of the strategies of the evil one.
- *your adversary* (v8): Greek for an opponent in a court of law
- *a roaring lion* (v8): a picture of Satan's vicious, malevolent nature; he wants to destroy believers
- *Resist him, steadfast in the faith* (v9): Believers are to stand up against the devil, by remaining firm in the Christian faith (that is, living according to Scripture).
- *after you have suffered a while* (v10): God's purposes realized in the future require some pain in the present.
- *perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle* (v10): strength and resoluteness of character that God is building into His people through their suffering
- *Silvanus* (v12): Silas, a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37) and Paul's frequent traveling companion
- *Babylon* (v13): a veiled reference to Rome

Discussion Questions

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 - What does this passage teach?
 - Specific
 - What has Peter identified as the "mighty hand of God" throughout the letter?
 - For children: God's power is seen in our lives every day. Talk about different ways that we can see Him at work in our lives.
 - What is the link between the command to "humble yourselves" and prayer? How does this mindset and practice help in our resistance against the devil?
 - For children: Describe prayer as simply talking to God and depending on Him. Consider reading Matthew 6:7–13 to help them see how simple prayer can be. Spend time talking about how God wants to hear us talk to Him about what worries us.
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Review

Date: 4/17/2024 **Text:** 1 Peter 4–5

Discussion Questions

- What one passage best helped you understand the message of 1 Peter 4–5?
- Has your view of life changed or matured in any way as a result of the study? How so?
- If 1 Peter 4–5 was not included in the Bible, what would you struggle with because it's missing?