

FOLLOW ME:

Stories from The Life of Peter



WEEK 1

ON THE SHORE: A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



Cultivating Love, Choosing Progress, Cherishing Civility

First Baptist Church of Rancho Cucamonga

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☐ Day 1	1 Peter 1:1-2	☐ Day 21	1 Peter 4:12-15
☐ Day 2	1 Peter 1:3-8	☐ Day 22	1 Peter 4:16-19
☐ Day 3	1 Peter 1:9-12	☐ Day 23	1 Peter 5:1-4
☐ Day 4	1 Peter 1:13-16	☐ Day 24	1 Peter 5:5-11
☐ Day 5	1 Peter 1:17-21	☐ Day 25	1 Peter 5:12-14
☐ Day 6	1 Peter 1:22-25	☐ Day 26	2 Peter 1:1-2
☐ Day 7	1 Peter 2:1-3	☐ Day 27	2 Peter 1:3-8
☐ Day 8	1 Peter 2:4-7	☐ Day 28	2 Peter 1:9-11
☐ Day 9	1 Peter 2:8-12	☐ Day 29	2 Peter 1:12-16
☐ Day 10	1 Peter 2:13-17	☐ Day 30	2 Peter 1:17-21
☐ Day 11	1 Peter 2:18-21	☐ Day 31	2 Peter 2:1-4
☐ Day 12	1 Peter 2:22-25	☐ Day 32	2 Peter 2:5-8
☐ Day 13	1 Peter 3:1-6	☐ Day 33	2 Peter 2:9-12
☐ Day 14	1 Peter 3:7	☐ Day 34	2 Peter 2:13-17
☐ Day 15	1 Peter 3:8-12	☐ Day 35	2 Peter 2:18-22
☐ Day 16	1 Peter 3:13-17	☐ Day 36	2 Peter 3:1-3
☐ Day 17	1 Peter 3:18-22	☐ Day 37	2 Peter 3:4-7
☐ Day 18	1 Peter 4:1-3	☐ Day 38	2 Peter 3:8-10
☐ Day 19	1 Peter 4:4-7	☐ Day 39	2 Peter 3:11-16
☐ Day 20	1 Peter 4:8-11	☐ Day 40	2 Peter 3:17-18





FBC Growth Group Covenant

Congratulations on your desire to grow deeper in your relationship with God through this weekly study and the relationships that will begin as a result of your participation.

As a member of this group, you will be asked to enter into a covenant with the other group members. You are requested to make this Growth Group a priority; by making the following commitments:

- ☐ I will make this group a priority by attending each week (call if I'm going to be absent or late), keeping up with my assignments and participating openly in group discussion.
- ☐ I will regularly attend church services and contribute to the ministry of the church through my attendance, giving, service and inviting of others.
- ☐ I will strive to build authentic relationships with those in this group by showing care, providing encouragement and praying for their needs.
- ☐ I will avoid gossip (including, what happens in the group stays in the group) and immediately resolve any concerns by following the "conflict resolution" principles of Matthew 18:15-17.
- ☐ I will limit my freedom by not serving or consuming alcohol during growth group meetings or events so as to avoid causing a weaker brother or sister to stumble. (1 Cor. 8:1-13; Romans 14:19-21)
- ☐ I will serve with my group once a month during the semester and will participate in a mission project and play together with my group once.
- ☐ I will honestly explore my next steps for spiritual growth and give permission for other group members to speak God's truth into my life.

NAME (Signature)

DATE





NOTE: The foundation of spiritual growth is your understanding of God’s Word.
Each week, bring your Bible and your study guide to the group meeting.

CONNECT 15 minutes

1. If your group is new or you have any new members, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves. Briefly share how you heard about your church.
2. Write the names and contact info of the members of your group on the page provided.
3. Complete your growth group calendar with the necessary information, including who will facilitate each session if you decide to share that role.
4. Review the Growth Group Covenant and sign the commitment.
5. Share insights from the devotional section of **Follow Me: Stories from the Life of Peter**.

GROW 30 minutes

First Peter has the singular focus of encouragement for the early church to demonstrate faithfulness under the extreme pressure of ever-increasing persecution. These believers were experiencing “fiery trials.” The society in which they lived reviled their faith, denigrated their morality, and derided their hope. It is in such a climate that Peter appeals to his readers to answer this pressure with a rekindled commitment to live out God’s grace. This perseverance would please God and give evidence of His grace.

Christians were regarded as strange, superstitious, and disloyal to Roman society. They gathered in secret (to avoid persecution), practiced strange rituals (the Lord’s Supper was misunderstood as involving bloody sacrifice and cannibalism), and they followed a countercultural lifestyle. Their refusal to go along with the world around them created tensions. Followers of The Way, as they were called, were discriminated against and accused of misconduct and were often brought into court on false charges.

These are the circumstances that 1 Peter addresses. Difficult trials and false evil accusations tempted these Christians to retaliate in a similar manner. They were even tempted to compromise their godly lifestyle because of the anguish they endured.

- 4 Peter, aware of the temptations confronting these early Christians, encourages them to view the accusations and unfair treatment as an opportunity to be a witness to Jesus Christ. As they followed the example of Christ (He lived a godly life and refused to abuse others as He was abused), believers could practice a lifestyle of true evangelism.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- ✓ What or who do people turn to in times of sorrow or suffering?
- ✓ What standards or examples do many people use to determine how they should live?
- ✓ When was the last time you felt like a stranger?

 Read **1 Peter 1** and interact with the following questions:

Greetings from Peter

“This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to God’s chosen people who are living as foreigners in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. ² God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. May God give you more and more grace and peace.”

The Hope of Eternal Life

³ “All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, ⁴ and we have a priceless inheritance – an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. ⁵ And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see. ⁶ So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. ⁷ These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. ⁸ You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. ⁹ The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you. ¹¹ They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ’s suffering and his great glory afterward. ¹² They were told that their messages were not for themselves, but for you. And now this Good News has been announced to you by those who preached in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen.”

A Call to Holy Living

¹³ “So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. ¹⁴ So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. ¹⁵ But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. ¹⁶ For the Scriptures say, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’ ¹⁷ And



remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as 'temporary residents.' ¹⁸ *For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value.* ¹⁹ *It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.* ²⁰ *God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake.* ²¹ *Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And you have placed your faith and hope in God because he raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory.* ²² *You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.* ²³ *For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.* ²⁴ *As the Scriptures say, 'People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades.* ²⁵ *But the word of the Lord remains forever.'* And that word is the Good News that was preached to you.” ¹

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY:

1. Where and how were Peter's readers living? (1:1)

2. Into what kind of inheritance did Peter say his readers had been born? (1:4)

3. What protects these believers and for how long? (1:5)

¹ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pe 1:1–25.

4. Why had trials come to Peter's audience? What benefit is there in suffering? (1:7)

5. What bold challenge did Peter give his readers? (1:13)

6. What pressure must we resist conforming to? (1:14)

7. What does God challenge us to be? Why? (1:15-16)

8. What did Peter urge his readers to do? (1:22)



FEAR IN THE BIBLE:

God does not want me to live in paralyzing fear. The Bible mentions two fundamentally different kinds of fear. Perfect love expels all fear (1 Jn 4:18), and understanding and grasping God's love for us casts out fear. As our love for God grows, our fears diminish. This refers to the anxious, paralyzing fear that dominates our thoughts and prevents us from trusting God. However, Scripture calls believers to cultivate a *different* fear. It is a reverent awe. While Christians should not live in terror, there is a sense in which we should remain in awe as a result of understanding the greatness of God. Fearing the Lord is a bold response to the holy and merciful that both repels and attracts. This fear motivates obedience, respect for authority, and proper relationships rather than producing paralysis.

THINKING THROUGH THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PASSAGE:

9. What trials are you suffering or have you suffered recently?

10. How have the trials you have been through strengthened and refined your faith?

11. In practical terms, what does it mean to be holy?

12. Why is being holy difficult?



HOW GOD WANTS ME TO APPLY THIS PASSAGE TO MY LIFE:

13. What step can you take right away in order to live a more holy life?

SHARE 10 minutes

INVEST & INVITE

“Live wisely among those who are not Christians, and make the most of every opportunity.”
– Colossians 4:5 (NLT)

Seek to invest in others who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and invite them to FBC.

Three people I will attempt to invest in and invite to FBC:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I Will...

- Pray daily for them.
- Share my own verbal witness.
- Invite them to FBC.

SERVE 5 minutes

Thoughts for service ...

How will you demonstrate love for another Christian this week?

WORSHIP 15 minutes

***Pray that God will keep you rooted in His word
and that you will not neglect His truth.***



DEVOTIONAL DAY 1:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today.

☐ **Prayer**

Read: 1 Peter 1:1-2 and The Devotional Thought

¹ *“This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to God’s chosen people who are living as foreigners in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. ² God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. May God give you more and more grace and peace.”* ²

Devotional Thought

Peter writes to God’s chosen people who are dispersed to different locations around northern Asia Minor. God knew them and chose them long ago. They have been made holy by the Spirit. The result was obedience and cleansing through the blood of Jesus Christ. Peter’s desire is that God would provide for them more grace and peace.

Peter is writing to these believers to encourage them. They face opposition because of their faith. Because they are *“living as foreigners”* away from their homes, one can make the case that they are experiencing difficult times. We know that persecution can cause either growth or bitterness. The result is determined by our response.

Peter reminds them of their status before God. The Father knows them and in fact chose them long ago. They belong to God and were made holy by the Spirit. In obedience, they followed and were *“cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.”* He further reminds them that they should not be surprised or dismayed if they face opposition because Jesus faced it. Instead, they should feel hope and joy to be counted worthy to suffer for His name.

Many of the early Christians thought Jesus was coming back very soon because of all the persecution they faced. They were beaten, jailed, and executed for their faith. Fortunately, today, at least in the U. S., we may not face that kind of persecution ... but we need to understand that more people were killed for following Jesus in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined. The most persecuted people group around the world is Christians. Persecution for following Jesus will increase. However, Peter’s words are not only directed to those early Christians, but to us as well. We need the encouragements offered by Peter in his letters.

God provides grace and peace for whatever life throws at us. It is easy for us to live comfortable lives. We, perhaps, are not prepared for the type of persecution that may lie ahead. Therefore, claim the promise of God’s presence. Speak with civility when sharing God’s truth. Stand with Jesus Christ and suffer for His name if necessary.

Thank You, Father, for the promise of Your presence and the knowledge of Your cleansing grace that has given us the assurance of an eternity with You. Give us courage to do what is right and honor Your name.

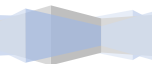
² Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pe 1:1–2.

Reflect: Focus your thoughts on what God has revealed to you through your reading.

Record: Your thoughts, impressions, things to remember, & an application statement.

[illegible]

Request: Based on what you have learned today, write out a prayer to God.

[illegible]

DEVOTIONAL DAY 2:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today.

☐ **Prayer**

Read: 1 Peter 1:3-8 and The Devotional Thought

³ “All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation,
⁴ and we have a priceless inheritance – an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. ⁵ And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see. ⁶ So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. ⁷ These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. ⁸ You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy.” ³

Devotional Thought

Our salvation is based on God’s great mercy – He raised Jesus from the dead. Therefore, we “live with great expectation” because we have a “priceless inheritance” waiting for us in heaven. This inheritance is **pure** and **undefiled**. It is “beyond the reach of **change** and **decay**.” The basis for this expectation is the conviction that God will keep His promises to raise us just as Jesus rose from the dead. Our salvation is protected by God’s power until we receive the eternal reward.

Right now, we experience various trials that we must endure. These trials are temporary and will prove that our faith is genuine. A strong faith is forged through many trials, leading to praise, glory, and honor on ‘that day’ when Jesus Christ is revealed to all the world.

The believers that Peter addressed loved Jesus even though they never met Him. They still did not see Him, yet they trusted Him. In fact, they rejoiced with “glorious, inexpressible joy.” The same is true for those who love, trust, and believe today. I am grateful for the eternal life that I have through Jesus Christ. I have reason to draw strength through my current trials because of conviction forged through the fiery trials that previously purified my faith. I can view life from a new and better perspective.

Give thanks to God every day for the eternity secured in heaven through Jesus Christ. Recognize that every trial is temporary, especially compared to eternity. Acknowledge that faith is growing stronger through every trial. Claim the promise from God of eternal security. Love Jesus more every day and trust Him.

12

Father, thank You for our home in heaven. Thank You that it is secured through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus. I recognize that my current trials are temporary and my faith has grown stronger from past ordeals. I know it will continue to grow in my present circumstances.

³ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pe 1:3–8.

Reflect: Focus your thoughts on what God has revealed to you through your reading.

Record: Your thoughts, impressions, things to remember, & an application statement.

Request: Based on what you have learned today, write out a prayer to God.



DEVOTIONAL Day 3:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today.

☐ **Prayer**

Read: 1 Peter 1:9-12 and The Devotional Thought

⁹ “The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you. ¹¹ They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ’s suffering and his great glory afterward. ¹² They were told that their messages were not for themselves, but for you. And now this Good News has been announced to you by those who preached in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen.” ⁴

Devotional Thought

Peter encourages his readers that hope for the future is the basis for consolation right now. Peter draws a sharp contrast in verses six through nine between the present and the future. Christians are suffering now, but they will rejoice. They are embattled now, but they will be victorious. Their faith is tested now, but it will prove itself purer and more precious than gold. Whether they live through the trials or not, the final outcome of their faith is salvation. They cannot see Jesus now, but they will see Him revealed in all His glory.

Our salvation is incomprehensible to humanity. Even the wisest of prophets and the angels struggled with understanding this wonderful gift. The prophets understood only as much of this great salvation as God was willing to reveal to them. The angels desired to understand the message of Christ, but Peter implies that it was hidden from them as well. The gift of salvation that God has provided to humanity is amazing! That gift shows the depth of His love for us.

The pain is worth the gain. Life is hard. It is painful. It is difficult to understand. However, just as the pain of exercise is grueling at times and the result of sticking with it is sweet, so it is with our salvation. The reward of eternal life vindicates the trials we endure. It proves that we are right to patiently withstand the difficult circumstances. We look forward to our heavenly future with confidence and live today with hope.

Paul said that the goal of his life was to know Christ and the power of His resurrection. Cherish this wonderful gift of salvation. Share its significance and benefits with others. Live life confidently with eyes focused on Jesus and His eternal glory. Proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Father, thank You for Your precious gift of eternal salvation. Thank You for the growth I experience every day. Thank You for the trials that increase and bolster my faith. I trust You even though I have never seen You physically. I love You because You first loved me. I serve You because I want to love You more and serve others better.

⁴ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pe 1:9–12.

Reflect: Focus your thoughts on what God has revealed to you through your reading.

Record: Your thoughts, impressions, things to remember, & an application statement.

Request: Based on what you have learned today, write out a prayer to God.



DEVOTIONAL Day 4:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today.

☐ **Prayer**

Read: 1 Peter 1:13-16 and The Devotional Thought

¹³ *“So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. ¹⁴ So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. ¹⁵ But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. ¹⁶ For the Scriptures say, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’”*⁵

Devotional Thought

“Be holy because I am holy.” This command is common throughout scripture. God sets the standard for morality. Roman gods were warlike, adulterous, and spiteful. Other pagan gods were bloodthirsty and promiscuous. But the God of the Hebrews (our God), is merciful, just and cares deeply for His followers. The expectation is that we would imitate Him by following His high moral standards and show mercy, justice, and care to others.

Peter encourages early followers of Christ, and all believers, to not slip back into their old sinful ways. We were powerless to do anything about it before Christ and did not know any better. Now we can choose to be holy in everything. We can choose to be set apart for God’s purposes in our lives.

Peter says, *“prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control.”* He gives a call for immediate action. In the Word Biblical Commentary, J. Ramsey Michaels writes, “Peter believes the time has come for those who love God with heart and soul and mind to prepare themselves with the same concentration for ‘the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.’”⁶ We should live each day with the same enthusiasm for holy living as we have for the return of Jesus Christ.

Our society often exhibits the same qualities for which the Roman and pagan gods were noted. Our modern-day world is warlike, adulterous, spiteful, bloodthirsty and promiscuous. Evil is thriving. Peter’s call for holy living is fresh and on target for us. We *“must live as God’s obedient children.”* God’s high moral standard is applicable for today; *“You must be holy because I am holy.”*

Therefore, I can show mercy, battle for justice, and demonstrate care by embracing and living out godly values. I am part of a family that cultivates love, chooses progress and cherishes civility. I can strive to be holy by maintaining a growing, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ; by being quiet before the Lord and experiencing His presence; by talking to God about everything; and by developing the habit of praise. A close, intimate relationship with my creator will prepare me for action and increase my self-control as I strive to be more like Jesus.

Father, I come from a place of not knowing any better. When I was without you, I was lost and confused. Your grace changed me. Your grace showed me a better way. Your grace took away my confusion and brought clarity. Your grace saved me. I want to be holy because You are holy.

⁵ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pe 1:13–16.

⁶ J. Ramsey Michaels, [1 Peter](#), vol. 49, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1988), 54–55.

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Record: Your thoughts, impressions, things to remember, & an application statement.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Request: Based on what you have learned today, write out a prayer to God.

[illegible]

DEVOTIONAL Day 5:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today.

☐ **Prayer**

Read: 1 Peter 1:17-21 and The Devotional Thought

¹⁷ “And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as ‘temporary residents.’”¹⁸ For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. ¹⁹ It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. ²⁰ God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake. ²¹ Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And you have placed your faith and hope in God because he raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory.”⁷

Devotional Thought

God has no favorites. Judgment or reward is based on what I do. I must live in reverent fear. I am a temporary resident here. God paid a heavy price to rescue me. The price was the “*precious blood of Christ*.” He was God’s choice to pay the price even before all things started. My trust in God comes because of Jesus. My faith and hope are in God because of the resurrection of Christ. God does not want me to live in paralyzing fear. The Bible mentions two fundamentally different kinds of fear. Perfect love expels all fear (1 Jn 4:18), and understanding and grasping God’s love for us casts out fear. As our love for God grows, our fears diminish. This refers to the anxious, paralyzing fear that dominates our thoughts and prevents us from trusting God. However, Scripture calls believers to cultivate a *different* fear. It is a reverent awe. While Christians should not live in terror, there is a sense in which we should remain in awe as a result of understanding the greatness of God. Fearing the Lord is a bold response to the holy and merciful that both repels and attracts. This fear motivates obedience, respect for authority, and proper relationships rather than producing paralysis.

Jesus Christ, through His atoning death and resurrection, is the unique liberator from fear, and through conversion to Christ believers receive the Holy Spirit as a spirit of adoption rather than bondage. When anxiety threatens, you’re invited to bring your worries to God in prayer, and God’s peace will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus (Ph 4:6-7).

God paid a heavy price for my salvation. I am grateful and in awe. I realize who I am apart from the grace of God. Without Him I could be the worst of criminals. Every day I will work to trust Him more and love Him better. I will feel more hope for others because I realize all that God has done for me and what He wants to do for others. I will not be consumed by my concerns, worries, or tribulations. Rather, my abiding awareness will be God. He is my obsession.

Lord, thank You for the ransom You paid to release me from the empty life that would have been mine without Your grace. Thank You for the precious blood of Your Son, Jesus, that was spilled for me. Thank You for planning this gift well before I was born. Father, I ask that You transform my natural desires into spiritual desires through obedience to Your voice. Rather than focusing on my rights, I choose to do what is right.

⁷ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pe 1:17–21.

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Request: Based on what you have learned today, write out a prayer to God.

[illegible]



Growth Group Roster/Project

Healthy groups share responsibilities and group ownership. It might take some time for this to develop. Shared ownership ensures that responsibility for the group doesn't fall to one person. Use the calendar to keep track of social events, mission projects, birthdays, etc. Complete this calendar at your first meeting. Planning ahead will increase attendance and shared ownership.

Name	Email Address	Phone Number

Date	Ministry/Mission Project



Growth Group Calendar

Date	Lesson	Location	Facilitator	Snack or Meal
	Week 1			
	Week 2			
	Week 3			
	Week 4			
	Week 5			
	Week 6			
	Week 7			
	Week 8			

Date	Social Event





ON THE SHORE: A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION

Memory Verse: *"For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps."* – **1 Peter 2:21 (NLT)**

WHO IS PETER?

- Peter's given name was Simon Son of John (Simon bar Jonah)
- Jesus gave Simon the name Peter (Aramaic "Cephas") meaning "rock".
- Peter was a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee.
- Peter is always first when the Bible lists Jesus' disciples.
- Peter denied knowing who Jesus was three times the night before Jesus was crucified.
- Peter became a leader in the early church and was the first to share the Good News of Jesus with non-Jews (Gentiles).
- Peter wrote two books of the New Testament (1 & 2 Peter), and the Gospel of Mark is believed to be Peter's account of the life of Jesus.
- Peter was crucified upside-down for his faith around 65 A.D. in Rome under the great persecution of Christians by Emperor Nero.

Jesus Calls Peter to Follow Him

Matthew 4:18-20 (NLT)

"One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers – Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew – throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. Jesus called out to them, 'Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!' And they left their nets at once and followed him."

When Jesus says "Come Follow Me" to _____, How Do I Respond?

Six Lessons from Matthew 4:18-22

➤ I FOLLOW OBEDIENTLY.

"And they left their nets at once and followed him." – **Matthew 4:20 (NLT)**

This Week's Follow Me Principle: ALWAYS SAY "YES" TO JESUS.

"So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then." – **1 Peter 1:14 (NLT)**



➤ I FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY.

"And they left their nets at once and followed him." – Matthew 4:20 (NLT)

"I will hurry, without delay, to obey your commands." – Psalm 119:60 (NLT)

➤ I FOLLOW SACRIFICIALLY.

"And they left their nets at once and followed him." – Matthew 4:20 (NLT)

"By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence." – 2 Peter 1:3 (NLT)

➤ I FOLLOW PUBLICLY.

"A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind." – Matthew 4:21-22 (NLT)

"And that water is a picture of baptism, which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ." – 1 Peter 3:21 (NLT)

➤ I FOLLOW CONTINUALLY.

(Jesus) *"If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me." – Luke 9:23 (NLT)*

➤ I FOLLOW COMPLETELY.

"Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance ..." – Matthew 26:58a (NLT)

(Peter) *"There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved." – Acts 4:12 (NLT)*





Cultivating Love, Choosing Progress, Cherishing Civility

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