

1 PETER

Following Jesus in a fragmented world

A Meeting Plan

Step 1 : Open by praying together.

Step 2: Get someone to read the passage aloud

Don't read in a rush, take your time. Pause at the full stops.

When the reading is done, sit still for a minute before the next step

Step 3 Questions and Phrases

If a word or phrase stood out to you when the passage was being read-share the word or phrase (but don't explain).

If you have a question that has come up, share that question. As people share their questions get someone to note them down, but don't answer them yet.

Step 4 : Get someone to read the passage again.

Step 5 : Discussion

Start a discussion of what you think you understand the passage to be saying and what you would love to know (the questions). Make sure everyone has a say and that you are actively listening to what other people are saying. Explore the questions and phrases, but you don't have to answer all of them.

If as a group you run out , there is a page of comments and questions for each passage on the next page.

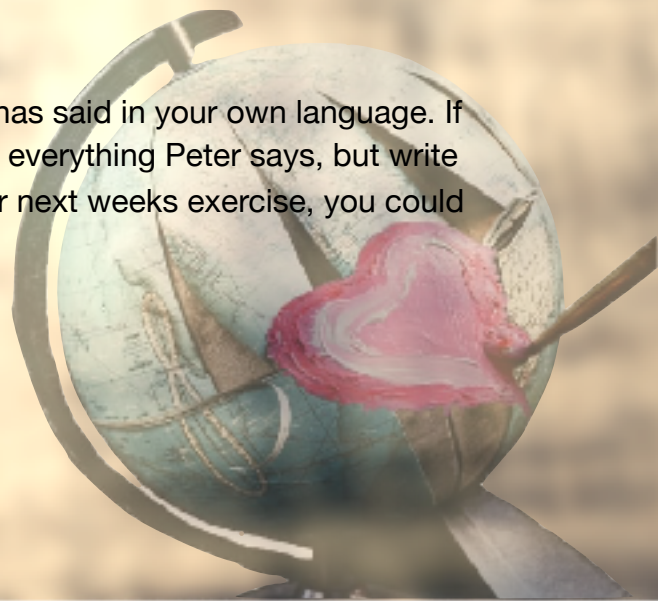
Step 5 : What connections does this make to your life ?

Now consider the week that has been, and the week that is to come. Does anything look different in the light of what you have talked about and read Can you see any connections ? Is there anything you think you might be being prompted to do ?

Step 6 : Pray for each other.

Step 7: Entirely Optional Homework

A really worthwhile exercise is to try writing what Paul has said in your own language. If you have time do this during the week. Don't try to say everything Peter says, but write what you would say in your own words. If you did it for next weeks exercise, you could share it together.



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1 Peter 1:13-2:10

Discussion Notes

This table is taken from "Faith for Exiles". The two columns describe the world of Jerusalem of these columns seem like today's world to you? How do you feel about your answer?

"Only God is Holy, just as only people are human. God's holiness is God's Godness. To speak of anything else as holy is to say that it has something of God's mark upon it." - Buechner

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Jerusalem | Babylon |
| monoreligious | pluralistic |
| homogeneous | diverse |
| slower paced life | frenetic accelerated Life |
| central control | open Source |
| sweet and simple | complex and bittersweet |
| idols: Religious pride / false piety | idols : fitting in/ not missing out |

Does this help in thinking about Holiness? What do you understand Holiness as?

Peter is keen to drive home that God is in control. He keeps pointing out that Jesus' death and resurrection was planned, not happenstance. If you were a persecuted 1st century Christian living in a world that seems to be going wrong, how would this make you feel? If you are a 21st century christian reflecting on the changes in the table above, how do you feel?

Peter also wants to drive home that we are chosen, precious, lasting... What words can you find that Peter uses in this passage that describe our identity?

V22 talks of purifying - what the message calls cleaning up your lives. What have you cleaned out of your lives because of your love for Jesus? How has that changed things?

There's a play on words in this passage. In Hebrew the word for son (*ben*) is very like stone (*eben*). You build a house from stones and a family from sons and daughters. Peter wants to position us right next to Jesus over and over again. As a temple and a family. Is there distance between you and Jesus? What's that about?

What do you think it means for Peter to say God dwells in us as a new temple?

