

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, September 20, 2009

Passage: 1Peter 5:5-16

Memory Passage: 1Peter 5:6-7

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 5:5.** What does Paul say to Timothy in 1Timothy 4:12-5:2 about how he is to relate to those who are older? How does Paul's similar instructions to Timothy compare with Peter's instructions to younger men? According to Paul, does honoring or even being subject to elders mean that you need to sit back and let the leaders do everything? What is it that Paul encourages Timothy to do?

(b) Peter here switches to addressing all people. How is it that we can clothe ourselves with humility (John 13:1-11; Rom. 3:12-13)? In other passages, Paul calls us to put on Christ (Rom 13:13-14; Gal 3:27). What does it mean to put on Christ? Is it acting rightly, visualizing Christ surrounding us, having a Christ-like attitude?

(c) What would our church be like if we all purposefully sought to clothe ourselves with humility toward on another? How would your life be different if you sought to do this?

(d) The end of this verse comes from Proverbs 3:34. How does this proverb motivate us to be humble? Read James 4:1-10. James quotes the same proverb in this passage. What is James warning us about? How is pride linked to worldly desires? How does he see this verse encouraging us?

(e) *Family:* Read 1Peter 5:5. How are we to act toward one another? How is it that we can clothe ourselves with humility? Read John 13:1-11. How does Jesus clothe Himself with humility? What benefit is there for those who are humble (Matt. 5:3)? How could you practice humility toward each other? Pray that the Lord would give you the strength to humble yourself and serve each other.

DAY 2 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 5:6-7.** These verses go on to tell how we are to be humble. How are we to humble ourselves? How would humbling ourselves under other things be wrong? How is the phrase "the mighty hand of God" used in these passages (Ex. 3:19; 32:11; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; Dan. 9:15)?

(b) What is the purpose behind our humbling ourselves (Luke 14:11; 18:14; Matt 23:12)? Do you often think of humbling yourself so that this might happen? Why or why not? Why is it so important to wait until God exalts you? Why is it important that Peter says God will exalt us "at the proper time"? What hope does this offer for those who suffer (Heb. 4:16)?

(c) What kind of image does Peter evoke with the call for us to cast all our cares upon God? Read Matt 11:28-20. What does Jesus say to us in this passage? Does Jesus imply that we won't have any burdens to bear at all? Why can we trust God with our burdens? What does Jesus point us to be concerned about in Matt. 6:25-33?

(d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 5:6-7. What does the "mighty hand of God" mean (ex 3:19; Dan 9:15)? What promise does Peter give to those who humble themselves? Why would God want to exalt us? Why is it important to know that God cares for us in relation to humbling ourselves under Him? Pray that your faith would be founded in the truth of this passage that God is faithful to care for us.

DAY 3 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 5:8-9.** How has Peter spoken of being sober-minded previously (1:13; 4:7)? Why is it so important to be sober-minded (1Thess. 5:4-8)? What are things that keep you from being sober-minded?

(b) If being sober-minded is a passive state then being watchful is the active state. What are we to be watchful of (1Thess. 5:6-8; Col. 4:2)? In Revelation 3:1-6, what does he accuse the Church of Sardis of? How are they to respond? What happens to our spiritual life when we fail to be watchful?

(c) What does Peter mean by the devil is seeking to devour (1Peter 1:5)? Read Ephesians 6:10-20. What parallels does this passage have with ours in Peter? What is the firm foundation of our faith (1Peter 2:4-5, 21-25; 3:18)? How does this help us to resist the devil?

(d) *Think about it:* One of the lies that Satan can tell us is that we are the only ones who are suffering with something. This can cause us to be wrapped in self-pity and loneliness and cause us not to reach out for help when our faith is attacked. Have you ever experienced the power that God can give through community and openness about struggles? Is there anything that you feel alone in or is there a sin you are struggling with that no one knows about? Find someone to share your burdens with you (Gal. 6:2-3).

(e) *Family*: Read 1Peter 5:8-9. Why is it important for us to be both sober-minded and watchful? What are some things that affect your watchfulness or your sobriety? How are we to resist the devil? How can we stand firm in the faith? Do you ever think that you are the only one going through a certain trial? How does this verse speak to that? Pray that you would encourage one another to lay a firm foundation in the faith and to be vigilant and sober.

DAY 4 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 5:10-11.** Note that there is an expectation that they and we will suffer, but what comes after that is what is important. What are the two ways that God is described in verse 10? How are they both comforting in the light of facing suffering?

(b) This is the end of Peter's exhortations. Where does he call our focus to be on? How does God restore us (Phil. 1:6, James 1:3-4; 2Cor 7:1)? How does He confirm us (Rom. 15:8; 1 Cor 1:6; Phil. 1:7)?

(c) How does He strengthen us (Rom. 16:25-27; Col 1:11; 2Tim 2:1)? How does He establish us (Col. 2:6-7; 2Cor. 1:21-22; 2Thess. 3:3)? Do these promises encourage you? How so?

(d) *Family*: Read 1Peter 5:10-11. What is encouraging about verse 10 in light of suffering and trials? What is Peter's perspective of God's control over your sufferings? Why is it so important to resist the temptation to focus entirely on your present circumstances? What do you need to shift your thinking to prepare yourself for suffering? Pray that the Lord would give you an eternal perspective and faith that rests on His accomplishment on the cross.

DAY 5 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 5:12-14.** How does Peter describe his own letter? How has this letter shown the grace of God? How do we stand firm in what Peter has said? What are some things he has said that we should practice? What are some other things that we could do to make sure we stand firm in Peter's words?

(b) Who or what is this lady in Babylon? What does Babylon represent in the OT (Is. 13-14; Jer 50-51)? Can you think of a modern day Babylon? Should we be kissing one another (Rom. 16:16; 1Cor 16:20; 2Cor 13:12; 1Thess. 5:26)? Why? What would be a similar cultural expression for us now? What kind of affection should we have for one another?

(c) Is peace the cessation of turmoil according to Peter? What is this peace that he wishes upon them (Num. 6:24-25; Rom. 5:1; 15:13; Gal. 6:16; Eph 2:14-16)? How is this peace different from something like a negotiated military peace?

(d) *Family*: Read 1Peter 5:12-14. What is it that Peter has been talking about throughout his book? Can you think of some themes of the book of 1 Peter? How is what Peter has said "the grace of God"? What does Peter mean when he gives peace to these people? Talk about what peace truly is. Do you have this kind of peace? Pray that the Lord of all peace and grace would give you both grace and peace.

DAY 6 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) *Think back through what you have learned each day this week.* What has stuck out to you this week? Are you prepared for sufferings if they might come? What are you doing to make your faith a firm foundation? Are you resisting the devil in every area of your life or are there some areas that you are letting him have a foothold? Do you bring peace to those who are around you or do you bring strife or unrest? Ask the Lord to fix your hope on his coming and to set your mind on his grace and glory and not your own.

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The Joy of Standing in Grace

"Peace to all...who are in Christ"