



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Culture Wars

March 9-15

1 Peter 1:3-9

Things to Know

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Gospel Connections and Conversations

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*Studying God's Word **In Community***

Reminder: The goal of group time is not to re-preach the sermon, but to understand and apply God's Word together.

Sermon Recap

Peter wrote this letter to Christians scattered throughout the Roman world who were facing increasing pressure and persecution for their faith. Instead of beginning with commands about how to live, Peter starts with praise to God and reminds believers who they are and what they possess in Christ.

He tells them that because of Jesus' resurrection, believers have been born again into a "living hope." This is a hope that is secure and eternal because of Jesus. Christian hope is not wishful thinking or positive vibes. It is a confident expectation rooted in the finished work of Jesus. Peter describes our hope using three powerful words: imperishable, undefiled, unfading.

Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you most in 1 Peter 1:3-9?
2. Why do you think Peter reminds believers of their hope before addressing their suffering?
3. Which description of Christian hope (imperishable, undefiled, unfading) speaks most to you right now? Why?
4. How does the resurrection of Jesus give us confidence in our future?
5. Peter says believers can experience joy even while facing trials. How have you seen God strengthen your faith through difficulty?
6. What are some temporary things people often place their hope in instead of Jesus?

Read

Read 1 Peter 1:3-9 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Scripture

1 Peter 1:3-9

Praise to God for a Living Hope

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, **5** who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **7** These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. **8** Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9** for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

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1 Peter 1:3-9

Living on Mission In Community

Speak Truth with Grace

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be both clear and compassionate. This means holding firmly to God's design while loving people who are confused, hurting, or struggling with identity.

Live from Your Identity in Christ

When our identity is anchored in God's Word and redeemed by Christ, we are freed from the pressure to define ourselves or seek validation from culture.

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
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Leader Resources - March 9-15

Small Group Curriculum - 1 Peter 1:3-9

1. Session Overview

This session focuses on 1 Peter 1:3-9, where the apostle Peter reminds believers that our salvation through Jesus Christ gives us a living hope that stands firm even in a broken and uncertain world. Writing to Christians experiencing social pressure and persecution, Peter begins his letter not with commands but with praise. He points believers back to the foundation of their faith. Because of God's mercy and the resurrection of Jesus, Christians have been born again into an eternal inheritance that is secure and protected by God Himself. This passage calls believers to anchor their confidence not in circumstances but the finished work of Christ.

Peter describes this hope using three powerful words: imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. Unlike the temporary promises of the world, our inheritance in Christ cannot decay, be corrupted, or lose its value. Even in seasons of trial, this hope produces deep joy because suffering refines our faith and reminds us that our future is secure. As leaders guide this conversation, the goal is to help group members see that Christian hope is not wishful thinking; it's a confident expectation rooted in the resurrection of Jesus and the promises of God.

2. Opening

Prayer:

Begin by thanking God for His mercy and for the living hope we have in Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your group's hearts to understand the truth of God's Word and to strengthen your hope in Christ. Especially in the midst of trials or uncertainty.

Icebreaker question:

Ask:

"What is something in life you were really excited about that eventually faded, broke, or didn't last as long as you expected?"

3. Scripture Reading

Have someone read 1 Peter 1:3-9 out loud.

4. Teaching Points (Systematic Walkthrough)

Christian Hope is...

1. Imperishable

1 Peter 1:4

Peter says our inheritance in Christ is “imperishable,” meaning it cannot decay, break down, or be destroyed. Everything in this world eventually deteriorates; hope in Christ does not. Relationships fail, possessions wear out, and our bodies even age. But the salvation and inheritance promised to believers are eternal and indestructible.

Our hope is secure because it is anchored in the resurrection of Jesus, not in our circumstances.

2. Undefined

1 Peter 1:4

Peter also says our inheritance is “undefined.” This means it cannot be corrupted by sin, evil, or brokenness. Every good thing in this world is eventually touched by sin. Even the best experiences carry disappointment because we live in a fallen world. But the hope we have in Christ is completely pure and untouched by sin.

Jesus has already paid for our sin and secured a future where righteousness fully reigns.

Our hope is pure because it was purchased by the blood of Christ.

3. Unfading

1 Peter 1:4

Finally, Peter says our hope is unfading. In the ancient world, flowers and crowns symbolized honor and beauty, but they eventually withered. Peter uses this word that emphasizes that our inheritance will

never lose its beauty or glory. Unlike worldly success, achievements, or pleasures that fade with time, the joy and inheritance awaiting believers will never diminish.

Our hope will never lose its value or glory because it is kept in heaven by God.

Living with this hope:

Peter acknowledges an important reality: believers still face trials and suffering. But trials do not destroy our faith; they refine it. Like gold purified by fire, suffering reveals and strengthens genuine faith. Because our hope is secure, we can experience joy even in hardship. Christian joy is not the absence of pain; it is the presence of hope.

5. Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you most in 1 Peter 1:3-9?
2. Why do you think Peter reminds believers of their hope before addressing their suffering?
3. Which description of Christian hope (imperishable, undefiled, unfading) speaks most to you right now? Why?
4. How does the resurrection of Jesus give us confidence in our future?
5. Peter says believers can experience joy even while facing trials. How have you seen God strengthen your faith through difficulty?
6. What are some temporary things people often place their hope in instead of Jesus?

6. Application

Encourage the group to move from **information to application**.

This week, spend time reflecting on where your hope is truly anchored.

Ask yourself:

- Am I placing my hope in temporary things like success, comfort, or control?
- Or am I anchoring my hope in the resurrection and promises of Jesus?

A practical step this week:

When you feel discouraged or anxious, preach truth to yourself from this passage: “My hope is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading because it is secured by Jesus.”

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

Reflection:

Our world constantly tells us that hope is fragile and temporary. But the gospel tells a different story. Because Jesus rose from the dead, believers have a hope that:

- Cannot be destroyed
- Cannot be corrupted
- Cannot fade away

And one day, that hope will become sight when we see Christ face-to-face.

Prayer:

“God, thank You for the imperishable, undefiled, and unfading hope we have in Christ. Help us trust Your truth. Also, Lord Jesus, help us be anchored in the hope You offer, not circumstances in our lives. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

8. Memory Verse

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,”

1 Peter 1:3-4

