



1 Peter

Faith Under Fire

Sample Lesson #1
and
Leader's Guide Answers

Read—Introduction, 1 Peter 1:1–12, other Scripture references as given.

In 1 Peter 1:1–12 the apostle Peter introduces himself (v. 1), offers a standard greeting (vs. 1–2) and provides a glorious summary of the blessings and benefits of salvation (vs. 3–12).

Peter, knowing his readers are experiencing trials and suffering, might seem to be insensitive to their present situation. Rather than consoling them during their suffering, he immediately focuses their attention (and ours as well) on the eternal. It is only when a believer gains an eternal perspective that he can understand the trials of life.

Before you begin, please ask God to reveal Himself through His Word and to transform you into the image of His Son.

1. The Greek word for **dispersion** (*diaspora*; NIV; ‘scattered’) in 1 Peter 1:1 is a combination of two words (*dia* meaning through, by means of, and *spora*—spore, seed). God spreads or scatters His seed (the gospel, God’s truth) by moving believers to other places through job relocation, etc.
 - a. Christians are citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20) who are commissioned by Christ to be His ambassadors to reconcile the world to God through saving faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). If you are a Christian, do you see yourself as Christ’s ambassador, a pilgrim or stranger living in a foreign land (this world), or does this world feel like home and heaven seems like a vague, distant dream?
 - b. Has there been a time when God abruptly moved you or changed your circumstances, and you didn’t realize until later that it was His will for your life? Yes No
What could you have done differently to trust God more during that time? Be prepared to share some details of the event as an encouragement to others in your group.

2. All three persons of the Godhead or Trinity have a part in a believer’s salvation. What does each Person of the Trinity do to redeem or save man (1 Peter 1:2)?
 1. God, the Father: _____
 2. God, the Son: _____
 3. God, the Holy Spirit: _____

3. God’s abundant mercy has produced man’s salvation (v. 3, **has begotten us**, NIV: “has given us new birth”), which results in **a living hope** for those who are saved or redeemed. Anthropologists (individuals who study humans and their ancestors through time and space) often use the term “human existence” to refer to man’s experience on earth. And, in many ways, man merely exists until he is redeemed and receives a living hope. What *do you think* are some of the practical differences between an unregenerate man’s “existence” and the life of a Christian who has a living hope?

4. God has given Christians a living hope and an amazing inheritance. List five things the Bible says about the believer’s great spiritual inheritance (1 Peter 1:3–4).

1. _____	2. _____
3. _____	4. _____
5. _____	

5. In 1 Peter 1:6 the apostle Peter begins to address how believers should respond to the trials of life. Suffering, and the believer’s response to it, is a dominant theme of 1 Peter. He refers to some form of suffering or trial 15 times, and he uses eight different Greek words to describe it.
 - a. Name at least four things Peter says about the trials believers experience (1 Peter 1:6).

- b. Peter stated that trials are necessary (1 Peter 1:6). Why are trials (including God's chastening or discipline) sometimes **necessary** (NIV: "you may have had to suffer") (1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:1; Hebrews 12:10–11)?
6. Since God has a purpose for every trial He allows to come into our lives, what changes (response, attitude, acceptance) do you need to make to honor God more and to be a better testimony for Christ when you face these difficult times?
7. a. In what ways do you think trials reveal the genuineness of a Christian's faith (1 Peter 1:7)?
1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____
- b. If a believer trusts God when trials come into his life, what three things will he receive when he meets Christ (1 Peter 1:7)?
8. Eventually life's trials will pass and every true believer will receive the ultimate prize of his faith—the salvation of his soul (1 Peter 1:9). Beginning in 1 Peter 1:10, Peter offers a brief but powerful description of the infinite value of God's gift of salvation (1 Peter 1:10–12).
- a. How does Peter emphasize the value of salvation (1 Peter 1:10)?
- b. What couldn't the Old Testament prophets understand about salvation even though they had the Spirit of Christ to help them (1 Peter 1:11)?
- c. What did the Old Testament prophets know about salvation (1 Peter 1:12)?
- d. Who else desired to know more about God's plan of salvation?
9. God's abundant mercy provided for man's salvation and the believer's glorious inheritance (1 Peter 1:3–5). The prophets studied the Scriptures for details about man's salvation and even angels long to know more about salvation. All of this speaks to the infinite value of God's gift of redemption.
- a. If you are a Christian, how much do you value the salvation God has given you on a scale of 1 (not much) to 10 (value greatly)?
- b. What evidence (forsaking of sin, daily studying God's Word, passionate prayer, dedicated Christian service, etc.) do you see in your life that you greatly value the great mercy and living hope God has given you in salvation (1 Peter 1:3)?

1: A Living Hope

1.
 - a. Answers will vary.
 - b. Answers will vary.
2. God chooses those who would be saved **according to** (Gk. *kata*) His foreknowledge. It is the work of the Holy Spirit who applies the work of salvation to the life of the individual (Titus 3:5). The result is the conversion of the individual which results in his/her obedience to Jesus Christ. It was Jesus Christ's death on the cross that actually purchased man's redemption ("sprinkled with His blood"; 1 Peter 1:2 NIV). This latter phrase perhaps refers to the last plague during the Exodus where those who had the blood sprinkled on their doorposts escaped God's judgment (Exodus 12:1–13).
3. Answers will vary, but could include the following: Since God created man and man's entire created purpose is to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31), the unregenerate man is missing the point or purpose of his life on earth because he lives for himself and others. He exists in the sense that he has a physical reality and can function in many capacities of life, but he is entirely oblivious to the real meaning and purpose of life from God's perspective. He is spiritually dead and blinded to the realities of life as God intended until he is born again. Jesus said, **I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly** (John 10:10 NASB). In this sense, anyone is without Christ and without hope until Christ gives him eternal life (Ephesians 2:1).
4.
 1. The believer's living hope and inheritance is a gift stemming from God's abundant mercy (v. 3).
 2. The believer's inheritance is incorruptible, meaning it cannot be spoiled or diluted.
 3. The believer's inheritance is undefiled, meaning it is not mixed with impurity and is not unacceptable to God.
 4. The believer's inheritance will not fade away, meaning it will not dissipate like the glory that faded away from Moses' face after he came down from the mountain of God (2 Corinthians 3:13).
 5. The believer's inheritance is reserved in heaven.
5.
 - a.
 1. Although trials seem to last forever, they are only temporary (in relation to eternity).
 2. Trials are sometimes necessary. The apostle will offer several benefits for trials in the lives of Christians throughout the remainder of the letter.
 3. Trials cause grief.
 4. Trials come in various forms, and the believer can expect numerous trials throughout his or her life.
 - b.
 1. Trials reveal the genuineness of a believer's faith (vs. 6–7). The unregenerate man turns away from God during a time of trial, but the true believer will likely turn to God. In this manner, the genuineness of an individual's faith is revealed. If a believer turns to God during life's trials, God promises to give him praise, honor, and glory when he meets Christ (1 Peter 1:6–7).
 2. Trials cause a believer to cease from sin because the believer is looking for reasons for his suffering (1 Peter 4:1). When he realizes that his suffering is a consequence of his sin, he is likely to repent of His sin, even if it is just to avoid the suffering.
 3. Trials and suffering often produce righteousness in a believer's life, which results in peace (and other fruits of the Spirit) being manifested in his life (Hebrews 12:10–11).
6. Answers will vary.
7.
 - a. Trials reveal the ultimate source of a man's confidence or faith. If an individual truly believes in God, he will turn to Him during a trial. The nonbeliever, even if he is religious, will not truly trust God and His sovereign will for allowing the trial to come into his life.
 - b. Praise, honor, and glory.
8.
 - a. The Old Testament prophets eagerly searched the Scriptures to understand the gospel that has been now revealed to all New Testament believers.
 - b. The Old Testament prophets studied the Scriptures carefully to determine the true identity of the Messiah (the Christ) and the suffering he would experience. The Spirit of Christ within them seems to have stirred their hearts and minds to search for this discovery, but it eluded them. This verse indicates the prophets knew that the Scriptures were saying more than they understood as they wrote them under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. They knew the Christ would suffer, and He would experience some glory after the suffering, but they didn't know how this would happen.
 - d. Angels.
9.
 - a. Answers will vary.
 - b. Answers will vary.