

# The Peter Principles

## Week 5: Benefits and Blessings of believing

### 1 Peter 2:4-25

### Leader's Guide

***Dear group leaders: It is my suggestion that you go briefly through the questions relating to verses 4 to 10 and spend the majority of your time on Verses 11 to 25. There is a lot application on those verses.***

#### **Read 1 Peter 2: 4-10.**

In verses 4 to 7, Peter uses a few titles to describe Jesus: Living stone, choice stone, Chief corner stone. What are the significance of these titles? (Recall what Pastor Kevin said in his message).

In verses 4 to 10, Peter gives six different descriptions of who we are as believers. List them below:

***a. Living Stones***

***b. Chosen People***

***c. Holy and Royal Priesthood***

***d. Holy Nation***

***e. God's Special Possession***

***f. People of God***

**Living Stones:** What implications can we draw from Peter's reference to us as "living stones"?

**Chosen People:** Peter refers to his audience as a chosen people (other translations: chosen race or generation). Now when we look for people to choose to be on our teams we often look for winners, superstars, people with great abilities and advantages. Do you think that there was something very special about us or God knew that we are superstars and that is why He chose us? ***(See Deuteronomy 7: 6-8)***

**Holy and Royal Priesthood:** What Old Testament parallel does Peter want to bring to mind through images like “spiritual house”, “holy priesthood”, and “spiritual sacrifices” in verse 5?

We as believers are God’s spiritual house both individually and corporately as a church. Can you think of New Testament references related to that?

Peter calls us priests. What were the 2 main responsibilities of a priest in the Old Testament?

***a. To offer sacrifices acceptable to God***

Am I fulfilling my role as a priest? Am I offering acceptable sacrifices to God? ***(Look up the following verses to help with your answer: Psalm 51:17; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15-16)***

***b. To intercede on behalf of God’s people***

Am I praying for other believers in the body of Christ?

**Holy Nation:** We have already learned that the word “Holy” means to “be set apart” or to “be different”.

What was the nation of Israel set apart for? What did God expect the Israel to be? In what ways we, the church are a holy (set apart) nation? If my co worker or class mate did not know that I am a Christian could he or she tell that I am different from others in our group? ***(Look up Matthew 5:13-16)***

**God’s Special Possession:** What does this mean? To what end are we given this privilege of being God’s special possession?

**People of God:** In verse 10, Peter tells his audience who they used to be and who they have now become and as a result what they have received. What does it say about their background? Are they Jewish or gentile believers?

**Read 1 Peter 2: 11-25**

In verses 11 and 12 Peter is setting the stage for what is to come in the rest of his letter. In these 2 verses, he encourages his audience in a general way how and why they should live godly lives all the time and especially in the midst of suffering and injustice.

In verse 12 Peter begs us to live a godly life among the unbelievers. He says that if we do that, it will glorify God. (See also Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 3:16; Philippians 2:15-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; 2 Corinthians 8:21)

From verse 13 of chapter 2 he shows how this holy life can be displayed and practice in the context of everyday life in the context of relationships.

**Lets start with these questions:** Have you ever been unjustly or unfairly treated? Have you ever done something good and you got a negative reaction for it? How did you respond to that situation?

In the next few verses and examples, Peter addresses the issue of unjust treatment and how to respond to it. His response is not to aggressively get even or to passively harbour resentment. His response is one word: "Submit"

Look up the word "submit" in the dictionary and write a definition for it. In addition look how different version of the Bible translate this word? When you hear this word, what comes to your mind and how does it make you feel?

Peter's first example is to do with submission to governing authorities (2:13-14). Do you know who were the authorities at the time Peter was writing? The mad man and cruel Nero was the Roman emperor. He says that we need to submit to "all" authorities and he does not qualify that with good ones or godly ones, sane one or insane ones. What do you think or feel about that command?

Lets get practical. In the light what has been happening in our city, province and country, on a Federal, provincial and municipal level and all the anti-Christian laws that have been already passed or are in the process of being passed, how do we have to follow Peter's instruction? Is there a place for a Christian to stand against the governing authorities?

In verse 15, Peter gives a reason for living Honorable lives as believers. What is that? Have you or anyone you know practised this and got that kind of a result?

In verses 18 to 20, Peter gives a second example. He asks slaves to submit to their masters and this time he qualifies it with not just the kind and reasonable ones but also to those that are cruel and unjust.

Does it make you uncomfortable that Peter does not discourage the idea of slavery? Why do you think Peter or other New Testament writers do not address abolishing slavery? What would be a modern comparison or analogy to the

slave-master relationship? How does this exhortation influence your workplace ethics?

In verse 21 Peter says "To this you were called". To what are we called to? Why are we called to "this"? How does the example of Jesus help to his audience then and to us now? How did Jesus deal with the unjust and cruel treatment he received? How is the portrayal of Christ and Jesus' painful and unjust death help drive Peter's point deeper?

Lastly, what is the significance of verse 25?

End your time with prayer.