

1 Peter: A Living Hope (4 of 8)
“Uncompromising Faith”
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
February 26, 2023

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to **defend** ourselves before you. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is **able** to save us. He will **rescue** us from your power, Your Majesty. ¹⁸ But **even if He doesn’t**, we want to **make it clear** to you, Your Majesty, that **we will never serve your gods** or worship the gold statue you have set up.”
Daniel 3:16-18 (NLT2)

Big Idea: Jesus is our living hope, who sustains us through the trials of life.

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. **1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)**

We Develop Our Faith By:

1. Distancing Ourselves From Temptation

Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners” to **keep away** from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. ¹² Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your **honorable behavior**, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world. **1 Peter 2:11-12 (NLT2)**

Stay away from her! Don’t go near the door of her house! ⁹ If you do, you will lose your honor and will lose to merciless people all you have achieved. ¹⁰ Strangers will consume your wealth, and someone else will enjoy the fruit of your labor. **Proverbs 5:8-10 (NLT2)**

So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. **Galatians 5:16-17 (NLT2)**

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** ²³ **gentleness, and self-control.** There is no law against these things! **Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT2)**

Notes: _____

2. Respecting Authority

For the Lord's sake, **respect all human authority**—whether the king as head of state,¹⁴ or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honor those who do right.¹⁵ It is God's will that your **honorable lives** should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you.¹⁶ For you are free, yet you are God's slaves, so don't use your freedom as an excuse to do evil.¹⁷ **Respect everyone**, and **love** your Christian brothers and sisters. **Fear God**, and **respect the king**. **1 Peter 2:13-17 (NLT2)**

Notes: _____

3. Persevering Through Our Suffering

“You who are slaves must **accept the authority** of your masters with **all respect**. Do what they tell you—not only if they are **kind and reasonable**, but even if they are **cruel**.¹⁹ For God is pleased with you when you **do what you know is right** and **patiently endure unfair treatment**.²⁰ Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you. **1 Peter 2:18-20 (NLT2)**

²¹ For God called you to **do good**, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. **He is your example**, and you must follow in His steps.²² He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone.²³ **He did not retaliate** when he was insulted, **nor threaten revenge** when he suffered. **He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly**.²⁴ **He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right**. By his wounds you are healed.²⁵ Once you were like sheep who wandered away. **But now you have turned to your Shepherd**, the Guardian of your souls.
1 Peter 2:21-25 (NLT2)

Notes: _____

- Which area are you struggling the most? Temptation? Authority? Suffering?
- **What is your next right step?**

My next right step, I will:

- Distance myself from temptation.
- Respect the authorities in my life.
- Trust God in my suffering.
- Accept God's gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- Be baptized as a believer in Jesus on March 26.

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[This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss.]

Big Idea: The depth of our faith is revealed when we are refined by fire.

Open your group with a prayer.

Icebreaker:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how many “wild oats” did you sow in your youth?

Study:

We Develop Our Faith By:

1. Distancing Ourselves From Temptation

Read 1 Peter 2:11-12

How does keeping your distance from temptation help you?

What are some ways you have created better boundaries?

Matthew Henry was a great teacher of the Word, and he wrote, “It is easier to keep temptation at a distance, than to resist it when near.” Do you agree or disagree?

Life Application Study Bible Commentary: 2:12 Peter's advice sounds like Jesus' in Matthew 5:16: If your actions are above reproach, even hostile people will end up praising God. Peter's readers were scattered among unbelieving Gentiles who were inclined to believe and spread vicious lies about Christians. Gracious, godly, and winsome behavior on the part of Christians could show these rumors to be false and might even win some of the unsaved critics to the Lord. Don't write off people because they misunderstand Christianity; instead, show them Christ by your life. The day may come when those who criticize you will praise God with you.

Read Proverbs 5:8-9

How would you describe your path? Very safe? In the bumps and potholes? Close to the edge of destruction? How can you improve?

Read Galatians 5:16-26

What motivates you to live a good life?

What two things are in conflict with each other? [17]

If we were made alive by the Spirit, why do we still struggle with sin?

2. Respecting Authority

Read 1 Peter 2:13-17

How are Christians to act toward government authority?

What does Peter mean by “submit yourselves”? [13]

When it comes to submitting to authority, where do you draw the line?

Life Application Study Bible Commentary: 2:13-17 When Peter told his readers to respect all human authority, he was speaking of the Roman Empire under Nero, a notoriously cruel tyrant. Obviously he was not telling believers to compromise their consciences; as Peter had told the high priest years earlier, "We must obey God rather than any human authority" (Acts 5:29). But in most aspects of daily life, it was possible and desirable for Christians to live according to the law of their land. Today, some Christians live in freedom while others live under repressive governments. All are commanded to cooperate with the rulers as far as conscience will allow. We are to do this "for the Lord's sake"—so that his Good News and his people will be respected. If we are to be persecuted, it should be for obeying God, not for breaking moral or civil laws. For more about the Christian's relationship to government, see the note on Romans 13:1ff.

3. Persevering Through Our Suffering

Read 1 Peter 2:19-25

What is your reaction to what Peter says about suffering?

How did Jesus react to being mistreated? [22-23]

How can Christ's example help you when you are mistreated?

Who are some of the authority figures in your life?

How well are you relating to them? How can you improve?

In Peter's day, persecution and slavery made submission to authority difficult. What conditions today make it difficult?

What can people do whose legal rights are being violated by authorities gone bad?

Close in Prayer: Start praying. Be bold and pray specifically.

Snack schedule: _____