

UNSHAKEABLE

H O P E

Anchoring Your Soul in God's Promises.

A 40-Day Devotional
By Jon Haley and Hallmark Church

4201 W. Risinger Rd. Ft. Worth, TX 76123
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Unshakeable Hope – A 40-Day Devotional

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Fort Worth, Texas

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Instructions

- Take time each day before you read to pray and ask God to reveal Himself through His Word, by His Spirit.
- Take time to read, meditate, reflect, and apply the passage.
- Take time to read the entire chapter in which the key verse is a part and strive to get the context of the verse.
- Take time to try and memorize the key verse.
- Take time to journal and apply.
- Respond in prayer to what God reveals to you.

I have provided a format to help you process and apply the daily readings. The book *Growing Up* by Robby Gallaty explains how to use a H.E.A.R. journal. On the next page, you will find a sample of one. Follow this pattern as you read your Bible each day.

Sample H.E.A.R. Entry

Read: Philippians 4:10-13

H (Highlight)

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13*

E (Explain)

Paul was telling the church at Philippi that he had discovered the secret of contentment. No matter the situation in Paul's life, he realized Christ was all he needed, and Christ strengthened him to persevere through difficult times.

A (Apply)

I will experience many ups and downs in my life. My contentment is not found in the circumstances. Instead, it is based on my relationship with Jesus Christ. Only Jesus gives me the strength to be content in every life circumstance.

R (Respond)

Lord Jesus, please help me as I strive to be content in You. Through Your strength, I can make it through any situation I face.

INTRODUCTION

By Jon Haley

Welcome to *Unshakeable Hope*, a 40-day devotional journey through the book of I Peter. This devotional book is a gift from Hallmark Church and was written by our dedicated leadership team. Introducing you to this spiritual journey is an honor and privilege, which we pray will deeply enrich your faith and give you unwavering hope.

The book of I Peter is a timeless message of encouragement, strength, and hope. Peter's words remind us that our hope in Christ is **unshakeable** in a world that often feels uncertain and unstable. Over the next 40 days, you will walk through the powerful truths of this epistle, discovering the depth of God's love and the strength of His promises.

At Hallmark Church, our mission is clear: to lead people to find and follow Jesus. We believe this devotional will be a significant step in your spiritual journey, helping you grow closer to Christ and live out your faith with greater conviction and joy.

Our core values at Hallmark Church are the foundation of everything we do. We are **Biblically Driven**, ensuring every teaching, every ministry, and every decision is rooted in the truth of Scripture. As you read through these devotions, you

will find each one is directly from the Word of God, providing you with a solid foundation for your faith.

We are **Personally Involved**. While our faith is personal, we believe it is not meant to be private. Our leadership team has poured their hearts into these devotions, sharing personal insights and experiences to help guide you through your own walk with Christ. We encourage you to engage with these devotions personally and share your reflections with others, fostering a deeper sense of community and mutual growth.

Hallmark Church is committed to being **Radically Generous**, reflecting the abundant grace and love that God has shown us. This devotional is a gift, a tangible expression of our desire to bless you and support you in your spiritual journey. We hope you will be inspired to live generously as you receive this gift, sharing God's love and hope with those around you.

Finally, we are **Outwardly Focused**, always looking for ways to reach out beyond our church walls and impact the world for Christ. As you read through these devotions, consider how God calls you to be a beacon of hope in your community and beyond. Let the message of I Peter motivate you to live out your faith boldly and compassionately, bringing the light of Christ to a world in need.

As your pastor, I am honored to walk with you on this journey. I pray through *Unshakeable Hope*, you will experience God's steadfast love, find strength in His promises, and grow in your faith like never before. May these 40 days be a transformative time for you, filled with the **unshakeable hope** that only Jesus can provide.

In Christ,

Pastor Jon

DAY 1

By Matt Whitsell

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of 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 is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.¹

1 Peter was written in a dark time of church history. This letter is addressed “To the chosen, living as exiles dispersed abroad...” At this point in history, the church is only about 30 years old. The young and seemingly fragile movement is experiencing extreme persecution. After the great fire of Rome, which burned for nine days, destroying around 2/3rds of the city, the Roman Emperor Nero blamed the Christians for starting the fire. This accusation ignited a hatred for those who were “followers of the Way.”² Under Nero, Christians were hunted down, attacked, and persecuted. At times, they were hung on crosses and set on fire. They were used as torches to light the city during the evening hours. Nero then ordered the deaths of the Apostle Paul, Peter, and many other church leaders.

**If the church faced similar challenges today,
how would you respond?**

¹ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Peter 1:3-4.

² Cf. John 14:6, Acts 9:2, 22:4, 24:14

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It was in these moments the church seized the truths from 1 Peter. Peter, also known as “The Apostle of Hope,” told us God “has given us new birth into a living hope...” Jesus is our living hope. He is not a dead hope; our hope is alive and absolute! Jesus gives us a great “inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading...” No matter what fire we may experience on this earth, we are being “guarded by God’s power”³, and our reward is reserved in heaven, safe from Satan and his agents.

As the apostle Paul declared:

¹⁶Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. ¹⁸So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.⁴

As we read through 1 Peter, may we remember that while we may suffer in this temporary life, our eternal hope and reward will not suffer. Let us set our eyes to focus on our eternal living hope.

³ [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Peter 1:5

⁴ [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 2 Co 4:16–18.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 2

By Dani Parikh

⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁵

Think about the last time you rejoiced. Maybe it was when you got a raise at work or when your favorite team won the game. It is easy to rejoice when things are going our way, but it is a much more challenging task to rejoice when we find ourselves in a season of suffering.

Peter opens his letter by encouraging believers he knows are enduring various trials, including persecution and being displaced from their homes - to rejoice! Peter does not promise these believers things will soon become easier for them, but instead implies our trials in this life are necessary so our faith can be tested and found genuine. Instead of giving them hope their circumstances will someday change, Peter reminds us of our living hope in Christ and of our inheritance that awaits us in heaven.

James 1:2-4 tells us to ²*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let*

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 1:6–7.

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steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. ⁶

While painful, our trials are ultimately brought about for God to do the important work of maturity in us that can only be accomplished through hardship.

After walking through infertility for the last three years, it can be hard sometimes to rejoice in the waiting. But over the last year, God has lovingly shown me He has allowed this season into my life to draw me closer to Him and to make good on His promise – which is to conform me more and more into the image of Christ. God has not forgotten me, but rather, it is in His loving kindness and wisdom that He has allowed this trial into my life.

Peter rejoiced because he knew what awaited him in heaven far outweighed the troubles he would face in this life. Peter also knew who his hope was in. When we know who God is and trust His character, we can begin to believe that though our trial is painful, God is working on our behalf, and this trial has been brought about for our good.

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jas 1:2–4.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 3

By Rhonda McLemore

⁶In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,⁷

I don't know about you, but I have never jumped for joy because I was going through a trial. When 1 Peter 1:6 says, we greatly rejoice, one meaning is to jump for joy. While going through trials may not send me jumping, I think there are a few ideas in these verses that make it easier to go through trials.

The first thing that helps me is knowing it is only for a season. Some of the trials we face seem to last a very long time, but this verse tells me it will only last for a little while. "A little while" can certainly be a relative term. Laying at the beach for a little while will feel much different than holding your breath underwater for the same amount of time. No matter the situation, if I know there is an end in sight, it is much easier to make it through a trial.

The second thing is there are many kinds of trials. The situation that would be a trial to me might not seem like it to someone else. When I waited for a baby for over five years,

⁷ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:6–7.

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it was difficult. However, to my coworker who doesn't even want kids, infertility would not seem like a trial to her. If you told me I had to hike up a 19,000-foot mountain carrying all my stuff and not shower for days, I would see that as a trial; others see it as a fun adventure.

This passage compares our faith being tried to gold being refined. When gold is refined, the refiner knows which chemicals to use to produce certain results. I am thankful the Lord knows exactly what it will take to refine my faith.

The last thing I see to help me through trials is knowing they have a purpose. It is much easier for me to handle hard things when I know there is a reason for them, and they will accomplish something. I love sweets! I recently did a 40-day sugar fast. It did not sound like something enjoyable, and it wasn't – just ask my family! But I knew that I needed to do something to get my sugar cravings under control and to try and lose weight. Because I knew this would help me accomplish goals for my physical life, I could endure my “suffering.”

I Peter 1:7 says the trial of my faith shows it is genuine and results in praise, honor, *and glory at the appearing of Christ*. **Now, that is something worth jumping for!**

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 4

By Mike Haley

⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.⁸

Peter wrote to those facing trials and tests to encourage them and encourage them to look ahead to the time when they would see the LORD.

The Roman government was increasing persecution of Christians. Roman Caesars were getting harder and harder on those who claimed that Jesus Christ was not only their Savior, but also their LORD! The Roman Caesars demanded full and complete allegiance to the emperor.

Peter was writing to a generation of believers who had become followers of Christ because of the testimony of those who were eyewitnesses to his life. Peter had seen the Lord and witnessed His miracles, His crucifixion, and His resurrection.

Peter commended them because they had not seen the Lord, but they loved Him and believed in Him. Two things go together: love and trust. You cannot have a close relationship without love and trust. Love and trust go

⁸ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:8–9.

together like coffee and donuts, peanut butter and jelly, popcorn and a movie, and baseball and a glove.

I have not seen the Lord with my own eyes, but I love Him. Do you love the LORD JESUS? How do we know if we love Him? Jesus said:

- ¹⁵“If you love Me, keep My commandments.⁹
- ²¹ *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.*¹⁰
- ¹⁰ *If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love.*¹¹

One day, we will see the Lord face to face, but today, we walk by faith. Jesus said to Thomas: ... *because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*”¹² By faith, we look ahead to when we will be in His presence. *but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*¹³ We will be glorified, and we will dwell with Him in that Heavenly home forever. Then, we will be filled with joy because we will rest from our labors and enjoy that perfect place He has prepared for us throughout eternity. ⁹ *receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls*¹⁴ Let’s keep looking up and looking ahead!

In what ways do you demonstrate your love for the Lord?

How does the Lord show us His love each day?

⁹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Jn 14:15.

¹⁰ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Jn 14:21a

¹¹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Jn 15:10a

¹² [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Jn 20:29b

¹³ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Jn 3:2b

¹⁴ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:9.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 5

By Dan Ashley

¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.¹⁵

This is a wonderful, if rather complex, sentence or two. H.A. Ironsides summarizes the main points well:

Of this salvation the prophets of ancient times spoke and wrote; but it was not given to them to know the fullness of grace as it has now been revealed to us. They wrote as the Spirit directed concerning ‘the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,’ but they had no way of knowing the exact time when these things were to be fulfilled;¹⁶

I think these verses clarify “this salvation” was not some new idea that just happened along. Hundreds of years earlier, in the Old Testament times, the Spirit of Christ was working in and through the prophets, foretelling the grace

¹⁵ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:10–12.

¹⁶ H. A. Ironsides, *Expository Notes on the Epistles of Peter* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1947) 18.

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of God that would come through Christ. In Chapter Two, Peter refers to the prophecies of both Hosea and Isaiah. Micah's specific Old Testament prophecy is referred to here, but we could well imagine some of the many that Peter might have had in mind: Psalm 22:14-18, 96:1-3;13; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7, 25:8-9, 49:6-7, 53:1-2; Micah 5:2; and Zechariah 9:9-10, 12:10.

The Old Testament prophets had been eager to proclaim what God had revealed to them. Many of the first New Testament saints, empowered by the Holy Spirit, had already preached the gospel message to the readers of this letter. Hopefully, we can now be eager to proclaim this same gospel message to those around us.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 6

By Jerry Howery

¹³Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.¹⁷

Peter is writing to believers who, because of persecution, have lost everything, been scattered and running for their lives. Peter's purpose is to remind them of the hope they have in Christ and to encourage them to stand in the faith. In verse 13, he gave them three action steps and reminded them of the promise of Christ's return. To live for Christ is a call to action.

1. ***Gird up the loins of your mind.*** Symbolically, this means to get ready. In Peter's day, they wore robes, so to move quickly and unhindered, they would gather them from the bottom and gird or tuck them in at the waist. Similarly, today, followers of Christ should get ready for action by gathering up their thoughts to focus, unhindered, on God's promises and grace. ²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ¹⁸
2. ***Be sober*** in the New Testament has multiple meanings, one of which is being serious. A sober person can be serious, have self-control, and stay

¹⁷ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Peter 1:13

¹⁸ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Col 3:2.

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focused. *therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers*¹⁹ To compete in the Olympics takes years of serious, self-controlled, disciplined and focused training. To try to compete without proper training would be foolish and would set you up for defeat, failure, and embarrassment. Similarly, to run this race called life for Christ on a track that Satan has claimed without being serious, self-controlled, disciplined, and focused on our thinking would also be foolish.

3. ***Rest your hope fully.*** Biblical hope is much more than just a wish; it is the eager expectation of good things yet to come. Peter is telling us in the midst of all the trials and problems that come our way, if we ***gird up the loins of your mind*** and gather up all those foolish thoughts to focus on what we have been promised, if we will ***be sober*** and live a dedicated, controlled life, if we ***rest our hope fully*** on Christ and His promises, there is a better day coming, *at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*²⁰

How well are we running life's race?

¹⁹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 4:7b.

²⁰ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:13c.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 7

By Billy Dye, Jr.

¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”²¹

We have been reading in 1 Peter about our heavenly inheritance. Today, we look at what we are to set aside to live a holy life worthy of that inheritance. We, as believers, are called to live a holy life through our faith in Jesus.

Peter wrote about a life full of ignorance (giving in to your lusts). Every person who has ever lived, from Adam and Eve to the present, has lived in darkness because of sin. Looking at our world today, it is easy to see mankind's lust everywhere. Peter wrote it is not to be that way for the believer. Yes, we once walked in sin, but now we, as believers, are called to be holy, like God.

The word **holy** in Greek is “*Hagios*,” and the equivalent Hebrew word is “*Kadosh*.” Both words mean separated, set apart, and different. Morally, the word holy means pure, sinless, and righteous.²² Peter wrote that we are to be holy; therefore, we cannot live a life controlled by our desires.

Warren W. Wiersbe said, “The argument here is logical and simple. Children inherit the nature of their parents. God is holy: therefore, as His children, we should live holy lives.”²³

²¹ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:14–16.

²² *The Oxford Languages* (University Press 2018)

²³ *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Co: David C. Cook, 1989), 1 Peter 1:14-15 p.396

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Looking back at my life, I see so many traits I have inherited from my earthly father. My dad raised me to love God and others, and I'm thankful for the traits he instilled in me. Today, when I evaluate my life, my desire is to have the traits my Heavenly Father has (mercy, grace, and righteousness, to name just a few). When I think of all my earthly father did for me (and it was a lot), it is nothing compared to what my heavenly Father has done for me through the death and resurrection of his only Son, Jesus. Therefore, how can I not want to please Him and live a holy life?

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 8

By Billy Dye, Jr.

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;”²⁴

Yesterday, we looked at being holy as God is Holy. Today, we are looking at having a holy fear of God. What does it mean to have a holy fear of God? That question can be answered, but it will depend on who God is to you. If you believe through faith in the birth, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and have asked Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins, then you have been adopted into God's family. That family relationship spurs awe and reverence (a holy fear) toward your Father God. On the other hand, if God is not your Father, you are an unbeliever who has no feeling toward God one way or the other. God is just someone you know about, but you don't have a relationship with him and no real understanding of who he is. Unbelievers have not experienced the Holy God. (*see page 126 on how you can have a relationship with God*)

Awe, wonder, respect, and reverence of God is how you show Him and others that you love him. God places a special love in you when you are adopted into his family, and you would never want to do anything to hurt your relationship with Him.

As a child, I loved going to the beach, but I had a healthy fear of it. There were things at the beach that I knew could hurt me - rip currents, huge waves, sharks, and jellyfish. My

²⁴ New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), 1 Peter 1:17

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parents warned me about the dangers, but that didn't change my love for it. I was in awe of the beach and didn't cower down to it. I rode the waves! The same is true with God; as a child, I remember being told all about His judgment, and I should do this and not do that. I didn't understand all there was to know about God and His judgment, but that did not stop me from loving and respecting Him (holy fear of God) as best I knew how.

Over time, as I age, I study, learn, and feel more and more of God's love for me, which makes my love for Him grow. I can see how God is changing me into His image. The things that God loves, I love, and the things God hates, I hate. God said, *Be holy, for I am Holy.*²⁵ I understand that holiness is a process in my life as a Christian, but it is what I desire and strive for. God is Holy, and I am to follow His example.

God loves me, and he loves you too. I challenge you today to see God for who He really is. He's a Holy Father who loves His children. Look around at all God has created and be in awe and wonder of His holiness as you fear him.

²⁵ New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), 1 Peter 1:16

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 9

By Ken Griffin

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ²⁶

We who believe and follow Jesus were once far away doing our own thing with no regard to sin. But through God's love for us, He sent Jesus to intervene for our sinful nature if we would believe and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Jesus came as He was directed because we were His creation and a part of Him, to be worthy of being His children.

Jesus came willingly, knowing the price He would pay for our sins. He came as the perfect Lamb and took upon Himself our sins. Jesus died for us on the cross as our sacrificial lamb, cleansing us from our sins for those who would open their hearts to receive Him as the Father of their lives.

¹⁷ “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I

²⁶ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 1:18–29.

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*have power to take it again. This command I have received
from My Father.*"²⁷

He bore all the beatings, humiliations, and abuse because of His love for us, which is beyond our ability to understand.

- ⁴ *Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.*
- ⁵ *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.*²⁸

Thank you, Jesus, for this gift of life that we can never repay, even in eternal life. Take time today and let Jesus know you are thankful *he humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*²⁹

²⁷ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Jn 10:17–18.

²⁸ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Is 53:4–5.

²⁹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Php 2:b8.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 10

By Allison Holcomb

22 Since you have purified yourselves by your obedience to the truth, so that you show sincere brotherly love for each other, from a pure heart love one another constantly,³⁰

As the Children’s Director at Hallmark, I have taught many lessons about what it means to love one another. One of the most common questions the kids ask is: How am I supposed to love someone when they hurt me? It can be challenging to love one another unconditionally, especially when they hurt us or make us mad. This is something I struggle with. I tend to lean too much on my feelings and how I have been hurt instead of listening to the facts. I don’t always respond in love. I am quick to give an unloving response to defend myself.

“The love indicated in this verse by Peter is the love of choice, the kind of love that can respond to a command. Only those whose souls have been saved, have the capacity to love like this. Such love exhibits itself by meeting others at the point of their need.”³¹

God is the true definition of love. He showed His love for each of us by sending His Son as a sacrifice for our sins – the very thing that separated us from Him. It is impossible for us to show that kind of love to others on our own.

³⁰ *Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 1:22.

³¹ *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Thomas Nelson, Nashville, Tennessee, 2005)

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When we trust in Jesus, we receive the power of the Holy Spirit to help us love others the way God loves us. When we love God with all our hearts, He shines through us, and His love touches others. We can demonstrate this love to others by serving them, forgiving them, and sharing Jesus with them.

I always tell the kids that our actions towards others are one of the greatest ways for people to see Jesus in us. When we react in love or kindness, they will see Jesus in us. We need to abandon our own evil desires, try not to prove we are right, and work hard at loving each other instead.

As believers, we are commanded to love one another. Is there someone in your life you struggle to love constantly? Start by praying for them, and then pray your heart will be changed to love them unconditionally.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 11

By Ysh Cucuta

¹Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation, ³if you have tasted that the Lord is good³²

I am a foodie! I love to eat food, and I love to cook. There's something about the smell of certain foods that makes my mouth water. Who am I kidding? A lot of food makes my mouth water. That sensation resonates from the first time I can recall tasting that particular food. Certain smells, after so long, make me crave that food.

Since I am now adopted into the family of Jesus Christ, through His salvation, I am commanded to stop sinning. Not only because I'm commanded not to sin, but also so that the sacrifice that Jesus made wasn't made in vain.

The moment I was adopted into God's family at the age of 16, I wanted to learn more. I wanted to find out more from Him and what His word had to say. Unfortunately, after a couple of years, I drifted away from the Lord through my own sinful rebellion. However, deep down inside, I felt something was missing. The world wasn't satisfying my "needs." The thing that was missing was my relationship with Jesus.

³² [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 2:1–3.

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

I can recall my desire to need Him. I felt spiritually empty and malnourished. I was not feeding on His word, and I was mentally weak.

After joining Hallmark in 2010, I began plugging myself into all aspects of church life. I joined Sunday school and life groups, slowly building my strength and feeding on spiritual milk. Then, I became a leader in the youth, VBS, and kids ministry. I continued to grow and feed on spiritual milk. God has grown me in my faith, confidence, and knowledge of His Word. I currently am a substitute teacher for our Church Connect Groups. Recently, I traveled to the Philippines and had the opportunity to give a devotional to church leaders. WOW! I never thought this would have been possible, but God continues to grow my faith and my desire to know Him through His word.

I am nowhere near being perfect; however, I still desire to grow more in Him. I once heard someone say, and it has stuck with me: *You CAN do anything you want to after you're saved. Because if you're genuinely saved, God changes your "want to".*

**How are you growing in your salvation?
Are you craving the word of our Father?**

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 12

By Nathan Parikh

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.³³

For those of us living in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, we have a love-hate relationship with Interstate 35 (actually, I don't know anyone who loves driving I-35). A common joke is that, as the ninth-longest interstate highway in America, I-35 will never *actually* be finished. Even though it was technically completed in 1982, it's still always under construction.

As Christians, we understand that we, too, are very much still works in progress. In 1 Peter 2:4-5, Peter shifts from the imagery of newborn infants (vv.1-3) and now presents us with a new image: living stones.

In Matthew 21, days before He was crucified, Jesus quoted Psalm 118 and called Himself the rejected cornerstone. This seems to have stuck with Peter and shaped his reading of the Old Testament since he references this imagery in his sermon in Acts 4 and again here in 1 Peter 2. As we come to Christ (v.4), we don't just endlessly consume spiritual milk (v.2). Instead, verse 5 states that we are "built up". But we are not the ones responsible for the building

³³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 2:4-5.

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

process. Jesus is the builder, fulfilling His promise in Matthew 16 to build his church. Christ does His work on us and transforms us.

And what is Jesus building? Peter writes that Christ, THE living stone, is using us as living stones to construct a "spiritual house". In the Old Testament, the Temple was commonly referred to as God's house. Now, Peter is helping Christians see the church is God's new house. A place of holiness, worship, service, and communion with God.

However, one stone doesn't make a house. The imagery here is plural. We are being formed collectively into this spiritual house. While each of us is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), the New Testament makes it clear that God did not design us to be able to fully know, enjoy, or serve Him in isolation. We are fitted together in this house called Hallmark Church so that something more than a collection of individuals is constructed—a spiritual house.

God is up to something good. That's why He will never stop chiseling away at you, forming you, and calling you into community with other believers. He's building you up alongside your brothers and sisters in Christ so we can fellowship with Him together and invite others to Him.

We are being built. We are being built into something. And we are being built into something together.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 13

By Nathan Parikh

⁶For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” ⁸ and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” ³⁴

One of the cultural stigmas in the West in recent years has been the "sin" of being offensive. Countless dollars have been spent on training programs and awareness campaigns to help avoid offense, with an ever-growing list of triggers and sensitivities.

Jesus is the literal embodiment of truth, kindness, love, and forgiveness. He didn't just preach it, He lived it. As his disciples, we should seek to emulate Him. Ironically, however, when we speak and live out the truth and love of Jesus, we will find ourselves committing the cultural sin of being offensive.

Peter continues his stone imagery in verses 6-8, drawing from Isaiah 8, 28, and Psalm 118. He presents Jesus as the cornerstone of the spiritual house that God is building. The cornerstone was the first stone laid, setting the direction and standard for the entire building and binding the structure together. Without it, everything falls apart.

³⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 2:6–8.

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

The surprising thing is that Jesus - the living stone and cornerstone - was rejected and is now "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense" (v.8). His teachings on human sinfulness, God's judgment, and the exclusivity of salvation are just as hard to hear today as they were to those who rejected Him 2,000 years ago.

The world sees people as inherently good and free to do whatever feels right. The Gospel clashes with this and leads us as Christians to share that even the "smallest" of sins deserve God's eternal punishment. Jesus is the only way to salvation, and Jesus changes those He saves.

Jesus was rejected for His words, and if we faithfully share the Gospel, we will face rejection, too. That's who Peter is writing to. A small group of exiles (1:1, 2:11) who are now out of sync with the world, but chosen by God.

Yet, I'm thankful that "whoever believes in him will not be put to shame" (v.6) and that God honors those who believe (v.7). Our hope is firm because Jesus, the living stone, rolled away the stone of his own tomb, conquered sin and death, and became the chief cornerstone of the church.

As you share the Gospel, do so with grace and love, remembering that while the Gospel may offend, it also offers the only true hope for humanity. We may face rejection, but we stand honored in Christ, unashamed and secure in the cornerstone of our faith.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 14

By Matt Whitsell

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.³⁵

Do you remember the day you came into His marvelous light?

When I was 11 years old, the Lord pursued me in a way I could not ignore. I had told my family and church that I asked Jesus into my heart when I was six years old, but that was a lie. At that time, I was giving everyone the church answers they wanted to hear, but I had not decided to follow Jesus for myself.

At age 11, I knew I had to stop living that lie; Jesus was calling me out of darkness (quite literally, too; this decision took place in the middle of the night). When I could no longer ignore the Spirit, I got out of bed, woke my parents up, and confessed that I was not saved and that I wanted to ask Jesus to forgive me that very night.

Have you ever considered what God has saved you from? From being abandoned to being chosen. From being insignificant to a royal priesthood. From being contaminated by sin to being made into a holy nation. From being lost and wandering to being a person for His possession.

This passage reminds me of one of my favorite worship songs from a decade ago, “Marvelous Light.” What follows

³⁵ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 2:9–10.

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

are the lyrics to the song “Marvelous Light”. I pray you can read through them and remember the glorious day you came into His marvelous light!

*I once was fatherless, a stranger with no hope.
Your kindness wakened me, awakened me, from my sleep.
Your love it beckons deeply, a call to come and die.
By grace now I will come, and take this life, take Your life.
My dead heart now is beating, my deepest stains now clean.
Your breath fills up my lungs. Now I'm free. Now I'm free!
Sin has lost its power; death has lost its sting.
From the grave You've risen, VICTORIOUSLY!
Into marvelous light I'm running, out of darkness, out of
shame.
By the cross you are the truth, you are the life, you are the
way.³⁶*

**Let us go out and proclaim the praise that this
marvelous light is available to all!**

³⁶ Marvelous Light, Song by Charlie Hall, Capitol CMG Publishing, Universal Music Publishing Group, Warner Chappell Music, Inc.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 15

By Lisa Dye

¹¹ Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.³⁷

One of my hobbies is thrifting, and every Tuesday is senior discount day at my favorite thrift store. So, most Tuesdays, I stop in and have a look around. Last week, as I was checking out, the cashier said to me, “You are always so nice and pleasant every time you come in.” Well, of course, that was a nice compliment, but honestly, as a follower of Christ, isn’t that the way I should present myself all the time and everywhere?

“We do not witness only with our lips; we must back up our ‘talk’ with our ‘walk.’ There should be nothing in our conduct that will give the unsaved ammunition to attack Christ and the gospel. Our good works must back up our good words.”³⁸ To help me conduct myself in a manner that glorifies God, I must remind myself I am a child of God. I also remind myself I am just passing through this world on my way home to God in heaven. So, as a child of God while on this journey, I can and will conduct myself in a way that honors and demonstrates Christ to others.

³⁷ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 2:11–12.

³⁸ Warren W Wiersbe Volume II David C Cook Colorado Springs, Co 1989 pg.404

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

My devotion to Christ motivates me to live a godly life and the following scripture helps keep me focused.

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brother kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.³⁹

I pray for God to make me acutely aware of my conduct in all situations. I also pray for God to help me remember that I am not of this world; I'm just passing through on my way home to Him in heaven.

Will you join me today in asking God to help you conduct yourself in a manner that pleases Him and for Him to remind you this world is not your home? You are just passing through on your journey home to Him in heaven.

³⁹ NIV Study Bible Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1985 pg. 1899, I Peter 1:3-8

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 16

By Dan Ashley

¹³ Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.⁴⁰

We are plainly told here to submit to the ordinances of man as they come through kings and governors. Similar words are found in Romans 13:1-7 and in Titus 3:1. Jesus Himself told a crowd in Jerusalem, *Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*⁴¹ Peter does not directly mention paying taxes here, but Paul does in Romans 13:6-7. These all agree in their clear general direction. We are given one exception that is found in Acts 4 and 5. The apostles, who had been imprisoned briefly, were back preaching Christ in the temple. The high priest asked them, *Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?*⁴² Read in the next verse how Peter answers them. ²⁹ *But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."*⁴³ (See also Acts 4:18-20.)

When Linda and I ministered in West Berlin before the Iron Curtain collapsed in 1989, I made trips to communist East Berlin and sometimes took "illegal" gospel tracts with

⁴⁰ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 2:13-14.

⁴¹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 22:21.

⁴² [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ac 5:28.

⁴³ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ac 5:29.

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me. I only got caught once and, thankfully, was not arrested. I had a dear friend in her 80s whose only son lived behind the wall in East Berlin. I took her to visit him regularly.

One day, Frau Lemke asked me to help her smuggle 7,000 East German Marks in my car to her son. East Marks could be bought at a very good exchange rate in the West, but East German law made it illegal to take this money from the West to the East. I told Frau Lemke that I did not approve of the communist government in the East, but as a Christian, I would not break their laws for financial gain. She acknowledged my decision. I won't reveal here what she ended up doing.

In summation, it is not up to us to choose which laws we want to obey. We should abide by the laws that apply to us and pay the taxes we owe. If we believe in certain circumstances, we should obey God rather than man; we must also be willing to pay the consequences, as both Peter and Paul did.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 17

By Charles Bartley

¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. ⁴⁴

As we read I Peter, it is important to be aware of the context in which it was written. Christians during this period were experiencing various forms of persecution. Some theologians believe that the persecution and suffering that Peter refers to was primarily social and religious rather than legal.

A pagan society that existed at that time would slander, ridicule, discriminate, and even inflict physical abuse on those whose lifestyle had been radically changed because of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Peter shares with us by doing good, we are following the will of God. The end of verse 15 tells us the result of our doing good should be to silence the ignorance of foolish people. To accomplish good works, we follow the Word of God (meditate on His word) and obey God's commandments. Often we forget that the lost world does observe our actions, our speech, our attitude, etc. We "walk the walk" to enable those around us to see that we follow the

⁴⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 2:15–17.

Word of God in our lives, which brings honor and glory to Him.

“Live as people who are free” are the first words in verse 16. This sounds great as the word “freedom” instills positive emotions and thoughts in our minds. However, Peter instructs us not to use our freedom as a cover-up (veil) for evil, but to live as servants of God. *For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

⁴⁵

**Christian freedom is always conditioned
by Christian responsibility!**

Peter concludes this section of scripture with four directives:

- 1) **Honor everyone**: Be conscious of the fact we are all created in the image of God.
- 2) **Love the brotherhood**: Love our brothers and sisters in Christ. (John 13:34-35)
- 3) **Fear God**: Have an awe and respect which leads to obedience.
- 4) **Honor the emperor**: Honor to those that God has placed in authority.

When I read this passage, I remember thinking the following as a teenager: “I can hardly wait until I turn 18 years old, and I will have the freedom to do what I want” (I can hear your laughter).

⁴⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ga 5:13.

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Adulthood quickly revealed how foolish my thoughts were as a teen. As a child of God, I do experience freedom in Christ. This freedom is not for my personal benefit or gain. Our freedom in Christ implies that we follow His Word and live as His servants, hopefully leading others to find and follow Jesus! The motto of a follower of Jesus should be ***Not my will, but yours, Lord.***

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 18

By Billy Geeslin

¹⁸ Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. ¹⁹ For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:⁴⁶

Do you remember a time growing up when you got in trouble for something you didn't do? How unfair and unjust it seemed? If you were like me, then you were sure to profess your innocence. "I didn't do it!" Never mind all the times I got away with things I did wrong.

In today's world, it is easy to get lost in an attitude of unfairness, but Peter reminds us whining is not what we are called to do. In fact, he reminds us that when we keep our thoughts focused on God, then when we endure pain unjustly, grace is at work!

¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly⁴⁷ That is exactly the example Jesus set for us when faced with the burden of the cross. He endured great suffering and hardship for having done absolutely nothing wrong. I think the book of Isaiah

⁴⁶ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 2:18–21.

⁴⁷ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 2:19.

says it best: *And in the face of such oppression and suffering—silence. Not a word of protest, not a finger raised to stop it. Like a sheep to a shearing, like a lamb to be slaughtered, he went—oh so quietly, oh so willingly.*⁴⁸

Submitting to the authorities ruling over the people, Jesus went to the cross because He was truly “mindful of God.” What He did could seem impossible to us, but He set the example for us to follow.

When we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, when we pray earnestly and seek His face, when we hide His Holy Word in our hearts, we also have the ability to follow Jesus' example. In fact, we can connect with the very same power He had to endure that hardship and suffering.

My pastor quite often reminds us that **“God is good all the time”** and **“all the time God is good.”** Regardless of our circumstances and whatever we may face, He does not change. It is when we are “mindful of Him” that we can also endure life's difficulties.

⁴⁸ The Voice Bible Copyright © 2012 Thomas Nelson, Inc. The Voice™ translation © 2012 Ecclesia Bible Society All rights reserved. Isaiah 53:7

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 19

By Lisa Dye

22 “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”;²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.⁴⁹

“Scripture declares the sinlessness of Christ in the clearest terms, allowing for no exception.”⁵⁰ “The reason for his sufferings: He bore our sins. Christ, in his sufferings, stood charged with our sins. He bore the punishment of them.”⁵¹

Christ’s suffering is significant.

He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.⁵² He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you

⁴⁹ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 2:22–24.

⁵⁰ NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982 pg.1891

⁵¹ Matthew Henry’s Commentary Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1961

⁵² NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982, Isaiah 53:5 – 6

*have been healed.*⁵³ “The fruits of Christ’s suffering: our justification. By his stripes we are healed.”⁵⁴

Christ bore our sins. He was innocent, we were guilty. He gave up his life for us. He died as a substitute for the sinner (you and me). Healing and righteousness come through his wounds. We have spiritual healing and are no longer slaves to sin. *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.*⁵⁵

When I study the Bible, I find it helpful to copy a few verses and rewrite them in my own words, making it personal. This helps me better understand what I am reading and studying.

Here is my example of 1 Peter 22 – 24:

Verse 22 – *He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.*⁵⁶

***Verse 22** – Jesus never sinned.

Verse 23 – *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*⁵⁷

***Verse 23** – Jesus suffered but remained humbly obedient to his Father.

⁵³ NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982, 1 Peter 2:24

⁵⁴ Matthew Henry’s Commentary Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1961

⁵⁵ NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982, Romans 6:22.

⁵⁶ NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982, 1 Peter 2:22

⁵⁷ NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982, 1 Peter 2:23

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Verse 24 – *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*⁵⁸

***Verse 24** – Jesus died as a substitute for me; therefore, I am righteous before God.

Lord Jesus, thank you for being my substitute. I know that I have sinned, but I know that you never sinned. I am guilty, but you are innocent. I know you suffered and died for my sins, and I sincerely thank you. Please help me to live a life that is righteous and pleasing to you.

⁵⁸ NIV Zondervan Publishing House Grand Rapids, Michigan 1982, | Peter 2:24

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 20

By Stephanie Corrigan

²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.⁵⁹

Have you ever worked with sheep or even watched a flock of sheep? In truth, sheep are not very smart animals. If they don't have someone watching over them, they could wander away, get lost, get attacked, or not find enough food. The one thing they do know is they recognize the shepherd's voice and that there is safety with him. I think many times we act just like those sheep. We lose our way. We don't know what to do next, but if we listen closely, we can hear our Shepherd's voice and be returned to His care.

Jesus came to this earth to give His life for us. When we accept that, He becomes our guide and our authority. While we have earthly authority that we must follow, Jesus is the ultimate authority over our lives and our souls. He is our Shepherd. I've seen many people who are God's children take the wrong paths. They don't look to God as their leader and guide. Either they take the leadership of the crowd they run with, or someone gives them bad advice. Sometimes, they want to go their own way, no matter what others say. Just like those sheep, eventually, they come into danger, or things in their life fall apart, and they are left wondering what to do next. Sometimes, they even blame God for the situation they are facing. The fact remains they walked away from their Shepherd, their Protector, and their Authority.

⁵⁹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 2:25.

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

As followers of Jesus, we should focus on building our relationship with Him. We need to learn to listen for His voice. That requires intentional time in prayer and studying His word. It's not just checking the box daily that you read the required verses. It is stopping, letting those verses sink in, pondering them, and letting God speak to your heart. This is a lesson for me, too. It is too easy to do the daily reading, run off to work, live my life, and not listen to God's voice.

I don't want to wander away from the flock, but I know He will come searching for me if I do. Luke 15 tells the parable of the lost sheep. Of 100 sheep, one was lost, and the shepherd left the 99 to go and find the lost one. He brought that one back into the fold, and there was great rejoicing. That one could be you or me. He is always looking for those who have wandered away and longing to bring them back.

**Whose voice are you listening to?
Who has authority over you?**

If you listen, Jesus calls you back if you have wandered. Let Him be the true Shepherd in your life.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 21

By Jeanne Howery

¹ Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, ² when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.⁶⁰

Are these verses important? They must be because the devil has tricked most of society into believing that wives being submissive to their husbands is no longer relevant and outdated in today's culture. He continually tries to get us to doubt God's word, enabling him to rob us of the joy and peace God has planned for us when we are obedient.

Submissive - willingly compliant, yielding, and obedient. God does **not** mean wives are inferior or are to be slaves to their husbands. It also has nothing to do with their value or significance to God, as both were created in His image (Genesis 1:27).

Marriage is a picture of Christ and the church. *Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.⁶¹* Between the two, one must be the primary leader. God's order is for the husband to take the lead. *But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.⁶²* However, the husband also has instructions in Ephesians 5:25. *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ*

⁶⁰ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Peter 3:1,2

⁶¹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Eph 5:24.

⁶² [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Co 11:3.

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*also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*⁶³ What if a husband wants his wife to do something that would cause her to disobey the Lord? Her greater commitment is obedience to God.

Notice these instructions are not only given to wives married to believing husbands, but also to wives married to men who are not living for the Lord or are non-believers. As a husband observes his wife's godly conduct daily demonstrating a quiet and meek (power under control) spirit, it is then the wife has a good chance of winning her husband over to the Lord. Notice he is not won with words, but actions.

When church leadership was invited to participate in a second devotional book, I let the Lord know I wouldn't be volunteering this time. However, if there was Scripture that wasn't taken, I would know it was the one *He* wanted me to cover. My husband wanted me to participate in the writing, but honestly, I was relieved when all of I Peter was taken. Then, I received a text from a friend stating she had taken two Scriptures; would I take one of them? I thought this must be You, Lord, so I agreed. Out of all the Scriptures, it was - wives submitting to their husbands! I love the Lord's sense of humor (so does my husband).

⁶³ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Eph 5:25.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 22

By Joy Haley

³Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—⁴rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.⁶⁴

In our world today, beauty is often associated with our outward appearance. Magazines, social media, and advertisements overwhelm us with images of perfect hair, flawless skin, and the latest diet trend. In 2023, revenue for the cosmetic/personal care industry was 103 billion dollars.⁶⁵ The culture loudly proclaims that beauty is about what we wear and how we look. However, the Bible offers a very different perspective on what is true beauty.

1 Peter 3:3-4 calls us to shift our focus from the outward to the inward. The passage speaks of *the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit*, which is highly valued by God. Unlike physical beauty, which fades with time, inner beauty is eternal and grows brighter as we cultivate it.

True beauty, according to God, is about the heart. A gentle and quiet spirit is not about being timid or passive but about showing patience, humility, and complete trust in God. *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

⁶⁴ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 3:3–4.

⁶⁵ Statista.com

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*gentleness, and self-control...*⁶⁶ This kind of beauty does not fade with age but becomes more vibrant and attractive as it reflects the character of Christ. The inner beauty truly impacts those around us and honors God. I think of my Nana, Ozell Dunn when I read this passage. Her life exemplified all these qualities and was a great example for her daughters and granddaughters.

As we go about our day, let us remember that our true beauty is not found in what we put on our bodies, but in what we cultivate within our hearts. Let us strive to live out the virtues that please God and reflect His glory.

⁶⁶ Galatians 5:22-23 New Living Translation, biblegateway.com

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 23

By Mike Haley

⁷ Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.⁶⁷

“Husbands, likewise,” refers to the previous scriptures that urge Christians to be subject to man's laws and responsible, law-abiding citizens. It also refers to a servant who obeys their master with all respect. We are to follow the example of Christ, who suffered for us and left us an example to follow. Christ was obedient to His Father in all things, even to die on the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

In chapter three, verse one, Peter refers to wives who are to be submissive to their husbands. Now, Peter tells the husbands to fulfill their role as husbands in the spirit of Christ. The way in which they treat their wives will enhance and empower their prayer life, or it will hinder and diminish the effectiveness of their prayers.

As a husband to my wife for 55 years, I have learned the importance of caring for my wife. I have learned that God calls me to understand my wife and to be loving, caring, and compassionate. I am not saying that I fully understand my wife. However, I am called to honor her as an equal heir of

⁶⁷ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 3:7.

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the grace of Christ. She has the same Christ living in her as I do. She has the power of the Holy Spirit in her, as I do. She is a child of the King, just as I am. Understanding her needs, desires, feelings, and fears is very important and should be a priority in my life.

As a Pastor, I have been counseling pre-marriage couples and performing weddings for many years. After observing many marriages, I am convinced that many godly women are willing to live selflessly, loving and serving their husbands and children. However, very few men are willing to do the same. A loving relationship is only maintained when the husband and wife have mutual love and care.

As Diane and I have grown older, we have renewed our love for one another. When Diane had surgery, I found I made a renewed commitment to care for her. Diane has renewed her commitment to care for me when I am sick or have surgery. We are committed to love and cherish one another through the good times and the difficult times. We are in this together!

We pledged our love to one another on June 6, 1969, and we have renewed ourselves to that pledge many times. We often fall short of the perfect example of Christ. That's why we forgive one another often and renew ourselves daily to serve the Lord and one another.

- How may we better serve our spouse?
- Are we willing to discuss how we can improve our relationship with our spouse?

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- Are we willing to help clear up misunderstandings?
- Are we forgiving, and are we willing to seek forgiveness?

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 24

By James Nicholson

⁸ Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.⁶⁸

This passage of scripture in 1 Peter clearly reminds me of my dad's radical transformation after hearing and receiving the gospel as an adult in his late 40s.

Before accepting the gospel, my dad was an agnostic, neither believing in God nor disbelieving in God. The world would have considered him a good man, husband, and father. He worked hard and tried to live his life without any context of God or Christianity.

In the fall of 1983, that all changed, as my dad accepted Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. His character changed and he became a living example of model Christian behavior. He had crossed over from death to life and was in unity with fellow believers, living out the godly virtues that Peter lays out in verse 8.

This was all playing out in a small, desolate West Texas town. I watched as my dad would exemplify brotherly love and help a pastor from another church pack their belongings

⁶⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 3:8–9.

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to move when the pastor had been assigned to a church in another community. On many of these occasions, my dad was the only man in the community who would volunteer to help the pastors and their families move, even though he was not a church member. That living example of 1 Peter: 8-9 is something I think about often 40+ years later.

Those memories constantly remind me of Hebrews 13:1, *Let brotherly love continue.*⁶⁹ I must admit that I have not always demonstrated the same unity and brotherly love as my dad did. I pray that I, too, can embody the scripture in a more profound and practical manner in my walk with Christ.

⁶⁹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 13:1.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 25

By Garrett Scott

*10 For the Scriptures say, If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. 11 Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. 12 The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil.*⁷⁰

As we jump into the words from Peter in this passage, he is quoting Psalm 34:12-16, a psalm from the great songwriter David in the Old Testament. This psalm's tone is mainly one of thanksgiving to the Lord, saying, *I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.*⁷¹, which may seem a little odd to be in the middle of this psalm.

*If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days.. turn away from evil and do good.*⁷² I've heard a quote from Milton Vincent: "Every time I deliberately disobey a command of God, it is because I am in that moment doubtful as to God's true intentions in giving me that command."⁷³ At that moment, I doubt whether God is good and if he has my best intentions at heart to obey these commands.

So, why would God want me to refrain from speaking evil and lying? If you live this way, you will love life and see happy days. Who doesn't want this? The one who does right receives God's blessing, and God opposes those who live a life of deceit. I also want the Lord to hear my prayers and not turn away from me, as he says in verse 12.

⁷⁰ New Living Translation (Carol Stream IL, Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pet. 3:10-12

⁷¹ New Living Translation (Carol Stream IL, Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Psalm 34:1

⁷² New Living Translation (Carol Stream IL, Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Pet. 3:10-11

⁷³ Milton Vincent, *A Gospel Primer For Christians (Bemidji, MN, Focus Publishing, 2008)*, 329.

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This is all the fruit of a life rooted in Jesus, knowing that we want to live this way but will never live up to the standard of our own power. Thankfully, *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds, you have been healed.*⁷⁴ We want to honor the blood that was shed on our behalf and live in new life so that we may receive the blessing of God.

Today, evaluate your life and see whether you choose to enjoy life and God's blessings or evil days and life against God.

⁷⁴ English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL, Crossway Publishing, 2001) 1 Peter 2:24

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 26

William McLemore

13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,⁷⁵

These two verses are nestled in the middle of a section of 1 Peter chapter three that many English versions of the Bible title “Suffering for Righteousness’ Sake”. They follow verses where Peter quoted Psalm 34, a psalm titled “Taste and See That the Lord is Good.”

At first glance, I really don’t understand how these two thoughts go together. How can suffering taste good? Don’t we prefer sweet and savory things? Or foods with just enough sour or spice to liven things up? But who wants to taste rancid or putrid things?

Surprisingly, many people do. In 2000, a 130-year-old candy company introduced a line of jellybeans in flavors such as black pepper, dirt, rotten egg, ear wax, and booger...⁷⁶ I’ll stop there. That novelty propelled the Jelly Belly Candy company even further into international cultural fad status, something initially sparked by President Ronald Regan’s taste for jellybeans.

⁷⁵ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Pe 3:13–14.

⁷⁶ <https://www.jellybelly.com/company-history>

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Eating disgusting foods is a self-inflicted pain that people choose to do for the sake of the experience. Similarly, people endure pain during strenuous exercise in the hope of improvement on the other side of that pain. In both examples, the experience and the improvement are benefits the person may receive.

Sadly, though, it seems Peter wrote these words because people are less likely to endure pain and suffering for the sake of helping others or doing good without expecting a return. Even less likely are people who choose to do the right thing, the godly thing, when doing so most likely will provoke mental and physical attacks from others.

Thankfully, Peter encourages us to change our perspective. Instead of looking at what *might* benefit us in the here and now, he tells us to look beyond the pain and suffering that may come from doing what's good and right and to look to the eternal blessings that will come from the Lord as a reward for our actions.

Now, that's a trade-off that won't leave a bad taste.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 27

By Greg Self

¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;⁷⁷

I remember the end-of-the-year field trip our class took during my freshman year in high school, when our teacher, Coach Findley, decided to take us spelunking – aka, cave exploring. Throughout the excursion, Coach would ask the students to point their flashlights at various features of the cave while explaining the geological significance of each. He eventually gathered all the students into a circle and instructed us to turn off our flashlights. The complete darkness that ensued was shocking. Even today, I can remember feeling the darkness around me, as if physically pressing down on me, as I labored to breathe.

The Bible speaks a lot about the darkness in this world, and when it does, it's always a bad thing. Luke 11:35 warns us to be careful lest the light in us becomes darkness. Darkness is often associated with God's judgment on the *Day of the Lord*,⁷⁸ even describing the place where the wicked are cast as *outer darkness*.⁷⁹

But what exactly is darkness, and who can be found there? Basically, darkness is the absence of light. To remove

⁷⁷ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 3:15.

⁷⁸ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Zep 1:14.

⁷⁹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 25:30.

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darkness, one has to introduce light. When the Bible speaks of darkness and light, it is referring to the spiritual reality of the world, and the state of man as he lives in this world. The light of the world is Jesus Himself, as He declared in John 8:12.

Only those who aren't saved walk in darkness because they are void of God's presence in their lives. That doesn't mean that Believers are immune from trials and disappointments. The difference is that while the non-believer walks in darkness (void of light), the Believer walks through shadows, which occur when something obscures the light from above.

But when the light is obscured, it is still there and will remain, even when the shadows are removed. That constant presence of the Light of Jesus Christ and the salvation He brings, even when we're going through the shadows, is the hope that is within us, and that hope is the difference between walking in darkness and crossing through the shadows.

Believers are called to be a light in the world, and there is no better way to do so than when people who are walking in darkness see us leaning on the hope that is within us as we walk through the shadows of our lives.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 28

By Jon Haley

¹having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ²For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.⁸⁰

Have you ever been falsely accused? I have! There is still a mystery from my childhood that has not been solved. The mystery involved a broken ceramic cardinal. I took the fall for it. 40 years later, I still hold to the truth of my innocence.

Peter writes about having a good conscience. These verses emphasize the importance of maintaining a clear conscience and living a blameless life, even in the face of suffering and slander.

Living a blameless life doesn't mean living free from trouble or criticism. Rather, it means living so that any accusations against us are baseless, rooted only in our commitment to Christ. Joseph's story in Genesis is a powerful illustration of this principle. Despite his integrity and faithfulness, Joseph faced false accusations and was imprisoned. His suffering was not a result of wrongdoing but of his steadfast commitment to righteousness.

Joseph's story teaches us that doing the right thing doesn't always yield immediate rewards. It can sometimes lead to hardship. Yet, Joseph's clear conscience before God,

⁸⁰ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 3:16–17.

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fueled by his unwavering faith, gave him the strength to endure, ultimately leading to God's greater purpose being fulfilled in his life. His life challenges us to remain faithful to God's standards, even when it costs us.

Have you ever heard of the 50/20 principle? This principle comes from the words of Joseph found in Genesis 50:20. ²⁰ *But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.*⁸¹

Are you walking blameless before the Lord?

Are you willing to suffer for doing what is right?

⁸¹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ge 50:20.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 29

By Billy Geeslin

¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,⁸²

All human beings owe a debt they could never possibly pay. When sin came into the world, a seemingly unbridgeable chasm was created between God and man. Nothing imperfect mankind could ever do would be able to bridge that chasm. Only a perfect sacrifice free of sin could do that. Jesus Christ is that bridge.

However, He would have to endure suffering as no other human being had or will ever endure. Not just the physical torture he endured, but the separation from God the Father. Something He had never known. I think this was more torturous to Him than the physical burdens He endured leading up to and on the cross.

You might ask why He did this. Peter tells us that He endured it so that “He might bring us to God.” *¹⁸For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, **that he might bring you to God.** He was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,⁸³*

I get stuck on the “might” part if you are like me. It puts a hitch in my spiritual giddy-up. It is completely true,

⁸² [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 3:18.

⁸³ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 3:18.

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though. There are those who will hear of what Christ did to reconcile them to their Creator, and they will turn away from that truth. God made a way for every human being that has ever been or will ever be. Everyone must embrace the fact that accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior is the only way to a peaceful, eternal life.

Christ died once and for all to permanently pay for the penalty of sin. The only way the payment could be made was through his atoning sacrifice. It is by Grace that we have been saved and made whole. *⁸For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—⁹not from works, so that no one can boast.*⁸⁴

Christ suffered for us and has commissioned us to go after those who have not received Him. We may find those who would reject what He did for us, but there is always that one lamb out of the 99. You may be the one whom God is choosing to go after that one. So be encouraged and keep looking.

⁸⁴ [*Christian Standard Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Eph 2:8–9.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 30

By Stephanie Corrigan

²¹ There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.⁸⁵

Baptism. It's a beautiful and significant event in the life of a Christian. Why is baptism so important? The answer is simple. It is a public statement or identification that you are a follower of Jesus Christ.

Let's examine it a little closer. To understand these verses, you need to go back to verse 20. Peter refers to Noah building the ark and only eight souls being saved by water.

Noah and his family, being in the ark, could pass safely through the waters. In the same way, the term 'baptism' should be understood as a visible representation of deliverance through Christ, just as the ark represented deliverance from the waters of the flood. When a person accepts Christ, he is saved; when the believer is baptized, he is identified with the one who has delivered him.⁸⁶

This is depicted with the baptism of Jesus Christ, himself. Jesus was baptized by John. ¹⁶ *When He had been baptized,*

⁸⁵ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 3:21–22.

⁸⁶ The Complete Word Study New Testament, FN | Peter 3:21, Edited by Spiros Zodhiates, ThD

Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”⁸⁷ He was identified as belonging to the one who had delivered Him here and would deliver Him through all His trials.

Even beyond this is what baptism depicts. How often have you watched a baptism and heard the words “buried in the likeness of His death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection to walk in the newness of life”? Jesus showed this as a foretelling with His baptism. He was “buried” as he was lowered into the water, representing His coming death, and “raised” as He came out of the water, signifying His glorious resurrection. When we are baptized, we are looking back at Christ’s death and resurrection, but we are also symbolically “burying” our sins or past life and “raising” up to a new life as a follower of Jesus. That doesn’t mean we will live a perfect life because we won’t. It means Christ has power over sin because of His resurrection, and we can rest in His strength to walk in a new life. His death, resurrection, victory over sin, and the grave washed away our sins and gave us new life.

Are you walking in new life?

Maybe today is the day to look to Jesus and find new life in Him.

⁸⁷ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Mt 3:16–17.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 31

By Jim Ater

¹Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ² that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. ⁴In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. ⁵They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.⁸⁸

In the first six verses of I Peter chapter 4, Peter encourages the followers of Christ to remember what Christ had suffered for on their behalf and the importance of continuing to live “*according to God in the spirit*” and not returning to the ways they had lived before coming to Christ for salvation. It reminds us that we are to be in the world proclaiming the Gospel but not live “*of the world.*” Before reading this section, I listened to a Zach Williams song titled, “Less Like Me”, where he sings, “Where I talk a talk that I don't walk and miss the moments right before my eyes.”

⁸⁸ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 4:1–6.

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That is the challenge for us Christ followers, to not only talk the talk but to walk the walk that He has called us to, just as it was for those reading I Peter.

How do we do that? Not too long ago, I was listening to a young man deliver the eulogy for his father. He reflected on the words of wisdom his father had shared with him: the importance of committing to a plan, then executing the plan, and then accepting the outcome. That really stayed with me as I thought about my spiritual commitments and what Peter is telling his readers in these verses. When you make a commitment to do something, it doesn't happen just because you speak the words; it only becomes a true commitment when you put those words into action. I can say that I am going to share the Gospel, but sharing my testimony with neighbors, family members, and co-workers, really anyone that I can connect with is when my commitment is put into action. The cool thing is that God controls how my story might be used. My story for His glory is my hope!

As a former athlete and coach, I can relate to the plan of communicating, executing, and accepting. I had to make a tough decision in my first year as a varsity coach. After losing the first seven games in my first year, I could see we were an awful offensive team. So, we concentrated on defense for most of our practices. It wasn't an overnight success, although we did win our next game. That commitment continued for the rest of my tenure, with a better record the next year and five straight trips to the State Championships, including a 24-0 record on the last trip. We followed the same plan for the championship game but came

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up short! I remember that my wife and daughter were more upset with the loss than I was. Why? I accepted the outcome because we had committed and executed the plan. That is the encouragement Peter is giving to his readers in this passage. He encourages them to commit to following Jesus by “living according to God in the Spirit” instead of living for worldly desires. That is God’s will for the readers of I Peter and us.

So, what do these verses mean to me? That my commitment to be “a little more like Jesus, a little less like me” is a commitment I need to put into action every day, leaving the outcome in His hands.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 32

By Deurk Reimer

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.”⁸⁹

As a retired mechanical engineer who worked 30 years at a nuclear power plant and, more importantly, a father responsible for planning vacations for my four kids and wife, I understand the importance of having a good project plan. A good plan includes the critical steps to ensure success, what success looks like (making it home from Six Flags with all four kids), and contingency plans for when things don't go as expected.

To succeed, you must be mindful of obstacles and “stay on target.” “Stay on target” reminds me of a famous scene in the first Star Wars Movie. A fighter pilot is part of the mission to destroy the first Death Star and is flying in a trench on the surface. The pilot is getting animated and excited, losing focus. His superior tells him firmly and calmly to “stay on target.” Many projects and family vacations fail because the carefully crafted plan is not followed. The same is true for us on our spiritual journey.

Peter instructs his readers in verses 7-8 to plan for what will come. The critical milestones for the next big reveal in

⁸⁹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 4:7–8.

biblical prophecy have already occurred: the Messiah has come, lived, died, been resurrected, and ascended. We are living in the end times whether you believe the Rapture occurs before the Tribulation period or if you believe Christ's return and the Rapture occurs after the seven years of the tribulation have ended. "What is important is that all Christians hold in common that Christ will ultimately return bodily, visibly, and gloriously to reign and rule with His resurrected and transformed saints forever and ever. The details of this great event will be made known in God's own time."⁹⁰

Jesus, after giving many details about the second coming, provides us with the timing of his return. *But of that day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.*⁹¹ We know from the Bible that in these end times, there will be false prophets, wars, and natural disasters, and as believers, we will be persecuted; many will fall away because of these tribulations.

Jesus gave us the perfect plan; following Peter's instructions will make us better prepared to stay on target. The word 'therefore' in verse 7 shows the connection between these end times and the urgency of serious prayer. Paul tells us in a letter to the church in Philippi. *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.*⁹² Believers should be praying faithfully to finish the mission so that we will behold the glory of God in heaven.

⁹⁰ Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (Answers by BGEA Staff, 2017)

⁹¹ The New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Matthew 24:36

⁹² The New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Philippians 4:6

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As believers, we are not perfect. We make mistakes even when we mean well. We are called to love one another just as Jesus loves us. Genuine love for each other includes overlooking past hurts and picking each other up when we fall. The author of Hebrews says, *but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*⁹³

Jesus instructs the faithful remnant in the church at Thyatira. *But hold fast what you have till I come.*⁹⁴ We can rely on the Holy Spirit, which is given to all believers, to help us focus on Jesus so we complete our mission. Hold fast, trust, and have faith in God.

While in these end times, stay on target and deeply love your fellow brothers and sisters.

⁹³ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Hebrews 3:13

⁹⁴ *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Revelation 2:25

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 33

By Ysh Cucuta

⁹ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.⁹⁵

I remember sitting in a pew watching a speaker on stage deliver amazing one-liners from the Bible. And I remember thinking, man, I wish I could do that. I even remember a time when I was listening to the worship pastor belt out a high note and wished I could sing like that. But the moment a microphone is placed in my hand, my voice would quiver, and my hands would shake.

God did not create every person to play the same role in His church. God did not give everyone the talent to sit and compile a message from His word so that we could all understand. God did not give everyone the vocal cords to sing beautiful praises to Him.

However, God did bless every person with their talents and gifts to be used for Him.

One summer, at church, I watched a recap video about camp and a youth mission trip. I told myself I could never work with kids, yet I was approached with the opportunity to serve our youth. God unlocked something inside me to connect with the younger generations, to listen to them and

⁹⁵ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 4:9–10.

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understand, to share from my past to help better their walk with the Lord, and to be a Christlike example to them.

What talents and/or gifts has the Lord blessed you with? Do you have the ability to compile a masterpiece with colors? Do you have the ability to rock a baby to sleep? Can you cut grass or fix a car? Can you cook food to feed a multitude of people?

God's gifting to you was orchestrated so you can share it with His people!

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 34

By Kevin Farris

¹¹ If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.⁹⁶

As a new Christian, this is where I have struggled at times. I was saved on January 14, 2018, and baptized one week later. I have always been able to speak on topics that I have a solid knowledge of, but being a new Christian, I, at times, have been afraid of saying the wrong things about God, Jesus, The Bible, etc.

As I have continued my walk with Christ, I have gained more confidence and feel more comfortable in my knowledge of this. I know that God will lead me to say the right things if I am speaking in truth in my heart and mouth.

The Holy Spirit led me up front to talk to Pastor Jon during the invitation that wonderful day, and I hope that I continue to follow Him in every way since. Saying all of that is just a way to say that we all need to serve God in whatever way He directs us, and by doing so, He will give us the strength that we need to serve Him and His people.

⁹⁶ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 4:11.

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We should all hope to be examples that no matter when we find Jesus, because He has always known where we are, it is never too late to glorify God, speak his Word, and confidently minister to all people.

The directions given to us by God in this verse are also given in 1 Corinthians 10:31 ³¹ *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*⁹⁷ and in Ephesians 5:20 ²⁰ *giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*⁹⁸

So, my brothers and sisters, please, in all your words and actions, glorify God, and He will give you the strength you need.

⁹⁷ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Co 10:31.

⁹⁸ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Eph 5:20.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 35

By Steffan Campos

¹²Dear friends, don't be surprised when the fiery ordeal comes among you to test you, as if something unusual were happening to you. ¹³Instead, rejoice as you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may also rejoice with great joy when his glory is revealed.⁹⁹

I had the incredible opportunity to travel this summer while serving people in Kenya, Guatemala & even Texas through summer camp. One thing I noticed while talking with all these wonderful people is that everyone faces trials in their life. This also means everyone can choose how to respond in these trials. At the beginning of our reading today it says, *do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you... instead rejoice¹⁰⁰* This sounds very similar to what James tells us *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,¹⁰¹* These Scriptures give us the heads up that trials will be coming if they are not already in your life, but tells us to be ready to rejoice in them.

As I met multiple children in Kenyan schools, several had given their lives to Christ because the Truth of the Gospel was shown to them through the school's teaching or the

⁹⁹ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 4:12–13.

¹⁰⁰ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 4:12–13a.

¹⁰¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jas 1:2.

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church groups (like Hallmark) that are allowed to come to share the Gospel in their chapel services.

I listened one by one of their stories growing up with trying circumstances. Parents must choose which child will eat that day or how to choose which one will be able to gain an education. I saw current homes made of nothing but mud, stones, and sticks that an intense rainstorm could wash out at any moment.

However, I also saw the excitement these students shared of knowing Jehovah Jireh, who had provided more than just education or food but true salvation in their lives. Many of them shared that they are still praying for their families to know Christ as so many grow up with Muslim beliefs and are already battling the fear of their families disowning them for following God.

As I watched ALL of them sing at the top of their lungs the Truth of God's goodness or songs of prayer and blessing over their lost families, I couldn't help but worship through tears as they displayed precisely what it means to choose joy through the trials. The key is that they first knew Christ as their personal Savior and then chose to continually trust Him even when their circumstances told them otherwise.

I encourage you to end this time in worship by thinking through at least three things you can praise God or thank Him for today and sharing that with Him.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 36

By Bill Corrigan

¹The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ²Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.¹⁰²

Be a Shepherd. What? That's the Pastor and staff's job, not mine, right? Unfortunately, this is the reality that we may find ourselves residing. All of us are called to be a shepherd, no matter what period of life. First and foremost, I pray that all of God's family is in God's Word. Without that personal relationship, we could end up missing many opportunities to serve, lead, and advise someone who is going through a valley. As a church, we have been blessed with men and women who have accepted the role of shepherd, and hopefully, you can recall a time when you also served as a shepherd to someone.

First, let's look at the call for elders. Some of the hallmarks of an elder's call are consistent church attendance, willingness to visit our shut-ins and widows, financial support of the church, and just being willing to serve. As our verses remind us, they serve *as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly.*¹⁰³ This is a good example for us to follow.

¹⁰² [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 5:1-4.

¹⁰³ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 5:2b

Let's take a moment to think back to the people who impacted your life most. They are people who trusted and followed Jesus's example *to shepherd the flock of God which is among you*.¹⁰⁴ A person that did that for me was a man named Jerry Donovan. I can't describe his impact on my life as a new believer. The most important thing he showed me was the privilege I had to be a part of God's work and to be in His will.

**Do you have someone like Jerry in your life?
Are you being that person to someone else?**

The best example is Jesus Christ, the "Chief Shepherd". If we are faithful to His example, we will be willing to shepherd "the flock" that he has placed us. We can't do it in our own power. We need to call on the power of God. I haven't always answered the call to shepherd or mentor others, but my heart is willing, and I believe He will use me. I need to trust, listen, and then act. If you do the same, you will be rewarded. The blessing is greater in being a servant to others than we could imagine. *We will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away*.¹⁰⁵

Today, will you join me in looking for that opportunity to be a shepherd to someone else? If you have had a person like that, reach out and thank them for being an example of the Chief Shepherd to you.

¹⁰⁴ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 5:2a

¹⁰⁵ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Pe 5:4b

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

Day 37

By Violetta Hickman

⁷ casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you.¹⁰⁶

What does it mean to cast your cares on God? It is not just about talking to Him or praying about your problems. It is about surrendering your worries and fears to Him, trusting He is capable of handling them, and believing He has your best interests at heart. It humbly admits to God, "I'm overwhelmed, but I know you are not. You are my refuge, strength, and Savior, and I need You!"

Some of my greatest struggles were caused by doing the opposite of this verse. I made a habit of trying to control everything myself. I thought I had to have all the answers and tried to fix every problem independently. It was exhausting, and more importantly, I was neglecting the very One who wanted to help me.

God loves us deeply, and He does not want us to be weighed down by the difficulties and worries of this life. This verse reminds me of Matthew 6:25-27, where Jesus tells us not to worry about tomorrow or tomorrow's troubles because God is aware of our needs and will provide for us.

When we cast our cares on God, we are not saying our problems will magically disappear. We are saying we trust

¹⁰⁶ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 5:6-7.

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God to carry us through them, to sustain us, and to keep us from being shaken. We are saying we believe He is greater than our worries and concerns.

Take a moment to reflect on the areas where you struggle to let go. Is a specific burden or worry weighing heavily on your heart? I encourage you to cast them on God and experience the peace and freedom that comes from knowing He is bigger than any problem you will ever face.

Never forget God cares for you more than anyone else ever could.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 38

By Jeremy McLemore

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.”¹⁰⁷

They say you are most vulnerable when you think you’re safe, and I agree. It’s in the moments of my spiritual highs that I consult God the least, and my spiritual habits suck. So, when verse 8 says, *He prowls like a lion seeking someone to devour*, it is no wonder I’m taken down so easily. I let my guard down because I relaxed in my spiritual disciplines and fell into sinful ways all because I thought, “Nah, I’m good.”

I’m not sure about you, but I don’t care how strong you think you are; you won’t be able to just Chuck Norris karate chop a lion in the face and live, even when you are looking for the lion.

As American Christians, we underestimate Satan, spiritual warfare, the unrelenting effort he uses to trip us up, and the schemes he uses to see us fail. When we don’t give enough credit to the size of the challenge we are going against, we tend to fall flat on our faces.

¹⁰⁷ *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. | Peter 5:8-9

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I've learned that God has given us the perfect tools to protect ourselves from this roaming lion. The armor of God, mentioned in Ephesians 6, is the ideal set of tools we must use daily to "suit up" for the attacks that come our way. No wonder I fail when I go off to the spiritual war of the day without protective gear. Just like when you get up to leave for the day, grab your coffee, your bag, and your armor.

Not only is it essential to wear your armor, but you also need to know that you're not alone. Verse nine says, "*Your family of believers are suffering just like you.*" When life is hard, and everything is going wrong, it is way too easy to isolate yourself and think that you are alone. But you're not. God sees you. You are not suffering alone. There is a faith family around you that God has placed you in, just for a time like this.

Learn to protect yourself with God's word, and when some battles are too hard, lean on one another and carry each other through because you're not alone.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 39

By Jeremy McLemore

In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. All power to him forever! Amen.¹⁰⁸

It is effortless to stay stuck on the “*why*.” Why did the car break down this week? Why does it cost so much for groceries? Why do I feel stuck at my job? Why is my loved one not getting better? Why can’t we have children?...

I’ve been there. I am there. The *why* can keep you stuck forever if you let it.

I remember speaking with my dad, really needing some guidance. I was sharing my thoughts and feelings on many situations I’d been struggling with, and near the end of our conversation, he said, “I know it’s easy to get stuck on the *why*, but maybe change your perspective and start asking *what?*” I thought that was strange, but he clarified by saying, “*What is, what can God teach you from this? That’s the perspective you should have.*”

I know it may be illegal to say your parents are wise or smart, but my dad is smart.

¹⁰⁸ *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. | Peter 5:10-11

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In verse ten, God provides the biggest relief and best ending we can ask for when it comes to our suffering. He stops these hardships and restores us, supports us, gives us strength, and places us on a foundation on which we will not be moved.

Once I viewed my trials, struggles, frustrations, and worries from the viewpoint of what *should I be learning, Lord*, something changed. Like a bone popping back into place, there was relief. It doesn't make it all perfect; there is still some aching in my heart and mind, but most importantly, I can breathe in hope. My mindset changed from weakness to seeing how God wants to make me strong.

Every trial offers an opportunity for growth. As we learned yesterday, we can lean on one another when times are hard. God does not waste our pain.

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

DAY 40

By Carlos Campos

¹² Through Silvanus, a faithful brother (as I consider him), I have written to you briefly in order to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!

¹³ She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, as does Mark, my son. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.¹⁰⁹

As Peter concludes his letter, he emphasizes the essence of his message: the true grace of God. Throughout this epistle, Peter has addressed suffering, submission, and the hope found in Christ. Here, he calls believers to stand firm in this grace.

Peter acknowledges the reality of suffering but encourages believers to see it through the lens of God's grace. In times of trial, it is easy to feel abandoned or overwhelmed. However, Peter reminds us that God's grace is sufficient and present even in our darkest moments. This grace sustains us, giving us strength to endure and the hope of glory to come.

Peter's mention of Silvanus (Silas) and Mark highlights the importance of community. We are not meant to walk this journey alone. We find encouragement, support, and a tangible expression of God's love in Christian fellowship. The greetings from "she who is in Babylon" (likely a

¹⁰⁹ [Christian Standard Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), 1 Pe 5:12–14.

UNSHAKEABLE HOPE

reference to the church in Rome¹¹⁰) and from Mark, illustrate the interconnectedness of believers across distances. In our own lives, we should seek to build and nurture relationships within the body of Christ, knowing we are stronger together.

Peter's instruction to "greet one another with a kiss of love" speaks to the genuine affection and unity that should characterize Christian relationships. Love is the hallmark of the Christian community. It reflects the love Christ has for us and serves as a powerful witness to the world. Whether through a simple greeting or acts of service, expressing love to one another is a vital part of standing firm in grace.

Peter's final wish for peace would have echoed the hopes of all those who faced persecution. His teachings in this letter, if followed, provide a path to finding that peace amid the turmoil of life. True peace is found only in Him. In a world full of chaos and uncertainty, the peace of Christ anchors our souls. It is a peace that surpasses understanding, guarding our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7).

Let us remember to stand firm in God's grace, support one another in love, and rest in the peace that comes from Christ. In doing so, we honor God and exemplify His grace to a watching world.

¹¹⁰ *Layman's Bible Commentary, Vol. 12: Hebrews thru Revelation* (Ohio: Barbour Publishing, 2008) 101

H.E.A.R. Journal

H (Highlight)

E (Explain)

A (Apply)

R (Respond)

HOPE IN JESUS

By Jon Haley

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.¹¹¹

I believe this last verse is fitting of the last devotion. Paul prays a short, powerful prayer over the followers of Jesus in Rome. I pray this prayer over you as well. I pray the God of hope will fill you with joy and peace. I pray you will abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's words often sound like he was ending this epistle (vv. 13, 33; 16:20, 25–27). This verse (15:13) is, in effect, a benedictory prayer. The description of God as the God of hope relates to hope mentioned in the preceding verses and to the promises of God recorded in the Scripture, which give hope (v. 4). Paul desired God to fill his readers with all joy and peace.

- **Joy** relates to the delight of anticipation in seeing one's hopes fulfilled.
- **Peace** results from the assurance that God will fulfill those hopes. It is experienced as believers trust in Him (Hebrews 11:1).
- As a result, believers overflow with **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:19). The achievement of all God's purposes for the spiritual welfare of His children comes from the power given

¹¹¹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 15:13.

by the Spirit of God. What a fitting closing reminder to the apostle's discussion of Christian living."¹¹²

I do not want you to overlook or miss the two keywords in the middle of the verse. Read the verse again. ¹³ *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace **in believing**, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*¹¹³ Hope, Joy, and Peace are only found in placing your faith in JESUS.

You must first place your faith in Jesus for salvation. Secondly, we must daily place our faith in Him through surrender. The only way to have hope, joy, and peace is through salvation and then surrendering to Him daily.

If you have never placed your faith in Jesus for salvation, please do that now. You can TRUST in Jesus for forgiveness of sins by taking the following three steps:

1. Admit you are a sinner.

²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*¹¹⁴

2. Believe Jesus died for you.

¹⁶ *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*¹¹⁵

3. Confess Jesus is Lord.

⁹ *that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* ¹⁰ *For with the heart one believes unto*

¹¹² John A. Witmer, "[Romans](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 496.

¹¹³ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 15:13.

¹¹⁴ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 3:23.

¹¹⁵ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Jn 3:16.

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*righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*¹¹⁶

To walk in His hope, joy, and peace, you must surrender your plans for His on a daily basis. Daily surrender your life to live and walk according to what God has called you to do—Daily ***Trust in the Lord*** and the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in you.

¹¹⁶ [*The New King James Version*](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ro 10:9–10.

Congratulations

Congratulations on completing the 40-day Unshakeable Hope journal! This milestone is a testament to your dedication, faith, and commitment to growing closer to God. Over the past 40 days, you have journeyed through scriptures and reflections penned by our staff and leaders, all designed to strengthen your hope and anchor your soul to Christ.

I want to encourage you to continue your daily Bible reading and H.E.A.R. journaling. The H.E.A.R. method—Highlight, Explain, Apply, Respond—has guided you in engaging with God’s Word more deeply, and it is a powerful tool to keep your spiritual momentum going. Each day presents a new opportunity to hear from God, to let His Word speak into your life, and to be transformed by its truth.

God is good,

Pastor Jon

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