

SMALL GROUP / STUDY GUIDE

Lord of Your Heart — 1 Peter 3:13–22

SCRIPTURE

Read 1 Peter 3:13–22. Also read Hebrews 10:11–14 and 1 Corinthians 15:24–26 as you consider Christ's completed sacrifice and His present reign.

KEY TRUTH

The Savior who suffered for us now reigns over everything we fear. We can trust Him enough to obey Him.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

(What does the passage say?)

- What does Peter say about suffering for doing what is right in verses 13–14?
- What does Peter tell believers not to fear, and what does he call them to do instead?
- According to verse 15, what should believers always be ready to explain?
- What attitudes should accompany our answer? How does verse 16 connect our conduct with our witness?
- What does verse 18 tell us about Christ's suffering, whom He suffered for, and His purpose?
- What connections does Peter make between Noah, the flood, baptism, and Jesus' resurrection in verses 19–21?
- Where is Jesus now, according to verse 22? What has been subjected to Him?

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

(What does the passage mean?)

- What does it mean to set Christ apart as Lord in our hearts? How does this address the fear described in verse 14?
- How can believers be blessed while still experiencing the pain of unjust suffering?
- Why might faithful conduct during hardship cause someone to ask about our hope?
- How is explaining our hope different from trying to win an argument? Why do gentleness, respect, and a good conscience matter?
- Although Christians interpret some details of verses 19–21 differently, what do these verses emphasize about God's deliverance and Jesus' resurrection?
- What does being at God's right hand communicate about Jesus' honor and authority?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

(What does this mean for us?)

- When has doing the right thing cost you approval, comfort, an opportunity, or a relationship? What helped you remain faithful?

- Which most often competes with Jesus for the final say in your life: work, family approval, personal goals, other people's opinions, control, security, or your desires?
- How can you recognize when a good gift has become more important to you than obedience to Christ?
- If someone asked, "How are you getting through this?" how would you explain your hope in ordinary words?
- When discussing your faith, do your tone and conduct reflect the gentleness and respect Peter describes?
- How does Jesus' love, demonstrated through His suffering for you, help you trust His authority?
- What would change in a situation you currently fear if you remembered that Jesus already reigns?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Take a moment and ask:

- Whose approval am I afraid to lose?
- What am I trying to control that I need to entrust to Jesus?
- Have I allowed "I want this" or "I can't risk losing this" to override what Jesus says?
- Is there an act of obedience I keep postponing because of what it might cost?
- Can I say, "I want this, but I want to be faithful to You more"?
- Does the way I explain my faith reflect the character of Christ?
- Am I looking to my circumstances or to the risen Jesus as the foundation of my hope?
- Since Jesus already reigns over everything I fear, will I trust Him enough to obey Him?

PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

Identify one area where fear, approval, control, security, or personal desire has been getting the final say. You do not need to share private details with the group.

Each day, pray: "Jesus, You are Lord. You know what I fear and what I want. Help me trust Your love and authority enough to obey You."

Choose one concrete step of obedience: tell the truth, apologize, stop compromising to gain approval, respond gently to criticism, practice generosity, or follow through on something you know Jesus has called you to do.

Also write a brief explanation of your hope in three or four ordinary sentences. Include what Jesus has done through His death and resurrection and why that gives you confidence about the future. Practice sharing it with someone in your group.

Do not make your obedience dependent on an easy outcome or someone else's response.

Remind yourself each day:

"The Savior who suffered for us now reigns over everything we fear."

PRAYER

Thank Jesus for suffering for our sins, rising from the dead, and bringing us to God. Praise Him as the reigning Lord over every authority and power. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal anything competing for His rightful place in our hearts. Pray for courage to obey when faithfulness is costly, confidence in His love when circumstances remain difficult, and gentleness and respect when explaining our hope. Entrust your fears and future to Him, and ask that others would see Jesus through the way you live.