

Peoples Church: Small Group Questions
Sanctuary – Hope for Refugees
April 23, 2017
Speaker: Pastor Dale Oquist

LOOKING BACK: 1 Peter 1:1-3

The author of this book, Peter, was selected and trained by Jesus for three years. In the process, he becomes one of Jesus' closest friends. He's the only person, other than Jesus, to walk on water! He saw miracles and he watched as Jesus interacted with people.

In this book, he's writing to both the Church then and the Church now. He uses the term "exiles" frequently. They are elect, but they are also exiles (pilgrims, sojourners, foreigners, aliens, strangers). He doesn't say they are like exiles. This is not a metaphor—he is using this term to describe the reality of their situation.

Peter continually stresses that we, as believers and exiles, should never be at home in this world. We are the refugees in this world and if you make this world your home, you will continually chase joy and peace and never find it. The moment we become believers, we go from being a citizen of Earth to a citizen of heaven (James 4:4).

1. Do you ever feel like, while you're a citizen of heaven, you're trying to impress people in the world? If so, what causes you to fall into this trap?

2. What does the phrase, "You are not a body that has a spirit, you are a spirit that happens to have a body" mean?

DIGGING DEEPER: The hope of refugees

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power, are being guarded through faith for a salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Peter writes in these verses about God's "great mercy". He has given us more mercy than we will ever need. He has also given us "new birth," which means "begotten again". Because of that word, we have the same status with God the Father, as Jesus does.

The resurrection proves that the sin that killed Jesus can no longer kill again! We are now part of the immortal, royal family of God.

3. Do you ever feel like a stepchild of God, rather than an adopted son or daughter? What makes you feel this way? What hope can you find in these verses?

TAKING IT HOME: The chosen generation

"Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things" (1 Peter 1:10-12).

As great as the prophets were, they longed and searched, but realized they couldn't experience this grace; that this would be a message to another generation. This was for us, not for them. Elijah, Moses, angels, not even they have experienced what we can experience.

4. What does Peter mean by the phrase “the grace that has come to you”? Why do you think the prophets longed for it and searched for it “with the greatest care”?