

following Jesus in uncertain times

What is the series about?

You only have to watch the news for five minutes to know that we live in very uncertain times. In every arena from politics to economics things are far from stable. With this cultural backdrop, the Bible reminds us that Jesus brings certainty in uncertain situations. In this series we unpack what it looks like to follow Jesus in uncertain times.

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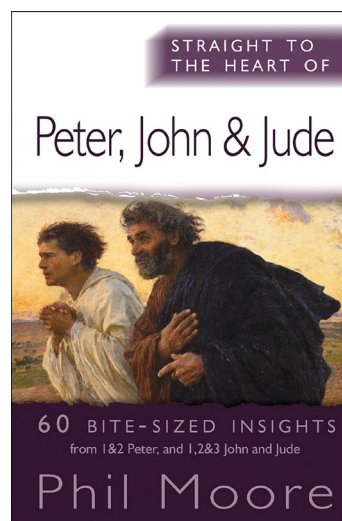
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Recommended Reading

Straight to the Heart of:

Peter, John & Jude

Phil Moore



Title: **Accusations, insults and our response**

Speaker: Paul Hatton (City West)

Bible Ref: 1 Peter 3:13-17

Overview

Obeying Jesus leads to suffering: Called evildoers (2:12/2:15) accused of being disloyal to government, not caring about society (2:15). Abuse from authority (2:18).

When accused and insulted we can be tempted to respond:

1. **Attack - unleashing our tongue**

Antidote = Meditate on the sufferings of Christ (2:22-23)

2. **Retreat – Fear people**

Antidote = Fear God (3:14-15)

Jesus suffered to bring us back to God (3:18). His death & resurrection is linked to Noah's life and to a believer's water baptism which is uniting together with Jesus' death & resurrection.

Questions to help your group **understand** the truth preached

On Sundays we hear God's word preached and as we listen well we trust that God is changing us in the moment. Use these questions to further explore the truth that was taught.

1. What were Peter's readers facing from the world? (2:12-18)
2. What does Peter tell us to do in 3:10 and not to do in 3:14-15?
3. With what type of character does Peter tell us to speak? (3:15-16)

Questions to help your group **apply** the truth preached

When applied, God's Word will enable us to love God and to love others. These questions will help your group apply the truth understood in a way that leads to transformed lives.

1. In relation to keeping our tongue from evil, how can we practically meditate on the sufferings of Christ?
2. What does it mean to fear God rather than people?
3. What does it look like to speak with gentles and respect to people who don't know God?

Questions to help your group **dig deeper**

Having understood the truth preached, and explored how it can be applied to your lives why not dig a little deeper and ask your group the following questions:

1. What is Peter talking about in relation to imprison spirits and Noah? 3:18-22

See additional notes overleaf.

Notes about verses 18-22

- Martin Luther *"This is a strange text and certainly a more obscure passage than any other passage in the New Testament. I still do not know for sure what the apostle meant."*
- The story of Noah was prominent in the culture Peter was speaking into. Noah's ark ended up in present-day Turkey, the same place that Peter's readers were living. Peter connects the story of Noah to the story of Jesus.
- **A reminder of Noah's story:** *"Everyone everywhere had forgotten about God and were only doing bad things all the time. God's heart was filled with pain when he saw what had happened to the world he loved. Everywhere was disease and death and destruction - all the things God hates most. Noah, God said, Things have gone wrong. People have filled my world with hate instead of love. They are destroying themselves, and each other, and my world. I must stop them. We'll build an ark."*

So Noah built an ark, and by doing this, he proclaimed condemnation to those who had forgotten God and turned away from him.
- In the same way that Noah makes this proclamation, Jesus is described as 'proclaiming to the spirits in prison'. There are three views to consider:
 1. That Jesus descended into hell as the Apostles Creed says. Not a view widely accepted now.
 2. That it was the Spirit of Jesus speaking through Noah
 3. That after rising again from the dead, Jesus' victory over Satan, sin and death was proclaimed to all those who had chosen in the past to turn from God.