

Connect Group Discussion Guide – 7/2/2023

1 Peter 1 - The Life and Letters of Peter

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvR0S5fB8AzraGYts4eQfg> (Posted on Monday)

Audio Only: On Spotify or Apple Podcasts: Connection Point Podcast

Opening discussion: What's your biggest wish today?

Highlights

- Peter's journey in seven steps:
 - Fishing
 - Calling (follow me)
 - Discipleship (who do you say I am?)
 - Unrest (Do you love me?)
 - Pastoral Ministry (Acts 1-12)
 - Later Ministry (1 & 2 Peter) Peter is in his 60's
 - Death
- Peter's letters are like he's writing to his younger self! What do I want to tell my 30 year olds self about Jesus that I know and understand now?
- **1 Peter 1:1-2** You're part of the family and we're together even though we're all over the place
 - He's writing to predominately gentile Christians to encourage them
 - It's not easy being a Christian in the Roman Empire
- **1 Peter 1:3** LIVING HOPE
 - We say "hope" a lot, but usually mean wishful thinking
 - When we call wishful thinking hope, it's confusing because it does not mean the same as hope in Christ.
 - Wishing leads to disappointment
 - Wishing leads to disappointment in God
 - When what we've wished for doesn't happen we question "is there even a God?" "is there a God who hears me but doesn't care?" "is there a God who is punishing me."
 - Hope is the EXPECTATION of something good in the future
 - Hope in Jesus is expecting God to do the good HE said He will
 - We can trust in Him with our future
 - **Have you ever questioned God after wishful thinking didn't happen? Describe in your own words the difference between HOPE and wishful thinking.**
- **1 Peter 1:3-4** "...through the resurrection..." Jesus is ALIVE. Our hope is in His life – what's to come – the future – is not in His death or burial (the past). Our hope is in His resurrection and His return
 - Our hope is in the future – if Jesus is not alive, none of this matters. **What does this mean to you.**
- **1 Peter 1:6-7** proven = refined
 - God doesn't put us through trials to prove your faith; trials happen and you have a choice how you respond.
 - We get refined like gold, but gold will perish (die; go away); we won't when we put our hope in the Living Jesus.
 - **Tell about a trial in which you have been refined.**
- **1 Peter 1:8-9** We CHOOSE to follow and love even though we can't see Him. **Have you made that choice?**
- **1 Peter 1:13** "set your hope..." you have to make a decision. You can choose hope.
- **1 Peter 1:14-15** "children..." we are born again and have a new family

- We are striving to be something that is not natural: to be like Jesus.
- Holiness is a journey
 - Our hope in Christ should lead us to live more like Him
- **1 Peter 1:17** impartially – God sees us all the same. **Do you believe this. Why or why not?**
 - Foreigners – see the world differently from citizens; a foreigner doesn't look or sound like everyone else.
 - We are citizens of Heaven when we say “yes” to Jesus, so we are foreigners here.
 - **Do you see the world differently? How? If not, what needs to change?**
- The priorities of an Everyday Disciple are different. We reject what the world sees as success.
- **What are you chasing?** When you put your hope in Jesus you get to chase only one thing
- **1 Peter 1:18-20** Jesus existed before gold and silver were created and gold and silver will eventually go away. Jesus will not.
- **Jesus's value is greater than _____” What do you fill in the blank with? (You can't use the word “everything!!!!!!”)**
- **1 Peter 1:21** Put your faith and trust (your hope) in Jesus that will never perish.

How do you put your hope in Jesus? (**Discuss all three of these with your group**)

- Shift your focus. Move from problems to purpose.
 - Your purpose – Love God, love others.
- Change your prayers. Spend more time honoring than asking.
 - “Hey God! I love you.” That's all! **How can you do this? What does it sound like?**
- Let others in. Your faith is meant to personal not private.
 - Your relationship and journey with Jesus is YOURS. But it's meant to be shared. That's how you and others grow in that relationship.
 - You're not meant to do this alone.

If your hope is placed in anything other than Jesus (money, success, relationship, yourself) IT WILL DIE.

JESUS IS OUR LIVING HOPE