



BIBLE TEACHING GUIDE

Hunger for Holiness

**LIVING PURE IN AN
IMPURE WORLD**

A STUDY OF 1 PETER

**Chris Curran * Craig West
Lon Graham * David Strawn
Chad Chaddick * Emily Martin
Bill Miller * Bob Moore**



**GC2
PRESS**

Dallas, Texas

Hunger for Holiness: Living Pure in An Impure World
Connect 360 Bible Teaching Guide

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Production, Cover Design, and Printing: Randall House

First edition: September 2022

ISBN - 978-1-948618-72-4

How to Make the Best Use of This *Teaching Guide*

Leading a class in studying the Bible is a sacred trust. This *Teaching Guide* has been prepared to help you as you give your best to this important task.

In each lesson, you will find first “Bible Comments” for teachers, to aid you in your study and preparation. The three sections of “Bible Comments” are “Understanding the Context,” “Interpreting the Scriptures,” and “Focusing on the Meaning.” “Understanding the Context” provides a summary overview of the entire background passage that also sets the passage in the context of the Bible book being studied. “Interpreting the Scriptures” provides verse-by-verse comments on the focal passage. “Focusing on the Meaning” offers help with the meaning and application of the focal text.

The second main part of each lesson is “Teaching Plans.” You’ll find two complete teaching plans in this section. The first is called the “Discovery Plan,” which emphasizes discovery learning techniques; and the second is called the “Discussion Plan,” which provides questions and suggestions for dialogue about the Scriptures. Choose the plan that best fits your class and your style of teaching. You may also use and adapt ideas from both. Each plan is intended to be practical, helpful, and immediately useful as you prepare to teach.

The major headings in each teaching plan are intended to help you sequence how you teach to follow the flow of how people tend to learn. The first major heading, “Connect With Life,” provides ideas that will help you begin the class session where your class is and draw your class into the study. The second major heading, “Guide Bible Study,” offers suggestions for helping your class engage the Scriptures actively and develop a greater understanding of this portion of the Bible’s message. The third major heading, “Encourage Application,” is meant to help participants focus on how to respond with their lives to this message.

As you begin the study with your class, be sure to find a way to help your class know the date on which each lesson will be studied. You might use one or more of the following methods:

- In the first session of the study, briefly overview the study by identifying for your class the date on which each lesson will be studied. Lead your class to write the date in the table of contents in their Study Guides and on the first page of each lesson.
- Make and post a chart that indicates the date on which each lesson will be studied.
- If all of your class has e-mail, send them an e-mail with the dates the lessons will be studied.
- Provide a bookmark with the lesson dates. You may want to include information about your church and then use the bookmark as an outreach tool, too. A model for a bookmark can be downloaded from www.gc2press.org under the “Teacher Helps” tab.
- Develop a sticker with the lesson dates, and place it on the table of contents or on the back cover.

Here are some steps you can take to help you prepare well to teach each lesson and save time in doing so:

1. Start early in the week before your class meets.
2. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers meet for lesson overview and preparation, plan to participate. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers don’t have this planning time now, look for ways to begin. You, your fellow teachers, and your church will benefit from this mutual encouragement and preparation.
3. Overview the study in the *Study Guide*. Look at the table of contents and see where this lesson fits in the overall study. Then read or review the study introduction to the book that is being studied.
4. Consider carefully the suggested Main Idea, Question to Explore, and Teaching Aim. These can help you discover the main thrust of this particular lesson.
5. Use your Bible to read and consider prayerfully the Scripture passages for the lesson. Using your Bible in your study and in the class session can provide a positive model to class members to use their own Bibles

and give more attention to Bible study themselves. (Each writer of the Bible comments in both the *Teaching Guide* and the *Study Guide* has chosen a favorite translation. You're free to use the Bible translation you prefer and compare it with the translations chosen, of course.)

6. After reading all the Scripture passages in your Bible, then read the Bible comments in the *Study Guide*. The Bible comments are intended to be an aid to your study of the Bible. Read also the small articles—"sidebars"—in each lesson. They are intended to provide additional, enrichment information and inspiration and to encourage thought and application. Try to answer for yourself the questions included in each lesson. They're intended to encourage further thought and application, and you can also use them in the class session itself. Continue your Bible study with the aid of the Bible comments included in this *Teaching Guide*.
7. Review the "Teaching Plans" in this *Teaching Guide*. Consider how these suggestions would help you teach this Bible passage in your class to accomplish the teaching aim.
8. Consider prayerfully the needs of your class and think about how to teach so you can help your class learn best.
9. Develop and follow a lesson plan based on the suggestions in this *Teaching Guide*, with alterations as needed for your class.
10. Enjoy leading your class in discovering the meaning of the Scripture passages and in applying these passages to their lives.

Teaching Resource Items. These items are available for download for use in your class. These are available for \$10 at www.gc2press.org. Watch for them in the teaching plans for each lesson. These items are selected from the teaching plans. They are provided online to make lesson preparation easier for handouts and similar items. Permission is granted to download these teaching resource items, print them out, and copy them as needed for all classes within your church.

Premium Commentary. Plan to get the additional in-depth Bible Study comments available online. Visit our website, call 1-866-249-1799, or email gc2press@txb.org to order the *Premium Commentary*. It is available for \$20 in electronic format (PDF) from our website. Permission is granted to download this commentary, print it, and copy them as needed for all classes within your church.

Writers for this *Teaching Guide*

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Lon Graham wrote the Bible Comments for lessons five through seven. Lon is married to Amy, and they have four wonderful children together. He is the pastor of The Woods Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. In addition, he has served churches in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Washington state. Dr. Graham has degrees and certificates from Union University, Liberty University, University of Manchester, and Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam.

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Bill Miller wrote the Bible Comments for lessons eleven through thirteen.

Since 1973, William Miller pastored three Baptist churches in Missouri. He retired in 2017 after completing 31 years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Farmington, Missouri. He and his wife, Mary Beth, live in Fayetteville, Arkansas, close to their two sons, daughters-in-law, and five grandchildren. They are members of First Baptist Church in Fayetteville. Bill was an officer and executive board member of the Missouri Baptist Convention and served as a trustee for Southwest Baptist and Missouri Baptist Universities. He is a 1976 and 1982 graduate of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Bob Moore wrote the Teaching Plans for lessons eleven through thirteen.

Dr. Moore is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.A. in Religious Education) and Dallas Baptist University (Ph.D. in Leadership Studies). He served Texas Baptist churches as a minister of education for 22 years after a lengthy career in the corporate world. Bob and his wife, Patsy,

have been married for over 50 years and have two grown children and six grandchildren. They reside in Seguin, Texas, and are members of First Baptist Church where they co-teach a young adult Sunday School class. Bob also serves as the Education Consultant for FBC.

Hunger for Holiness

Living Pure in An Impure World

A Study of 1 Peter

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Introduction to GC2 Press

We've Changed Our Name!

BWP **has now become GC2 Press®**. **GC2** is a movement of God's people to share Christ and show love. Our driving passion is to follow the Lord's call to fulfill the Great Commission "to share Christ" and the Great Commandment "to show love." The Great Commission and the Great Commandment form the two "GCs," or **GC2**.

GC2 Press® will continue to publish the undated **CONNECT 360** quarterly Bible study curriculum. **Connect 360** has gained a reputation for solid biblical teaching and will continue to be published as an undated quarterly study available in book form and/or digital downloads. **Connect 360** is currently being distributed in 38 states and 16 countries and has been translated into seven different languages.

For more information, please go to our website at www.gc2press.org.



lesson 1

Hope That Lives

MAIN IDEA

Because of Jesus we have help for today and hope for tomorrow.

QUESTION TO EXPLORE

Is my faith the real thing?

TEACHING AIM

To lead adults to understand that when the Bible uses the word hope, it is speaking of a certainty, not a possibility



Bible Comments

Understanding the Context

God formed a new community of people through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These people formed local communities in the geographical location of where they dwelled. Living out their faith constantly caused friction within the secular culture of the Roman Empire in the first century. When the church gathered, they were always asking pertinent questions. How do we live as the people of God in a culture that is foreign to God's ways? What is our response during trials and tribulations?

First Peter was a letter written by one of the twelve disciples. In 5:13, Peter indicated that he penned the letter in Babylon. There is much debate of the exact location. The letter was written toward the end of Peter's life, and it is believed Peter spent his last days in Rome; therefore, many choose Rome as the place the letter was written (in Revelation, Rome is referred to as Babylon). Peter wrote this letter to a collection of churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). The letter encouraged this new community of Christ followers to endure suffering, trials, and tribulations, because the salvation of God through Jesus Christ guaranteed their future. Peter desired for the church to know that any suffering in this life is temporary. Therefore, a person should live a life of hope grounded in a past event that promises a future reality.

The letter began with a greeting and a blessing to the churches. The greeting and blessing reminded the churches of their position and purpose in Christ. Peter started his letter by informing the readers of their status as the chosen people of God, and the rest of the letter developed how the status of the believer determines a Christ follower's behavior.

Interpreting the Scriptures

The Gift of Being Chosen (1:1-2)

The salutation immediately communicates to the reader who the author and the recipients are. Peter, one of the twelve disciples, an eyewitness to the

events of Jesus' life was writing to a group of churches in Asia Minor. The courier visited each church sharing the words of the apostle.

Three rich theological themes come to the forefront in these two brief verses. First, God's people are chosen. Many Gentiles belonged to the churches in Asia Minor and the idea that not only Jews belonged to the people of God brought great comfort and confidence to many attending these churches. To be "elect" denoted that God is the sole initiator of providing salvation, not anything a person can do for himself or herself. Knowing God chose them allowed the people of God to stand firm and persevere through suffering and persecution. Second, God's chosen people are "exiles." These Christ followers were not exiles because they did not own the right passport or were a refugee in Pontus, Galatia, or any of the other regions. These Christ followers were exiles, because of their faith in Jesus. As the apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 3:20, "our citizenship is in heaven." Peter was acknowledging what these churches knew by experience. Many of these chosen exiles were most likely working-class people without much power or status in the community; however, being chosen as the people of God further differentiated them from their culture. The third theme articulates how and why God's people are chosen. Salvation occurs "through the sanctifying work of the Spirit" with the purpose of being obedient to the way of Jesus who made such living possible. While the first two themes inform the church of what God has done, the third theme tells the church what the Christian's response is.

God Inaugurates and Sustains Our Hope in Christ (1:3-5)

Many of the New Testament letters begin with a thanksgiving; however, 1 Peter starts with a blessing. The blessing is in response to the truth that every Christian has been given a "new birth." Building on the words in the salutation, the "new birth" language emphasizes to the church that just as a baby is born, because of the sole actions of two parents, a child of God is born by the unique act of only God. Nobody can take credit for his or her being born into this world. It was a gift given to them by their parents. In the same way, entering into the family of God with the promise of eternal life is only received as a gift from God, and receiving such a gift prompts a person to worship.

The privilege of this “new birth” manifests itself in the believer’s life in real and practical ways. The believer is given a “living hope.” Rather than living a meaningless, mundane, motionless life, the follower of Christ’s life resonates with purpose, life, and joy. God’s great gift transforms a person’s life right here, right now. As Jesus taught in John 10:10, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full,” Peter taught this new reality to these brand-new church plants. Moreover, “the living hope” continues when this life is over. Not only is today’s life guaranteed, but tomorrow is as well. The Christian has “an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade.” As a parent might sit down with one’s family and open up the books to show what is in store for their future after the parent dies, Christ’s sacrifice on the cross tore the Temple curtain in two, and now we can have full assurance of what comes next and what is waiting for us after we die. The promise of God is not only for the here and now, but the hope of eternal life when this life is over. For a group of people who were experiencing much suffering (see comments in 1:6-7), the future promise sustained them in their present-day trials and tribulations. Lastly, the Christian’s life is lived confidently, because the inheritance is “kept,” guarded by God in Heaven. All that is asked of the Christian is to live by faith, which is the continuous theme of Scriptures (Hebrews 11:13-16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Hope in Suffering? (1:6-7)

Peter’s letter quickly turned from ecstasy to agony. Sufferings, trials, and persecutions were the reality of the early church as they are today. Pain is the common human experience. How are Christians to praise God and live joyful lives in the midst of suffering? First, a joyful life is possible because the sufferings are only temporary. They are only lasting for “a little while” whereas the promised inheritance (eternal life) will last forever. Second, a joyful life is possible, because the Christian’s suffering is actually achieving good in a person’s life. Peter did not claim that the suffering is good, nor did Peter claim that suffering is not painful. Suffering is both but suffering of all types of grief and trials prove that a believer’s faith is genuine. Traveling the road of suffering transforms a person into a more mature Christian. As the

background text in James 1:2-4 instructs, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” A life who has experienced suffering flourishes and will “result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” Therefore, even in the midst of questions that might have no good answers today, a Christian’s hope is that suffering is not purposeless. God is working even in the most painful situations and circumstances. On the day Christ returns, there is a reward for those who lived joyful lives even in the midst trials and tribulations. Living in this reality, a believer can echo the words of the great hymn *It is Well With My Soul*.

The Future Reality in the Present (1:8-9)

Peter who had seen Christ, shared meals with Christ, and watched Christ do miracles was writing to a group of people who had never placed their eyes on Jesus. Yet the Christians in Asia Minor loved Him. The love and belief the churches had for Jesus granted an unimaginable amount of joy even during the times of persecution and suffering. Peter finished this section by reminding the church that the “end result” of being chosen by God and responding in faith is “salvation of your souls.” The idea of a “soul” in the New Testament is not some disembodied spirit floating in the heavens. A person’s soul implies the whole person, which is consistent with the teachings of the promise of a resurrected body in other Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:35-58). The guarantee hopes of having an inheritance of dwelling with God eternally has appeared through the lives of Peter’s readers. There is no turning back. Their present day lives are now being lived considering their future reality.

Focusing on the Meaning

Our culture’s idea of hope and the definition of biblical hope are two different things. A person might say, I hope to win the lottery, or I hope my team wins. Hope for them is nothing but lively fantasy like a little child hoping they get

a certain gift at Christmas. Our hope in Christ is nothing like that hope. Our hope is anchored down in a certain future. When one is in a midst of a rain-storm, one hopes to see a rainbow, not because one wonders if a rainbow will appear, but because when it does appear, the storm will be over and new life from the ground will spring up. This is our Hope.

Let me share a story to illustrate this hope. It was a Tuesday night. I had set my DVR to record my favorite game and headed to the church for a deacon's meeting. I wanted zero updates. I left my phone in the car and went upstairs to do God's business. The meeting went great! We had just finished up with a wonderful prayer time and I was on my way down the stairs when one of the deacons called my name and said, "I just looked at my phone. Your team's game ended" ... and before I could get a word out of my mouth, he tells me the details of the last two minutes and how my team won. I responded, "Uhh, I do my best not to know the ending but thank you for ruining that for me." "RUINING IT," he said, "I beg to differ—knowing the ending can be a huge blessing!" Knowing the certainty that Jesus Christ has defeated death through His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection and having the guarantee that Jesus will return with an inheritance of eternal life for His people allows the Christian to live life today with hope, to live with joy no matter the circumstances, because we are certain of a good tomorrow.

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Teaching Plans

DISCOVERY PLAN

Connect With Life

1. Prior to class, prepare three sheets of paper that contain the following phrases: What They Say, What They Do, How They Walk. Assign a color to each phrase and display them where they can be seen easily. As learners arrive, give them a slip of paper that corresponds with one of the three phrases. Instruct learners to use their respective phrase to discover how a person can tell someone is not from “this neck of the woods.”
2. Once all members arrive, allow time for responses. Once all responses have been shared, direct learners to “Main Idea” of the lesson. Connect this study’s concept of holiness with the hope that is given to empower believers for every aspect of their lives: what they say, what they do, and how they walk.
3. Lead the class in prayer, asking God to give them strength to visibly live in hope in the coming quarter.

Guide Bible Study

4. Have the class members form listening groups with their colored slips of paper. Read 1 Peter 1:1-2 and use “Bible Comments” to give commentary on Peter’s use of “elect” and “alien/sojourner.”
5. Direct the class to the sidebar, “Aliens” in the *Study Guide* and have them read it silently. Assign five class members to read aloud the five Old Testament passages referenced in the sidebar.

6. Ask the class to respond to the following questions:

- Do you ever feel like a stranger in this world? If so, how so? If not, why not?
- Have you experienced empathy in your walk of faith from more mature believers? How so? How, if at all, did that encounter affect your walk of faith?
- How have you been able to show empathy to those whose walk of faith is different from yours? (Note: Following false beliefs is not the intended meaning of *different*; a less mature believer of similar faith/practice is the intent.)

(A copy of this assignment is available in “Teaching Resource Items” for this study at www.gc2press.org.)

7. Read 1 Peter 1:3-5 aloud. Have the class respond to the following questions:

- What makes this hope different from things in which the world hopes?
- Based upon actions and words of Christians to things in the world today, what would unbelievers say about our hope?

Using material from the “Bible Comments,” give a short explanation of “new birth” that inaugurates hope in the believer’s life.

8. Using material in the “Bible Comments” and *Study Guide*, give a short explanation of the importance for believers to live in the tension of the “now” and “not yet” as they live as strangers in this world. (Use Ephesians 2:5-6 as a corresponding passage to help make this point.)

9. Read 1 Peter 1:6-9 and have the class respond to the following prompts:

- Based upon Peter’s comments, how can persecution affect our faith?
- In moments of personal suffering, have you found your faith to be strengthened, challenged, or defeated? (Class members may choose to remain silent.)
- How would you answer the Question to Explore for today’s lesson?

Encourage Application

10. Display the word “SECURITY” for the class. Have groups respond to the following prompts:

- Group 1—What makes you *feel* most secure today?
- Group 2—What are some things we secure in our lives?
- Group 3—Would it be difficult to live a life without security? Why or why not?
- All groups—How does God securing hope for believers compare to our attempts at securing things in our lives? Whose efforts do we rely on more, based upon our actions?

(A copy of this assignment is available in “Teaching Resource Items” for this study at www.gc2press.org.)

11. Prepare a poster to display the following question and responses (or display electronically): Which aspect of hope is most meaningful to you today?

- A permanent hope in a temporary world
- A living hope in a stagnant world
- A secured hope in a fragile world
- An enduring hope through suffering and trials

After a few moments of reflection, have class members share their responses.

12. Close the lesson in prayer, thanking God for the Hope that He has given to us.

DISCUSSION PLAN

Connect With Life

1. Prior to class beginning, provide copies of the lyrics to the hymn “We’re Marching to Zion” (song is in Public Domain and can be copied legally). Provide a sign with the lesson’s “Main Idea” stated on it. As class members arrive, ask them to review the lyrics and compare them with the “Main Idea.” Give class members a few moments of discussion to evaluate whether the song illustrates the “Main Idea.”

(A copy of this assignment is available in “Teaching Resource Items” for this study at www.gc2press.org)

2. Direct the class’s attention to the title for this lesson; have them consider the implications of a life that exemplifies living hope for those whose lives do not. Lead the class in prayer, asking for God to strengthen their faith through His Word.

Guide Bible Study

3. Read 1 Peter 1:1-2, using material from the “Bible Comments” and sidebar, “Aliens,” in the *Study Guide*, to deepen understanding of Peter’s usage of the following terms: Dispersion, foreknowledge, sanctification, exiles/aliens/strangers.
4. Ask the class to respond to these questions:
 - How do you think the listeners in the first century who received this letter would have responded to Peter’s description of their lives?
 - What types of feelings are inspired today by his words: similar or different?
 - How effective are believers today (as a whole) at fulfilling this idea of being “strangers?”

5. Read 1 Peter 1:3-5 and comment upon God's securing this inheritance for His children. Have class members consider the following:

- In this world, a child with a large inheritance can sometimes become lazy. Is there a similar effect when considering a heavenly inheritance? Why or why not?
- Do you view salvation more as a past experience, an ongoing reality, or a future event? Why is that your position?
- What makes the hope of which Peter writes different from the hope the world claims?

(A copy of this assignment is available in "Teaching Resource Items" for this study at www.gc2press.org.)

6. Read 1 Peter 1:6-9. Using material from the *Study Guide*, comment upon the believer's *potential* benefit from suffering, particularly when considering its crucible-like nature. Ask class members:

- How frequently do we rejoice in our trials? Why is this the case?
- What might be the cause of consistent grumpiness in the life of a believer?
- In what sense is our faith greater than gold? (Direct class to the sidebar "Faith Greater Than Gold" in the *Study Guide*, for help in prompting discussion.)

Encourage Application

7. Prior to class, secure an unused charcoal briquette. Using the illustration from the Teaching Resource Items, make a connection between the life of the believer and the charcoal.

(A copy of this assignment is available in "Teaching Resource Items" for this study at www.gc2press.org.)

8. Direct class members to the "Question to Explore" and then ask them the following:

- From Peter's words, what encouragement can we find in times of persecution or trial?
 - How have my actions when facing difficult times reflected my faith (or beliefs)?
 - As a believer, how should knowing that we have an inheritance in Heaven affect our attitude when we face suffering?
9. Prepare a graph from 1 to 10 that has the words "Inexpressible Joy" above it. Ask class members to consider where they would place their joy in life on the scale *at this time*. Then ask them:
- Why did you choose that specific spot?
 - What could make your walk of faith more joyful?
 - How often do you find joy in life associated with circumstances? What might Peter counsel you to do?
10. Close the lesson in prayer, thanking God for His provision, protection, and guidance over our lives.