



The big idea. Peter writes to believers scattered far from the centre of things and, before anything else, tells them who they are: chosen, born again into a living hope, and loved by a Jesus they have never seen. Distance from the centre is not distance from God.

Who this is for. Anyone leading a small group through this passage: a Discord voice channel, a Zoom room, a home group, a youth group. You don't need to be a pastor. Your job is to keep the group in the text and make room for everyone to speak.

Before you meet

- Read 1 Peter 1:1–12 twice this week, once out loud.
- Watch the two moments from Tuesday's session linked below (about 2 minutes each), or the whole replay if you have time.
- Pray for each person by name. In an online group, check that everyone has the link and can unmute.

HEAR in one line each

- **Highlight:** the phrase that stops you.
- **Explain:** what it meant to its first readers.
- **Apply:** not taught; answer what people notice from the text.
- **Respond:** one thing you'll do, and a prayer.

• Open

5 MIN

Welcome everyone and let each person say where they're joining from. In a scattered group, that alone makes the point of the passage. Open in prayer, or ask someone ahead of time to pray.

• Read

5 MIN

Read the passage aloud twice, with two different voices. If your group uses different translations, let them; hearing two wordings helps. Ask people to listen for one phrase that catches them.

H Highlight

10 MIN

Go around: which verse or phrase stood out to you, and why? Don't explain anything yet. Just collect the highlights.

1. Which phrase caught you, and what did you feel when you heard it?
2. Did anyone pick the same verse for a different reason?

Listen for: In the Tuesday session people picked verse 1 ("exiles of the Dispersion"), verse 2 ("sanctified by the Spirit for obedience"), verses 6–7 (rejoicing through trials) and verse 12 ("not serving themselves, but you"). Any of these opens a good conversation.

WATCH Flatcap on verse 8 and choosing to be faithful (39:26–40:15): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujFV1Gd0HN4&t=2366s>

E Explain

10 MIN

Now ask what it meant to the people who first read it. Use the background below only as much as the group needs; this isn't a lecture.

- "The Dispersion" (diaspora) was the word for God's people living scattered outside their homeland. Peter applies it to believers spread across five Roman provinces in what is now Turkey: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.
- Peter likely wrote from Rome ("Babylon" in 5:13), with the letter carried by Silvanus (5:12), most likely in the 60s AD. Many readers were probably Gentile believers, people who had left "the empty way of life you inherited from your forefathers" (1:18).
- These were not big city churches. They were small groups meeting in homes, often misunderstood by their neighbours. Peter opens by calling them "the elect": chosen, not forgotten.
- Verse 3 grounds their hope in the resurrection. Verse 7 compares tested faith to gold refined by fire. Verses 10–12 say the prophets served people they would never meet, and that this news is something "even angels long to look into."

1. What would it have felt like to be called "chosen" while living as an exile?
2. Why does Peter put the living hope (v. 3) before the trials (v. 6)?

WATCH Jeff Reed on who Peter was writing to (32:52–33:48): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujFV1Gd0HN4&t=1972s>

A Apply

15 MIN

Don't teach the application. People will start to say what they notice for their own lives. When they do, respond by taking it back to the passage: "Where do you see that in these verses?" Read that verse again together and let Scripture confirm, sharpen or gently correct it. The text does the work, not the leader.

R Respond

10 MIN

Ask each person: what is God asking you to do with this? Keep it to one concrete thing for this week. Then pray for each other's responses, briefly and by name.

1. What is one thing you'll do this week because of this passage?
2. Who in the group will check in with you about it?

The passage

BSB

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the elect who are exiles of the Dispersion throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by His blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance. ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in various trials ⁷ so that the proven character of your faith

—more precious than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ now that you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who foretold the grace to come to you searched and investigated carefully, ¹¹ trying to determine the time and setting to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, when they foretold the things now announced by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Going deeper

Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." **John 20:29 (BSB)**

Jesus blesses "those who have not seen and yet have believed": the people 1 Peter 1:8 describes.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. **James 1:2-3 (BSB)**

Another letter to the scattered, with the same link between trials and tested faith.

Notes for the leader

- Silence is fine. Count to ten before you fill it.
- In an online group, call on people by name, gently. Chat-only voices count: read their typed answers aloud.
- If someone shares something heavy, like grief, a crisis or thoughts of self-harm, pause the study and care for the person first. If anyone is in danger, contact local emergency services. In the US you can call or text 988. Outside the US, <https://findahelpline.com> lists local lines.
- You don't have to have the answers. "Let's look at the text together" is always a good reply.

Next week. 1 Peter 1:13–25, Peter's first "therefore", with a call to set our hope fully on God's grace and a word that endures. Live on Twitch, Tuesday at 5:00 PM ET.

Study: <https://thechurch.digital/scattered/1-peter-1-1-12/> · Daily devotional: <https://thechurch.digital/devo>

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain · [theChurch.digital](https://thechurch.digital)