

# *THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST*

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

## **1 & 2 PETER LESSON 2 (1 Peter, Chapters 3-5)**

### **Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:**

*THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.* Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Ben Bailey.

“If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter” (1 Pet. 4:16). Welcome to our study of the Book of 1 Peter. In this second lesson on chapters 3-5, we are going to notice our responsibility as Christians toward others. In chapters 3-5 Peter shows by inspiration that the child of God has a responsibility to various other people, as well as to himself and to God. Peter begins in 1 Peter 3:1 by showing a Christian mate’s responsibility toward an unbelieving mate. What if I’m a child of God and I’m married and have a wife (or what if someone has a husband) who is not a Christian? How do we win such people to the Lord? We first have to try to teach that person the Word. In 1 Peter 3:1 we read, “Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives.” Let’s realize that first we must try to teach an unbelieving mate. It is evident in the context that someone had tried to teach this man the Word. He was not won over by it. But someone had tried to teach him. If we are going to win lost people to Christ, we must teach them the Gospel. This is what Jesus told us to do in Matthew 28:18 when He said, “Go in to all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” At the preaching of that Word, the individual who hears it is responsible for obedience to it. Some people mentioned in the New Testament obeyed, and some did not. In Mark 10 Jesus spoke very plainly to the rich young ruler who went away sorrowful because he had great riches. Yet in Acts 8 Philip preached the Gospel to the people of Samaria (Simon included), and they obeyed the Gospel. Some may be won by the Word, whereas some people’s hearts are not yet ready. In the context of 1 Peter 3 we see a Christian woman who has been taught the Word, but he has not obeyed it. What, then, is her responsibility to her husband? How does the Christian mate win a non-believing mate to the Lord? Once the Word has been rejected, there is still an avenue by which an unbelieving mate can be won to Jesus. At every opportunity the believing mate needs to encourage and teach his unbelieving mate. No Christian should ever give up trying to teach the Word. But what else can a person do if his or her mate’s heart is hardened against the Word? According to 1 Peter 3:2-6, the wife may be able to win her husband by her Christian conduct.

“Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel; rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.”

How can a person win an unbelieving mate once that person has tried to teach him the Word? That mate must be won over by Christian character. This means that the believer must be the type of Christian the non-believer needs to see. If a person’s mate is not a Christian, that person needs to be an example to the unbeliever at every opportunity in order to show the unbeliever what a Christian is. The Christian needs to have chaste and

reverent conduct—a conduct that is godly, that shows reverence for holy things, and that represents the teaching of the Bible. The Christian needs to have reverence for God in every area. It is sad that, at times, a Christian tries to convert a mate because the Christian wants his mate to learn the Gospel and become a child of God. Yet in the home the unbelieving mate may see the believing mate do things (or act in ways) that are not right. Perhaps the Christian's dress is not what it ought to be according to Scripture. If a person is going to win his mate to the Lord, then he must be, in every area of life, an example of what a Christian is. The Christian cannot focus on physical appearance or worldliness. The stress must not be on adorning the body. Rather, the stress must be on the hidden, inner beauty of the heart (that is, what's on the inside). The unbelieving mate needs to see what Christianity has done for the Christian's life, and how it has changed who that person is. Plus, the Christian needs to be a submissive mate. The Christian must submit to the teaching of God on the home, even if the mate is not a Christian. I understand that a person must submit "in the Lord." As the husband is doing things that are in accordance with God's teaching, then the wife's responsibility is to be submissive. But if a husband says, "I am just going to leave the church, and you are going to go with me," submission does not go that far. A wife must submit to her husband (even though he is not a Christian) when he does things that are right in the sight of God. The wife must be focused on the inner person, and must be the best example of what a Christian is. Here is what that means. In your speech, do not let ungodly language ever pass your lips. Control your anger. Dress in a modest and appropriate way. Every time the doors of the church building doors are open—regardless of whether or not it is easy—you make it your aim to be there. Study your Bible at home. Let your husband see you doing that. Be happy, cheerful, and joyful—as a Christian ought to be. That is how a Christian can win a mate who is not a child of God and who will not listen to the Word.

Husbands are to be understanding with their wives, according to 1 Peter 3:7. "Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered." In marriage, the wife is to submit to her husband, who is the head of the home. He is the decision maker, and according to what the Bible says, he is to be the head of the home. There is no doubt about that. But how is he to relate to everyone in the family? Toward the wife, he is to be understanding. Husbands have not been placed in the home as dictators whose will and wishes must be obeyed regardless of what anyone else thinks or feels. Husbands are to be understanding (Eph. 5:21-31). Husbands, as the heads of the home, are to love their wives as themselves. They are to be willing to give their lives for their wives. They are to be the providers and protectors of the home. This means that they must take into consideration what others think. How important is all of this? Is accepting responsibility in the home really necessary in order to be a faithful Christian? Verse 7 says that it is. The failure to be a good, understanding husband (or the failure to be a good, submissive example as a wife) will cause you to be severed from your relationship to God. Verse 7 says that if husbands are not understanding with their wives, even their prayers are hindered. This is a matter of right and wrong, and of sin and righteousness. If we are not as understanding as we ought to be, then we have severed our relationship with God. Psalm 66:18 teaches that it has to be that way since God cannot hear the prayer of someone who remains in sin. God's ears are closed to such a person. Thus, we must have the proper relationship in the home. We must ask ourselves as husbands, "Are we being as understanding as we can be, or do we sometimes fly off the handle when things do not go our way?" If people do not like things the way we like them, do we get angry and take it out on everyone in the home? As wives, are you being submissive to your husbands, just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him "Lord"? We are not talking about husbands being dic-

tators. But there is a divine arrangement for the home. God has placed the man as the head of the home, and wives are to be submissive to their own husbands. Do you think that wives are to take the lead because they have better ideas or ways? That is an attitude that is not in accord with the teaching of the Bible. Yes, husbands and wives must work together. Yes, you are heirs of the grace of life together. A wife is a helpmate for him. But wives must see and follow the divine arrangement.

In 1 Peter 3 Peter also talks about the relationship Christians have to lost people in the world. What is to be our relationship toward those who are outside of Christ? We are to "be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." We are to sanctify God in our hearts. We are to set Him apart. As a result, we are ready to tell others about Jesus. That is our responsibility to the lost. To be ready, we must get ready. In 2 Timothy 2:15 we are told to study to show ourselves approved unto God. We must search the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). How I love the example of Ezra, who "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, to do it, and to teach its statutes in all Israel" (Ez. 7:10). Our responsibility is to be ready to tell others about the Gospel because of the reason of the hope that is within us (yet with meekness and fear). Can you tell people in the world why you have hope? Can you tell them how they can have hope? We have hope because of what Jesus did for us at Calvary. Because He gave His life as a sacrifice, we can live through Him. Can you tell people how to get that hope? I'm not talking about being ready for everything. I'm not talking about being ready to tell someone about the baptism of the dead, the seventy weeks of Daniel, or the four horsemen of Revelation. That is not the context here. You are to be ready "to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you." If someone asks, "Why is your life so happy; what kind of hope do you have?," could you tell that person about the hope that Jesus provides and about the plan of salvation? If you cannot, then you need to be reminded about the need to get ready to tell others about the Gospel. And you desperately need to study your Bible.

Just like the eight souls on Noah's ark were saved by the water of the Flood, so men and women today are saved by the waters of baptism. Peter discusses the example of Noah. As the water lifted up the ark and the people inside it found safety, so today men and women are saved through baptism. At times I talk to people who say, "Yes, baptism is something that a person ought to do. But it's something you do **after** you are saved. A person is saved, and then needs to be identified by being baptized sometime later." That is **not** what the Bible says about Baptism. And you will not find a clearer verse on this matter than 1 Peter 3:21. If someone says, "Show me a verse in the Bible that says 'baptism saves,' and I'll be baptized," here it is. Peter said, "There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." We need to realize our responsibility toward baptism. We must do what God says in regard to baptism in order to be saved. Was water essential for the salvation of the people in Noah's ark? Yes it was. The water lifted the ark as the rest of world died, and thus saved those people in the ark. Baptism does now also save us. How could God make it any clearer? A person cannot be saved until he obeys God in baptism. Baptism is not something that occurs on the past side of salvation. It is something that a person must do in the present in order to be saved. The Bible teaches this in multiple passages. In Acts 2:37 on the Day of Pentecost when the Jews cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?," the answer was, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Baptism is the point at time in which sins are remitted. Acts 22:16 teaches this. In Acts 9:6 to go into the city of Damascus where he would be told what he needed to do. In Acts 22:16 when Ananias came to Saul, he said, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins,

calling on the name of the Lord.” At what point in time during the salvation process are sins washed away? Sin separates us from God. So, if we can know that point in time, we can know exactly when salvation occurs. “Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins.” Jesus said it plainly. In Mark 16:16 He said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” Jesus said that two conditions—belief and baptism—are essential to salvation. Someone might ask, “Are you saying that a person cannot go to Heaven without being baptized?” That is what Jesus said. In John 3:5 Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” A person cannot be a part of God’s kingdom here, and a part of the kingdom that is going to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24), unless he obeys what God has said concerning baptism. I want you to see the essentiality of it today. In Ephesians 1:3 the Bible says that all spiritual blessings are found only “in Christ.” One of those blessings, according to 2 Timothy 2:10-12, is salvation. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. Salvation is in Christ. We therefore have to be in Christ to be saved. How does a person get “into Christ”? The Bible says there is only one way. Galatians 3:27 says, “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” If salvation is in Christ, if all spiritual blessings are in Christ, and if the only way that a person can get into Christ is by baptism, how dare we say that baptism is not important to God or that it is not essential to salvation?! God said it is. A person cannot be right before God until he or she has obeyed and been baptized. Let me make this as plain and clear as I can. This means that if someone taught you that baptism is something good to do, and you did it after you thought you were saved, you still are not saved. You are lost in sin, and have not yet obeyed God’s will. You might say, “Well, I was baptized.” But you had no clue as to why, and it wasn’t for a biblical reason. In John 8:32 Jesus said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” You may have gotten wet, but you did not know what God taught about baptism. That act, then, had no effect on your soul because you did it for reasons that were not right according to the Scriptures. We must understand our relationship toward baptism.

We also must understand that Christians have a responsibility regarding suffering. The Bible says that Christians **will** suffer persecution. In 1 Peter 4:1 Peter clearly says that we will have to face difficulty and persecution because of our beliefs. “Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” Christ suffered in the flesh. We are to arm ourselves with that same mind. What mind? It is the mind that understands that we will have to suffer in this life. Suffering is something that we all going to have to face. If we are not suffering, then according to the Bible we are not being faithful. “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). Paul had been stoned and left for dead. He later wrote, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). Peter said in 1 Peter 2:21 that we are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. What footsteps are those? They are the footsteps of suffering, being reviled, and being slandered, yet not sinning in return. James 1:2 says that suffering is not a bad thing. “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials.” We will have to suffer if we are going to be faithful to Jesus.

Today, what is our responsibility toward the immoral practices of this world? Christians cannot get involved in such things. In 1 Peter 4:3 Peter said, “We have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.” Our responsibility toward those things as Christians is to stay away from them. We have spent enough time in such things. So, let’s get out of them. Peter used the word “lewdness,” which is the sexual excess that often results in indecent behavior that is immodest, and sexually tempting. Do-

ing things that are immoral and ungodly with your body is against God's will. Lust is a basic lack of self-control over the flesh. The lust of the flesh can relate to sexual things, gluttony, alcohol, tobacco, or other things of that nature. We must stay away from those things. Drunkenness is excessive drinking and being habitually intoxicated. Christians should not want to be involved in any way with alcohol. Proverbs 20:1 says that "wine is a mocker, and strong drink is a brawler; whoever is led astray by it is not wise." Revelry, drinking parties, and such things are not things with which Christians should have any type of relationship. Rather, we are to have a proper relationship with the Word of God. In 1 Peter 4:11 Peter wrote, "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God." Our responsibility toward the Word of God is to live our lives so that they say what the Bible says. In 2 Timothy 4:2 we see that we are to preach the Word. God told Jonah to preach what He had told him. That is what we need today. We need more men who will take up the banner of Titus 2:1 ("As for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine"). As we speak what God's Word says, we need to do it without being ashamed. Look at the teaching of 1 Peter 4:16, "If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter." As we live properly in the world, abstain from ungodly things, and say what God says, we must not be ashamed of being Christians. In Romans 1:16 Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God." I imagine that as Peter penned these words, they were very near and dear to his heart. Do you remember the latter part of Matthew 26? Peter said, "Lord, if all are made to depart from You today, I will never depart." Jesus said, "Yes you will." As Peter was in the courtyard of the high priest and was asked, "Aren't you one of His?" Peter said, "No, not I." "Are you sure you're not one of His?" "Oh no, not me." "Are you sure you're sure?" And Peter began to swear, to curse, and to say, "I do not know the Man!" Peter was ashamed, at that point, of being a Christian. He was fearful. So he writes to tell us, "Do not be like me. Grow. Realize that not being ashamed is greater than anything in the world." Jesus has never been ashamed of us. He is not ashamed to call us His children (Heb. 2:11). And He was not ashamed to suffer, but instead looked forward to the joy of the cross (Heb. 12:1). As a result, we must never be ashamed of Him. If someone says, "Oh, you're a Christian," we should not blush and say, "Well, yeah I am." Instead, we should stand up and say, "I'm glad to be a Christian. Do you want to know how to become one?" We must be willing to stand up for Jesus and do what He says. We need to have the proper relationship regarding being a Christian.

We also need to realize our relationship toward leaders in the Lord's church. Peter himself was an elder, and in 1 Peter 5:1-5 he is going to tell us what our relationship toward leaders in the church should be.

"The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders."

Our responsibility toward the leaders of the church is to be submissive. Jesus, of course, has all authority in matters of doctrine. Matthew 28:18 clearly teaches that. We will be judged by the Word of God (Jn. 12:48). But when it comes to things like determining times of Bible classes or worship, and other things like that, we must be obedient. Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls."

Here is a practical lesson to learn. Was Peter the first pope? I want you to think about that. Many people say he was. But 1 Peter 5 and Matthew 8:14 clearly teach that he was not. Peter was not a pope. He did not live a celibate life. And he is not the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Jesus is the Head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23). Peter had a mother-in-law (Mt. 8:14), which meant that he had a wife. Peter also had children. How do we know that? Because we know that Peter was an elder. What is one of the qualifications of an elder? In 1 Timothy 3:1ff. we are told that he must have faithful children. He must have a wife who will help him in the work of an elder. Peter was not a pope. Elders have certain responsibilities. They are to exhort. They are to shepherd the flock of God. They are not to be lords; rather, they are to be leaders and examples who are there to help people in their journey toward Heaven, realizing that they will give an account for people's souls.

There is another responsibility about which we need to think for just a moment—the responsibility toward human pride. What is our responsibility toward our ego and toward pride? This causes so many people problems today. What does the Bible say? Look in 1 Peter 5:6—“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” God already had said that He “resists the proud and gives grace to the humble; therefore, humble yourselves in the sight of God and He will lift you up.” Our responsibility toward human pride and ego is to put them aside and to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, Who will lift us up (Jas. 4:6). We must realize that pride is something that, if we are not careful, will cause us to be lost. Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Therefore we must cast all our cares on the Lord, Who cares for us. We must realize that the devil is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. But we can resist him by remaining steadfast in the faith.

When it comes to our responsibilities, we must make sure that we put the kingdom first, and that we do what God says. There is no greater joy in the world than being a child of God. The Christian name is the greatest name a person could ever wear. I ask you today, are you a child of God? Have you obeyed the Gospel? Are you sure you are right with God? Remember that Acts 2:38 says that you must repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Once you do that, you must live faithfully to Jesus “unto death.” Then, you will receive the crown of life. If you are a Christian, have you been living up to your responsibilities? If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but rather let him glorify God in this name. May you make it your aim to glorify God in everything you do.

**Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:**

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## STUDY QUESTIONS FOR 1 & 2 PETER LESSON 2 (1 PETER, CHAPTERS 3-5)

1. In 1 Peter 3:1 we read, "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word...." To what does the closing phrase of that sentence ("the word") refer?
2. 1 Peter 3:1 we read, "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives." To what does the phrase "without a word" refer?
3. Explain the basic thrust of 1 Peter 3:2-6.
4. What does Ephesians 5:22 tell a wife to do?
5. What does Ephesians 5:25 tell a husband to do?
6. What does 1 Peter 3:7 tell husbands to do?
7. According to the last phrase of 1 Peter 3:7, what is one possible consequence of stress in a marriage relationship?
8. What does Psalm 66:18 teach?
9. What does 1 Peter 3:15 teach Christians to always be ready to do?
10. What does 2 Timothy 2:15 tell Christians to do?
11. According to Ezra 7:10, what did the prophet Ezra do that was commendable?
12. According to 1 Peter 3:21, what role does baptism play in a person's salvation?
13. In Acts 22:16, what did Ananias tell Saul to do?
14. What did Jesus say in Mark 16:16?
15. According to Ephesians 1:3, where are all spiritual blessings to be found?
16. How, according to Galatians 3:27, does a person get "into Christ"?
17. What important teaching for Christians is found in 1 Peter 4:1?
18. What did Paul say in 2 Timothy 3:12?
19. What point was Peter making in 1 Peter 4:3?
20. What encouragement did Peter offer in 1 Peter 4:16?
21. In 1 Peter 5:1-5, what instructions did Peter offer to elders of the Lord's church?
22. In 1 Peter 5:5, what instructions did Peter give to those Christians who were not elders?