

SUFFERING SAINTS

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SIXTY OUTLINES FROM THE EPISTLE OF I PETER

**PENMANN PRESS
P.O. BOX 611
BRENTWOOD, TENNESSEE 37024-0611**

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BY
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PREFACE

The theme of I Peter is hope and the reason for the emphasis on hope is seen in the fact that God's people were suffering because they were Christians. I Peter is the New Testament treatise on suffering and, therefore, is to the New Testament what the book of Job is to the Old Testament. In every chapter of this epistle one reads about suffering. Some reasons for suffering are set forth; the Christian reaction to suffering is stated.

The problem of human suffering, as old as the human race, is as real in our day as it was when Job grappled with the profound problem centuries ago.

The complex nature of the problem is intensified when God's righteous ones experience pain, either mental and/or physical because they are children of God and Satan is determined to destroy their faith. Indeed the suffering, verbal and/or physical abuse, is a "trial of faith" and Satan is the real power behind the trials, afflictions, hurts, heartaches, and persecutions. (See I Peter 1:6,7; I Peter 5:8,9.)

In view of inevitable sufferings God's people need an expectation and anticipation that will cause them to be steadfast and pay any price to belong to Christ. God's people need to know who they are and why; they need to remember how God has worked in their lives; they need to remember that their Savior was a "Suffering Servant", and, therefore, "arm" themselves with the same mind, (I Peter 4:1); they need to know that Satan is the cause of their sufferings; they need assurance that regardless of trials, tears, pains, and hurts, God is still on the throne and His people are destined for an eternal salvation "ready to be revealed in the last time". (I Peter 1:5.) God's people must remember that they are "sojourners and pilgrims" on earth (I Peter 2:11) and that their inheritance is "reserved in heaven" (I Peter 1:3.)

In an earlier book entitled, *God's Definition of a Christian*, attention was given to the true identity of God's people. This book, *Suffering Saints*, sets forth the foundation for God's explanation for the identity of His people. In order to face the troubles, trials, and tears of life, God's people need to be prepared to suffer because suffering now is as inevitable as when Job declared, "man born of woman is few days and full of trouble". (Job 14:1.) The psychiatrist, Scott Peck, began his popular book, *The Road Less Travelled*, with this statement: "Life is difficult". Peck says that learning this is learning one of the greatest lessons of life because if one expects difficulty he is more prepared to deal with it.

The sermons/lessons that are outlined in *Suffering Saints* are as practical in our day as they were in the first century. The truth about suffering does not cause God's people to wallow in self-pity. The truth about inevitable suffering does not cause God's saints to become fatalists. The truth about suffering does not produce people with a life controlled by morbid fear. The truth about suffering does cause God's people to arm themselves with an anticipation that "all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution". (2 Tim. 3:12.) God's people have hope that their temporal trials should give way to eternal triumph and that ultimately "sorrow and sadness shall flee away".

Perhaps God can use the lessons outlined in *Suffering Saints* to cheer some weary heart, to inspire some discouraged soul, to prompt some one whose heart is broken not to give in nor give up, to warn some who now have a life of ease and comfort to know days of hurt and sorrow shall come, to challenge God's people to go on to victory in Christ! If so, to God be the glory both now and forever. Amen!

Tom Holland
June 1, 1988

GOD'S CHOSEN CHILD

I Peter 1:1,2

Thesis: To show that the honor of being a Christian imposes responsibility to live as God's child.

Introduction:

1. "Elect" means to select or choose. (*Ek*, from; *Lego*, to gather or pick out.)
2. The source of election is God's grace toward man. (Eph. 1:4,5.)
3. The force of election is God's Gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14.)
4. The course of election is man's obedience. (2 Thess. 2:13,14; I Pet. 1:2.)

Discussion:

I. The Reality Of Election:

- A. Peter wrote to God's chosen ones. (I Peter 1:2.)
- B. Paul affirmed that people were elected by God. (Eph. 1:4.)
- C. Christians are called "God's Elect." (Romans 8:33.)

II. Man Has A Responsibility In This Election.

A. God's selecting or electing man to salvation is either conditional or unconditional.

1. If unconditional, then salvation is wholly an act of God, and universal salvation should be a fact. (I Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9.)
2. If God wants all saved, why are so many lost? (Matt. 7:13,14.)
3. Is God unwilling to save, or unable to save? *or*, is salvation conditional?

B. How does God select or choose men?

1. God chose to save people "In Christ." (Eph. 1:3-5; Gal. 3:26,27.)
2. God calls men by the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14.)
3. Man must believe and obey the gospel call. (2 Thess. 1:7-9; Mark 16:15,16.)
4. All men may become God's elect. (Matthew 16:24.)

III. The Result of Election:

A. The blessings of election:

1. God promised inheritance. (I Peter 1:5.)
2. Salvation or deliverance into heaven. (I Peter 1:5.)
3. Happiness. (I Peter 1:8.)
4. God's favor when Jesus comes. (I Peter 1:13.)

- B. Responsibility election imposes upon the Christian.
 - 1. Respect and obey God. (I Pet. 1:13-17.)
 - 2. Love God's elect. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 - 3. Desire, study, and practice God's **word**. (**I Peter 2:2.**)
 - 4. **Conduct self so as to reflect honor to God. (I Pet. 2:9; 4:16.)**
 - 5. **Abstain from fleshly lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.)**
 - 6. Respect recognized authority. (I Peter 2:13-17.)
 - 7. Follow in footsteps of Jesus. (**I Peter 2:21.**)
- C. Recognition by God. (I Pet. 1:3-5.)

Conclusion:

- 1. **Are** you ordained (disposed) to eternal life? (Acts 13:46-48.)
 - A. You can be if you will receive God's word. (James 1:21,22.)
 - B. You **will** be if you obey God's word. (Hebrews 5:8,9.)
- 2. God elects men for salvation, deliverance from sin, and for heaven.
- 3. There is but one eternal alternative—hell!

THE LIFE OF HOPE IS THE HOPE OF LIFE

I Peter 1:3

Thesis: To urge God's people to take hold of hope and receive the blessing.

Introduction:

1. Hope is one of the powerful forces that works forcefully in the lives of God's people. (Rom. 8:24.)
2. Hope is to be *in* God's people - in their hearts. (I Pet. 3:15.)
3. This lesson is important because:
 - A. We live in an age of pessimism, doubt, and despair.
 - B. God's people often suffer today, so they need the encouragement of hope.
 - C. Death is inevitable (Heb. 9:27), so we need the hope of life.
4. One outstanding characteristic of the Christian's life of hope is the hope of life.

Body:

- I. God: The Power of Hope. (I Peter 1:3,5.)
 - A. God's power created the universe and man. (I Pet. 4:19.)
 - B. God has a "mighty hand". (I Pet. 5:6.)
 1. He can save the lost. (Isa. 59:1,2.)
 2. He can keep the saved saved! (2 Pet. 2:9.)
 - C. God's power guards His children! (I Pet. 1:5.)
 - D. God is to be feared/respected. (I Pet. 2:17.)
 - E. Holy women of old "hoped in God". (I Pet. 3:5.)
- II. Christ: The Reason For Hope. (I Peter 1:3.)
 - A. "Our". One must have a personal relationship with Christ.
 1. We must believe in Him, (I Peter 1:8), God's word produces that faith. (John 20:30,31.)
 2. We must love Him (I Peter 1:8), so we will obey Him (John 14:15.)
 - B. "Lord".
 1. Jesus must be acknowledged as Lord!
 2. We must obey "The Lord". (I Pet. 1:22.)
 3. We must continue to be obedient. (I Pet. 1:14.)
 - C. "Jesus".
 1. He is our Savior! (Matt. 1:21.)
 2. He is our hope! (I Pet. 1:3.)

D. Christ. The Messiah.

1. He was foretold by the prophets. (I Pet. 1:11.)
2. He redeems by His blood. (I Pet. 1:18,19) (I Pet. 2:21.)
3. He shall be revealed. (I Pet. 1:7.)

III. God's Mercy: The Cause of Hope.

- A. God's mercy means that He forbears and, therefore, does not give us what we, by our sins, deserve.
- B. We have obtained mercy. (I Pet. 2:10.)
- C. He is gracious to us. (I Peter 1:10.)
- D. We will need the Lord's grace when He comes. (I Peter 1:13.)

IV. The Resurrection: The Foundation of Hope. (I Pet. 1:3.)

- A. The resurrection causes us to believe in Jesus as God's Son and the Messiah of Old Testament Scripture. (I Pet. 1:21.)
- B. The doctrine of the resurrection will correct so many erroneous views of Jesus.
 1. Peter's emphasis on the resurrection corrects the false view of the Messiah as an earthly ruler. (Acts 2:22-36.)
 2. It would do the same for premillennialists today!
 3. Our inheritance is "reserved in heaven", not on earth. (I Pet. 1:4.)

Conclusion:

1. The Lord's glory shall be revealed! (I Pet. 4:12.)
 - A. He shall come in glory.
 - B. He shall sit upon the throne of His glory. (Matt. 25:31.)
 - C. We shall see Him as He is. (I John 3:1-3.)
2. Peter knew that he would be a partaker of the Lord's glory. (I Pet. 5:1.)
3. Elders are promised a "crown of glory". (I Peter 5:4.)
4. We have been called to obtain this glory. (I Peter 5:10.)
 - A. We will be given glorified bodies - like His! (Phil. 3:20,21.)
 - B. We shall be with Him in glory!!
5. The song, "That Will Be Glory For Me", is an appropriate closing for this lesson.

KEPT BY GOD'S POWER

I Peter 1:3-12

Thesis: To urge God's people to put faith and trust in God.

Introduction:

1. There are two extremes to which men go in the matter of God saving us and our acceptance of that salvation:
 - A. One extreme: "Salvation is human achievement."
 1. "God will reward us on basis of, 'so much pay for so much work.' " (see Luke 17:10.)
 2. "God demands perfection, namely, sinlessness. (Result: constant guilt.)
 3. Some argue that they can be saved by their own good works.
 - B. Another extreme: "Salvation is wholly by grace apart from any human works".
 1. Gives a false sense of security.
 2. Logically applied: universal salvation.
 3. Practically applied: no essentials in Christianity such as attending worship, giving.
2. The Bible brings these two things together: God provides for and protects His people who respond to God in obedience.
3. According to Peter, I Peter 1:5:
 - A. That unto which we are kept by God's power.
 - B. The means by which we have access to this power.
 - C. The Blessing: a living hope.

Body:

- I. God's Power Keeps Us Unto Salvation.
 - A. This passage applies to Christians exclusively. (I Peter 1:22,23.)
 - B. The nature of the salvation unto which we are kept.
 1. An "inheritance", not something we earn.
 2. A special kind of inheritance: incorruptible, undefiled, permanent.
 3. Reserved in heaven.
 4. Salvation to be revealed. (I Peter 1:5.)
 - C. Emphasis on God's power. (I Peter 1:21.)
 - D. If God was able to raise His Son from the dead surely He can keep us saved for heaven.
- II. The Means By Which We Have Access to God's Power.
 - A. Faith gives access to God's power. (Rom. 1:16,17.)
 - B. Faith involves obedience. (Heb. 11.)

1. Noah *prepared* an ark.
2. Abraham *obeyed*.
- C. Faith is proven by trials. (I Pet. 1:7.)
 1. Heat removes impurities from gold.
 2. God uses trials to distinguish genuine faith from the superficial.
- D. Faith produces joy. (I Pet. 1:8.)
- E. Faith will culminate in salvation. (I Pet. 1:9.)

III. The Blessing of Faith: a Living Hope.

- A. "Living" is one of three adjectives connected with hope in the New Testament. Other two are:
 1. "Good". (2Thess.2:16.)
 2. "Blessed". (Tit. 2:13.)
- B. "Hope" is the "happy anticipation of good". (Vine.)
- C. Hope expects grace. (I Pet. 1:13.)
- D. Hope is centered in God. (I Pet. 1:21.)

Conclusion:

1. How should we respond to God's provision for our salvation?
 - A. Be "children of obedience". (I Pet. 1:14.)
 - B. Be holy. (I Pet. 1:15,16.)
 - C. Recognized God as Father. (I Pet. 1:17.)
 - D. Fear/respect God. (I Pet. 1:17.)
2. Important to believe in heaven and plan to go there!

THE INHERITANCE

I Peter 1:3-5

Thesis: To convince people of the possibility of going to heaven!

Introduction:

1. Life upon earth is brief and temporary
 - A. It is as a vapor. (Jas. 4:13,14.)
 - B. Death is a fact. (Heb. 9:27.)
2. Life is not defined as existence upon earth.
 - A. There is an eternity.
 - B. Man has one of two destinies: hell, heaven.
3. The possibility of heaven should prompt one to faithfully serve God. (2 Timothy 4:7,8.)

Discussion:

- I Christians Are Heirs Of God.
 - A. One becomes a child of God by a new birth. (1 Pet. 1:22,23.)
 - B. God's children are heirs of God. (Romans 8:16,17.)
 - C. God is giving unto His children that which they could not give themselves. Life is by grace. (I Pet. 4:7.)
- II The Character Of This Inheritance:
 - A. It means salvation. (I Pet. 1:5.)
 1. Salvation, or deliverance, from a world of sin, lust, suffering, and even death. (Rev. 21:4.)
 2. Salvation, or deliverance, into a position of glory and honor. (Romans 2:7.)
 - B. The inheritance will be incorruptible. (I Pet. 1:4.)
 1. In contrast to things of earth which are subject to decay, God's things are incorruptible. (See: I Pet. 1:23.)
 2. This inheritance will have to do with the incorruptible part of man, his spirit. (I Pet. 3:4.)
 3. Heaven will be permanent. (Lk. 12:33; Matt. 6:19.)
 4. Life in heaven will never end. (I Cor. 9:25.)
 - C. The inheritance will be undefiled. (I Pet. 1:4.)
 1. This term was applied to the High Priest. (Heb. 9:26.)
 2. In heaven God's children will be separated from a sinful world. (Rev. 21:27.)
 - a Imagine living in a place where there is no hate no greed, no backbiting, no slander, no suffering-physical or mental.

- b. "There is a land that is fairer than day!"
- D. The inheritance will be unfading. (I Peter 1:4.)
 - 1. Things of earth wear out, grow old, the beauty fades.
 - 2. Heaven will be perpetually new! (Rev. 21:1,2.)
- E. This inheritance is reserved in heaven for God's people.
 - 1. Earthly things shall ultimately end. (2 Pet. 3:10,11.)
 - 2. Life on earth shall one day end. (Heb. 9:27.)
 - 3. Since the Christian's inheritance is in heaven, it can never be touched, tarnished, or destroyed by earthly things.

III. The Assurance Of This Inheritance.

- A. Hope based on the resurrection of Christ from the dead. (I Pet. 1:3.)
 - 1. The resurrection was proof that Jesus was no mere man. (Rom. 1:4.)
 - 2. Therefore, what He promises is true and reliable.
- B. The inheritance is "guarded":
 - 1. By God. (I Pet. 1:5.)
 - 2. By man's faith. (I Pet. 1:5.)
 - 3. Man's obedient faith connected with God's immutable promises gives hope (expectation) to man of this salvation (inheritance). (Heb. 6:10-19.)
- C. Add Christian graces and insure inheritance. (2 Pet. 1:5-11.)
 - 1. These graces are practical, man can translate them into practice.
 - 2. The practice of these things (on the part of the Christian) insures him that the inheritance will be his.

Conclusion:

- 1. The acid test: do we believe God's word? (James 1:22.)
 - A. Note: no faith means no power of God; no power of God means no inheritance; no inheritance in heaven means condemnation to hell.
 - B. Note:
 - 1. "Kept by": efficient cause.
 - 2. "Through": secondary agency.
 - 3. "Unto": result = salvation.
- 2. What are you doing on earth for heaven's sake?
- 3. If you miss heaven, your life on earth has been a failure.
- 4. Look, by faith, at the unseen. (2 Cor. 4:16-5:1.)
 - A. Set your affection on things above.
 - B. No person goes to heaven who does not first send his heart on ahead!

THE REALITY OF A RESERVATION

I Peter 1:4-9

Thesis: To urge God's people to get serious about going to heaven.

Introduction:

1. There was time when people thought seriously about going to heaven.
 - A. Life on earth was both difficult and dangerous.
 - B. People needed assurance of life after death.
2. We need to get serious about going to heaven because life on earth is still dangerous and difficult!
 - A. Terminal illnesses are real.
 - B. Accidents claim lives daily.
 - C. Mankind has the power to destroy himself with atomic bombs.
3. God's people were being severely persecuted and, therefore, tried, when Peter wrote this epistle. (I Pet. 1:6,7.)
4. The hope of heaven can keep people going in spite of:
 - A. Persecutions.
 - B. Family problems.
 - C. Business failures.
 - D. Loss of personal health.

Body:

- I. Heaven: An Important Anticipation.
 - A. We are "sojourners" on earth. (I Pet. 1:17.)
 1. We are not permanently located on earth.
 2. The old song says, "This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through".
 3. Sojourners are warned about the danger of fleshly lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 - B. The flesh is temporal. (I Peter 1:24.)
 1. These fleshly bodies are mortal. (Rom. 6:12.)
 2. The outward (fleshly man) perishes. (2 Cor. 4:16.)
 - C. We are pilgrims on earth. (I Peter 2:11.)
 1. We are sojourners passing through this world.
 2. We are not natives to this world, we are on our way to a better land.
- II. Heaven: A Real Reservation. (I Peter 1:4.)
 - A. The meaning of "inheritance".
 1. Something provided for us by another.

2. In becoming children of God we also become heirs of God. (Rom. 8:14-16.)
- B. The three-fold nature of the inheritance: (I Pet. 1:4.)
 1. Incorruptible. It is eternal.
 2. Undeified. It is for "the pure and free".
 3. Never fading: the beauty will be perpetually "new".
- C. The location: "in heaven".
 1. Where is heaven?
 - a. The word identifies the space which surrounds the earth.
 - b. However, there is more than one heaven. (See 2 Cor. 12:2.)
 2. "Heaven" also identifies the place of God's abode.
 - a. Jesus ascended into heaven. (Acts 1:11.)
 - b. He ascended to God's right hand. (I Peter 3:22; Col. 3:1,2.)

III. Heaven: The Culmination of Salvation. (I Peter 1:5-9.)

- A. Heaven is described as a "salvation ready to be revealed". (I Peter 1:5.)
 1. Those who are delivered from the power and consequences of sin are said to be "saved". (Mark 16:16.)
 2. Receiving the eternal inheritance is eternal salvation.
 - a. Paul wrote of a salvation nearer than when we believed. (Rom. 13:11.)
 - b. Paul urged the saved to work out their own salvation. (Phil. 2:12.)
- B. This eternal salvation will be manifested "at the revelation of Jesus Christ". (I Pet. 1:7.)
 1. It will be made possible by God's grace. (I Pet. 1:13.)
 2. There will be a day of judgement at "the revelation of Jesus Christ". (I Pet. 1:17; Matt. 25:31.)
 - a. The judgement will be a righteous one. (I Pet. 2:23; Acts 17:30,31.)
 - b. The Lord is ready to judge! (I Pet. 4:5.)
 3. The Lord's glory shall be revealed! (I Pet. 4:13.)
 - a. He shall come in glory.
 - b. He shall sit upon the throne of His glory. (Matt. 25:31.)
 - c. We are called to eternal glory! (I Pet. 5:10.)
 - d. We shall see Him as He is and be like Him ! (I John 3:1-4.)
 - e. Glory shall be revealed. (I Pet. 5:1.)
- C. God's grace will enable us to receive the eternal inheritance. (I Pet. 1:13.)

Conclusion:

1. In the time of serious persecution and sore trials God's people needed to remember their inheritance. (I Pet. 1:6-7.)
2. The inheritance is so important that God's power guarded them so they could have this inheritance. (I Pet. 1:5.)
3. We need to keep our "eye on the goal, that sweet home of the soul".
4. The hope of heaven is hope for heaven and this hope can keep us faithfully serving God! (Col. 3:1-4.)
5. The hope of heaven brings joy to our lives. (I Pet. 1:6.)
 - A. It is joy "unspeakable". (I Pet. 1:8.)
 - B. It is a joy that is "full of glory", that is, a joy based on the reality of God's glory!
6. When the Lord's glory shall be revealed we shall rejoice with exceeding joy. (I Pet. 4:13.)

REACHING FOR HEAVEN

I Peter 1:3-9

Thesis: To prompt God's people to resolve to go to heaven!

Introduction:

1. People in the first century needed the hope of heaven. (I Pet. 1:6.)
 - A. In the 1st century the world view was dominated by paganism.
 1. Some thought things went in cycles - with ultimate Utopia.
 2. Death ended it all. (This hopelessness is revealed in statements made on the walls of catacombs.)
 - B. God's people needed to be reminded of hope of heaven!
 1. Danger of: laying up treasures on earth".
 2. Could forget here we are "sojourners".
 3. Suffering - does it pay? (I Pet. 1:6.)
 4. Flesh-grass. (I Pet. 1:24.)
2. Our forefathers needed hope of heaven!
 - A. Faced death at a much earlier age.
 - B. Danger of death from Indian attacks!
 - C. Dreaded diseases!
3. What about people now?
 - A. How relevant is the challenge of Colossians. (Col. 3:1-3.)
 - B. How relevant is the challenge of Peter. (I Peter 1:17; 2:11.)
 - C. Accidents?
 - D. Potential nuclear destruction?
 - E. Books about "Life after death"?

Body:

- I. The Reason To Reach For Heaven.
 - A. Life and Immortality are Realities. (II Tim. 1:10.)
 - B. Resurrection of Christ is the basis for our hope. (I Cor. 15:12-19.)
 - C. Responses to Resurrection: Denials!
 1. Swoon theory: "Jesus did not actually die,,,"
 2. Stolen body: "Disciples stole the body".
 3. Vision the apostles had.
 4. "Cause" of Christ was resurrected.
 5. Hallucination on part of the apostles.
- II. Reality of Heaven. (I Pet. 1:4-5.)
 - A. Inheritance, (cf. Rom. 8:14-17.)

1. Imperishable.
 2. Without flaw!
- B. Salvation, (vs. 5,9.)
1. To be revealed.
 2. Eternal deliverance.
 3. Joy of salvation!

III. Response.

- A. Faith. (I Pet. 1:5,9.)
- B. Hope.
1. *Living*. (Favorite word of Peter 1:23; 2:4,5; 4:5,6.)
 2. We must have hope. (I Peter 1:8,9.)
 3. Hope to the end! (I Pet. 1:13.)
 4. Hope *in* You. (I Pet. 3:15.)
- C. Keep Loving the Lord. (I Pet. 1:9.)
1. Don't question - Love him! He loves you!
 2. Love will result in obedience. (John 14:15.)
- D. Look to God for help.
1. Should not feel God keeps us unconditionally.
 2. Nor, that our salvation is in our feeble hands.
- E. Be Obedient children. (I Pet. 1:14.)
- F. Be Holy. (I Peter 1:15.)
- G. Pass Sojourn in fear. (I Peter 1:17.)

Conclusion:

1. "Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All".
2. We speak of the realms of the blest
of that city so bright and so fair
And oft are its glories confessed
But what will it be to be there!

A HEAVENLY HOME

I Peter 1:3-9

Thesis: To urge people to be heavenly-oriented people.

Introduction:

1. In the first century God's people experienced a hostile world - their faith was tried! (I Pet. 1:6,7.)
2. They needed to remember that on earth they were:
 - A. Sojourners. (I Pet. 2:11; 1:17, note: the *time* of sojourning". A stranger, alien, foreigner.)
 - B. Pilgrims, (I Pet. 2:11.) (Sojourning in a strange place, among people not one's own.)
3. They needed to know that they had an inheritance.
 - A. Their inheritance was in heaven, (cf. I Pet. 3:22.)
 - B. It was *reserved* for them! (III. Reserve motel.)
4. Therefore:
 - A. Let troubles, trials, and even death come.
 - B. God's people are destined to live in heaven!
5. Living conditions vary from country to country on earth.
 - A. Those going to a new country unprepared are in for a culture shock.
 - B. We need to know what life in heaven will be!

Body:

- I. The Nature of Our Inheritance.
 - A. Incorruptible.
 1. God had given His people an inheritance - Canaan. (Heb. 11:8-10.)
 2. Often invaded by enemy armies.
 3. Nations rise and fall; flourish and decay.
 4. Heaven will be safe and secure forever!
 - B. Undeified.
 1. Things of beauty on earth can be defaced, defiled!
 2. Heaven will be free from all vandals!
 3. Those who are wicked shall not be there! (Rev. 21:8.)
 - C. Unfading.
 1. Flower, carnation, worn at funeral service - thrown away!
 2. Give wife dozen roses - soon wither.
 3. Relationships can grow stable and boring.
- II. The Nature of Salvation.
 - A. Delivered from sin, and all that sin has done to man!
 - B. No funerals in heaven! (Rev. 21:4.)

- C. No hospitals in heaven! (Rev. 21:4.)
- D. No more marriage! (Matt. 23:29.)
 - 1. Marriage came from God to complete man.
 - 2. Christ will make us all complete.

III. The Nature of Life of Glory. (I Pet. 5:10.)

- A. Glorious bodies. (I John 3:1-4; Phil. 3:20,21.)
- B. Glory, honor, immortality. (Rom. 2:7.)
- C. With God, Christ, and the angels!
 - 1. God shall *dwell* with us. (Rev. 21:3.)
 - 2. Christ shall lead us! (Rev. 7:9-17.)

IV. A New Heaven and Earth. (2 Pet. 3:13.)

- A. John saw it. (Rev. 21:1-2.)
- B. Always *new* !
 - 1. New things thrill us!
 - 2. New things here grow old, become obsolete, wear out, - are cast aside!

Conclusion:

- 1. We can be *with the Lord* ! (I Thess. 4:13-18.)
- 2. If we love the Lord we want to be with Him! (Phil. 1:23.)
- 3. Who has the promise of an inheritance in the new heaven and new earth?
 - A. Those who are redeemed by the blood. (I Pet. 1:18,19.)
 - B. Those who obey the truth. (I Pet. 1:22,23.)
 - C. Those who keep the faith. (I Pet. 1:5.)
- 4. We speak of the land of the blessed
The country so bright and so fair
And oft are its' glories confessed
But what will it be to be there.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BELIEVE IN JESUS

I Peter 1:3-12

Thesis: To show the scope of faith and to refute the false idea that mere mental assent is real faith.

Introduction:

1. "Faith" is the noun form of "belief", and expresses an action of one's heart (Romans 10:10.)
2. Faith is the result of testimony. (John 20:30,31; Rom. 10:17.)
3. Faith in Christ is necessary for:
 - A. Salvation. (Acts 16:30,31.)
 - B. "Life." (John 20:30,31.)
 - C. The escape from spiritual death. (John 8:24.)
 - D. Protection from apostasy. (I Peter 1:5.)
 - E. Obtaining the eternal inheritance. (Heb. 10:36.)
4. But what does it mean to believe in Jesus?

Discussion:

- I. Faith In His Pre-Existence Prior To His Birth In Bethlehem. (I Pet. 1:11.)
 - A. The Spirit of Christ was in the Old Testament prophets. (I Pet. 1:11.)
 - B. He, through Noah, preached to the "spirits in prison." (I Pet. 3:19.)
 - C. Christ was following the Israelites. (I Cor. 10:1-3.)
 - D. "The Word" was deity and "became flesh" (John 1:1,14) but was from eternity!
 - E. Faith in Christ is belief in His eternal nature: He was no mere man-He was Emmanuel: *God* with us! (Matt. 1:23.)
- II. Faith In His Atoning Death. (I Pet. 1:11. Note: "suffering of Christ.")
 - A. Christ died to pay the price for sin. (I Peter 1:18,19.)
 1. "To redeem," to buy people from sin's bondage.
 2. Christ's blood is "precious"! (I Pet. 1:19.)
 - B. He was made a sin-offering. (2 Cor. 5:21.)
 - C. He died to redeem men from sin and for the Lord's service. (Titus 2:14. Note: "Zealous of good works.")
- III. Faith In His Resurrection From The Dead. (I Pet. 1:3.)
 - A. In His resurrection He was "declared to be the Son of God." (Rom. 1:4.)
 - B. Consequences of no resurrection! (I Cor. 1:12-19.)
 1. Christ is not risen, (verse 13.)

2. Preaching is of no value, (verse 14.)
 3. Faith has no basis, (verse 14.)
 4. Apostles are false witnesses, (verse 15.)
 5. No forgiveness of sins, (verse 17.)
 6. Those who have died have *perished*, (verse 18.)
- C. Christ has been raised; He is no mere man; He is the Son of God!
1. Therefore, His promises are sure! (2 Pet. 3:9.)
 - a. Forgiveness of sin is a fact. (Mark 16:16.)
 - b. Eternal salvation in heaven is now available through Christ. (Rev. 2:10.)
 2. He shall judge the world. (2 Cor. 5:10.)

- IV. Faith In The Lord's Second Coming. (I Pet. 1:7. Note: "The appearing (revelation) of Jesus Christ.")
- A. He promised to come again. (John 14:1-6.)
 - B. The angels declared His second coming. (Acts. 1:11.)
 - C. There are many assurances of the second coming in the New Testament (For example: Heb. 9:28.)
 - D. He is coming as:
 1. Judge. (Matthew 25:31.)
 2. Savior. (Heb. 9:28. Note: "... unto salvation.")

- V. Faith In The Gospel Of Christ. (I Pet. 1:12.)
- A. The gospel is God's power to save those who believe the gospel. (Rom. 1:16.)
 - B. The gospel reveals what God has done that men might be saved. (Rom. 1:17. Note: "Therein is *revealed* the righteousness of God" that is, God's way of making men righteous.)
 - C. The gospel reveals what men must do in order to be saved. (Mark 16:15,16.)

Conclusion:

1. Faith in Christ is essential for salvation. (John 8:24.)
2. The goal of faith is the eternal salvation of the soul. (I Pet. 1:9.)
3. Since faith comes by hearing God's word. (Rom. 10:17), do you believe?
4. Faith is the victory! (I John 5:4.)

THE DESIRE OF ANGELS

I Peter 1:5-12

Thesis: To secure greater appreciation for the possibility of salvation.

Introduction:

1. How can man so often be indifferent toward salvation?
2. *Salvation* defined:
 - A. "The saving of man from the power and effects of sin." (Webster.)
 - B. "Rescue from danger or destruction. Deliverance from the punitive wrath of God at the judgment of the last day." (Thayer.)

Discussion:

- I. Peter's Explanation of Salvation:
 - A. "Grace unto you." (I Peter 1:10.)
 1. Grace, (God's favor), involved a demonstration and a revelation.
 - a. Grace was demonstrated in the "sufferings of Christ." (I Pet. 1:11; Heb. 2:9.)
 - b. Grace has been revealed. (I Pet. 1:12; Tit. 2:11,12.)
 2. See: Ephesians 2:8,9.
 - B. Redemption from sin. (I Pet. 1:18,19.)
 1. Sin enslaves the soul. (Rom. 6:17,18; "bondservant", footnote, ASV.)
 2. Salvation means that man is brought from the bondage of sin. (Rom. 6:3,4; 6:17,18.)
 - C. Purification of the soul. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 1. Sin defiles the conscience of man. (Heb. 10:22.)
 2. Saved ones have been purged or cleansed from sin. (Heb. 1:4; 2 Peter 1:9.)
- II. Prophets Foretold God's Plan of Salvation. (I Peter 1:10.)
 - A. The source of the prophets' message:
 1. "To whom it was revealed." (I Pet. 1:12.)
 - a. Their message did not originate with the prophets themselves. (2 Peter 1:21.)
 - b. The prophets were God's spokesmen. (Matt. 1:22; Note the prepositions: "of," "by," KJV; "by," "through," ASV.)
 2. The prophets were witnesses of a coming Lord. (Acts 10:43.)

- B. The prophets foretold the Lord's sufferings. (I Pet. 1:11.)
 - 1. "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer..." (Luke 24:46.)
 - 2. See Isaiah 53; Psalm 22.

III. The Apostles Proclaimed God's Plan of Salvation.

- A. This apostolic proclamation is called "the gospel" (glad tidings). (I Pet. 1:12.)
 - 1. The apostles were gospel preachers; they were not worldly philosophers or mere social workers.
 - 2. Jesus commissioned them to "preach the gospel." (Mark 16:15.)
- B. Gospel did not originate with apostles.
 - 1. Received the message by revelation. (Gal. 1:11,12.)
 - 2. Recorded the message by inspiration. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.)
 - 3. Jesus promised the apostles that they would be guided by the Holy Spirit. (John 16:7-13.)
 - 4. Paul affirmed that the Holy Spirit guided the proclamation of the apostles. (I Cor. 2:9-13; compare with I Pet. 1:12.)

Conclusion:

- 1. Even angels are involved in man's salvation.
 - A. Angels announced the birth of the Savior. (Luke 2:8-13.)
 - B. Angels announced the resurrection of the Savior. (Matt. 28:5,6.)
 - C. Angels proclaimed the Lord's second coming. (Acts 1:10,11.)
 - D. Angels know about man's salvation. (Luke 15:10.)
 - E. Angels minister unto heirs of salvation. (Heb. 1:14.)
- 2. Angels desire to look into God's mercy, grace, justice, judgment, and man's salvation. (I Pet. 1:12.)
- 3. How can you be so indifferent and unconcerned about that in which heaven is so interested?
- 4. Salvation should challenge our minds, fill our hearts, demand our obedience.
- 5. Song: "Amazing Grace" ... *That Saved!*

THE SUFFERING OF THE SAINTS

I Peter 1:6-9

Thesis: To explain the nature and value of suffering and thereby encourage God's people.

Introduction:

1. The people to whom Peter wrote were God's elect because they had obeyed the gospel of Christ. (I Pet. 1:2; 2 Thess. 2:13,14.)
2. As God's elect, they had an inheritance. (I Pet. 1:5.)
3. As God's chosen ones, they rejoiced in salvation. (I Pet. 1:6.)
4. Problem: Why do the saved suffer?

Discussion:

I The Fact of Christian Suffering.

- A. All that live godly shall suffer. (2 Tim. 3:12.)
 1. Jesus suffered. (John 15:20; I Pet. 2:21 -24.)
 2. One who suffers as a Christian should not be ashamed. (I Pet. 4:16.)
- B. Why do the saved suffer?
 1. By a physical body the Christian is connected to a world where there is suffering, disease, death, accidents.
 2. A sinful world does not appreciate godliness, and will react by inflicting physical and/or mental suffering upon the saved. (I Pet. 4:1-5.)
 3. Satan causes suffering. (I Pet. 5:8; See book of Job.)
 4. Some homes inflict suffering upon those who try to obey the Lord. (Matt. 10:32-39.)

II The Nature Of The Trials.

- A. Manifold trials. (I Peter 1:6.)
 1. This refers to kinds of trials not to the numbers.
 2. Trials may be persecutions, deprivations, hardships, and difficulties as God's children. (James 1:2; I Peter 4:16.)
- B. Fiery trials. (I Peter 1:7.)
 1. Some trials are fierce. (Luke 12:50; Matt. 26:39.)
 2. Life during reign of Nero was difficult for Christians. (I Pet. 2:19,20; 3:14-17; 4:12-19; 5:9,10.)
- C. Temporary trials. (I Pet. 1:6.)
 1. Life's trials are "but for a moment." (2 Cor. 4:17.)
 2. Suffering as a Christian is but for "a little while." (I Pet. 5:10.)

III. The Value Of Suffering.

- A. Trials test and reveal true nature of one's faith. (Illustration: Abraham, Genesis 22:1,2,12.)
 - 1. Peter uses the figure of removing the impurities from gold by fire. (I Pet. 1:7.)
 - 2. Trial of faith works patience (steadfastness). (Jas. 1:2,4.)
- B. Trials may arouse one to greater service. (Psalm 119:67,71.)
- C. Trials enable one to help others who suffer. (2 Cor. 1:3,4.)

Conclusion:

- 1. It is important to develop and maintain a Christian attitude in the midst of suffering.
 - A. The importance of attitude: The same sun that melts wax hardens clay.
 - B. Rejoice because of heavenly reward. (Matt. 5:11,12.)
 - C. Rejoice that you are counted Christ. (Acts 5:40-42.)
 - D. Rejoice that faith has been proved and demonstrated. (I Pet. 1:6,7.)
- 2. Remember: Jesus knows and cares! (John 16:20.)

SOME WAYS OF SUFFERING

I Peter 1:6-9

Thesis: To explain reasons for suffering and thereby bring hope to God's people.

Introduction:

1. I Peter has a theme of hope and the importance of hope is seen in light of a "fiery trial" (I Pet. 1:6,7) and suffering.
2. I Peter is, on the subject of suffering, to the New Testament what the book of Job is to Old Testament Scripture.
3. Human suffering is one of the perplexing problems of life.
4. A failure to understand the meaning of suffering could result in a loss of faith. (Psalm 73:2-19.)
5. Peter sets forth some of the reasons for suffering.

Body:

- I. The World Which Gives No Choice. (I Peter 5:8,9.)
 - A. Sin has brought suffering to this world.
 1. Job correctly analyzed the situation. (Job 14:1,2.)
 2. Dr. Scott Peck, a psychiatrist, began his book, *The Road Less Travelled*, with this statement, "Life is difficult".
 - a. He says learning this means learning one of the greatest lessons of life.
 - b. Then we can make preparation for trouble by anticipating it.
 - B. Jesus warned His disciples of trouble they would experience. (John 16:33.)
 - C. In this world there are:
 1. Diseases that bring pain to us and our loved ones.
 2. Disappointments that can discourage us. (Gal. 6:10.)
 3. Doctrine of men that confuse us. (Matt. 7:13,14.)
 4. Dissipation of our strength and youth. (2 Cor. 4:16.)
 5. Death that shall overtake us. (Heb. 9:27.)
- II. Unwise Choices That We Make. (I Peter 2:20.)
 - A. We may choose to sin and thereby bring upon ourselves serious consequences. (Gal. 6:7,8.)
 - B. Peter specified some things that we may do and suffer for these actions. (I Peter 4:15.)
 1. Murderers can suffer the penalty of law and/or the pain of guilt in the conscience.
 2. Thieves can suffer the penalty of law and/or the humiliation of exposure.

3. Evildoers lose the access to God's providential approval. (I Pet. 3:12.)
 4. Meddlers can disrupt families, alienate friends, and eventually suffer rejection for such action.
- C. There is no glory in the suffering that one brings upon himself or herself. (I Pet. 2:20; 3:17.)

III. Because of A Right Choice Made. (I Peter 2:20.)

- A. God's people should not be surprised if they have to suffer. (I Peter 4:12.)
- B. God's Son suffered for doing right. (I Peter 3:17,18.)
- C. Suffering may be unfair! (I Peter 2:18.)
 1. God's people may suffer wrongfully.
 2. The Son of God surely suffered wrongfully. (I Pet. 2:21-23.)
 3. But God used the suffering of His Son to save us! (I Pet. 1:18,19.)
- D. God can use the suffering that we experience to bless us. (I Pet. 5:10.)

Conclusion:

1. David had to view suffering in light of eternity. (Psa. 73:17,18.)
2. We must look for blessings that can come to us from the trials of life. (Jas. 1:2-4.)
3. We need, like Paul, to learn the value of suffering. (Rom. 5:3-5.)
4. The song, "Ready to Suffer", is an appropriate conclusion for this lesson.

GOD'S OBEDIENT CHILD

I Peter 1:13-16

Thesis: To stress man's responsibility in accepting God's gracious offer of salvation.

Introduction:

1. Holy Scripture has a beautiful balance in God's grace and man's obedience with regard to salvation.
 - A. Peter defined "salvation" as: "Grace unto you" (I Pet. 1:10.)
 - B. Eternal salvation will involve "grace brought to you" (I Pet. 1:13.)
 - C. Peter also emphasized man's responsibility to obey God. (I Peter 1:2,14,22.)
2. Christians are called "children of obedience." (I Peter 1:14.)
 - A. A Christian has an obedient nature.
 - B. A sinner, in contrast, is a child of disobedience.

Discussion:

I. The Importance of Obedience:

- A. The soul is purified when one obeys the truth. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 1. "The truth" reveals that man has a soul.
 - a. Study Peter's use of "soul". (I Pet. 1:9,22; 2:11,25; 3:20; 4:19.)
 - b. The Holy Spirit calls the soul the "hidden man of the heart." (I Pet. 3:4; 2 Cor. 4:16.)
 - c. The "hidden man" or soul, is not corruptible, therefore, immortal.
 2. The truth reveals sin's defilement of man's soul. (I Pet. 2:24,25; 4:3-5.)
 3. The truth reveals God's plan for saving man's soul.
 - a. God's grace offers salvation. (I Pet. 1:9,10.)
 - b. Men must believe in Jesus as Savior. (I Pet. 1:8.)
 - c. If men refuse to repent of sins, they will be lost. (2 Pet. 3:9.)
 - d. Men must be baptized for remission of sins and the "answer of a good conscience." (Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:20,21.)
 4. When one obeys the truth:
 - a. His soul is purified from sin, the guilt and the condemnation of sin. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 - b. He is "born again," he has a new life in Christ. (I Pet. 1:22; 2 Cor. 5:17.)

- c. He has the joy of salvation. (I Pet. 1:8; Acts 8:39.)
 - d. He has hope of heaven. (I Pet. 1:3,13.)
 - e. He has an inheritance. (I Pet. 1:4.)
- B. One must obey the gospel. (I Pet. 4:17.)
- 1. The gospel, or "good news," has facts to be believed. (I Cor. 15:1-5.)
 - 2. Based on these fundamental facts (death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus) are binding commands to be obeyed. (2 Thess 1:7-9; See 1-A-3 above.)
 - 3. When the facts are believed, the commands obeyed, promises will be enjoyed. (See 1-A-4 above.)

II. The Christian Lives A life Of Obedience. (I Pet. 1:14.)

- A. He has the nature of obedience.
- 1. As a sinner, he was in ignorance. (I Pet. 1:14; 2 Pet. 2:20.)
 - a. His life was "fashioned according to lusts" or uncontrolled desire. (I Pet. 1:14; 4:3-5.)
 - b. As a Christian, he follows "the way of truth." (2 Pet. 2:3; Note: "the way of truth.")
 - 2. Knowledge is inseparably connected with obedience. (Rom. 10:1-3.)
- B. As a "child of obedience," the Christian must:
- 1. Desire God's word. (I Pet. 2:2.)
 - 2. Abstain from fleshly lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 - 3. Be submissive to civil authority. (I Pet. 2:13-17.)
 - 4. Let Christ be the pattern for life. (I Pet. 2:21.)
 - 5. Love one another. (I Pet. 1:22; 3:8.)
 - 6. Control tongue. (I Pet. 3:10.)
 - 7. Turn away from evil. (I Pet. 3:11; Romans 12:9.)
 - 8. Pray. (I Pet. 3:12.)
 - 9. Be ready to give a reason for possessed hope. (I Pet. 3:11; Romans 12:9.)
 - 10. Cast all his care (anxiety) on God. (I Pet. 5:7.)
 - 11. Resist the devil. (I Pet. 5:8.)
 - 12. In faith, supply the "Christian Grace." (2 Pet. 1:5-11.)

Conclusion:

- 1. Hope (I Pet. 1:3); Joy (I Pet. 1:8); the inheritance (I Pet. 1:4); cannot be realized apart from obedience.
- 2. Obedience does not destroy grace!
- 3. "Behold to obey is better..." (I Sam. 15:22.)

A CHRISTIAN IS HOLY

I Peter 1:13-18

Thesis: To show the Christian he/she **must live a life of separation from the world.**

Introduction:

1. "Holy": "The root meaning of *hagios* (holy) is *different*."
 - A. The temple was holy because it was different from other buildings.
 - B. The Sabbath was holy because it was different from other days.
 - C. The Christian is holy because he is different from other men.
2. Christians are called to be a holy people.
 - A. "Called" by the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14.)
 - B. The design of the calling: sanctification of the whole life to God.
3. God has always demanded holiness of his people. (Lev. 9:2; 11:44,45; 20:7,26.)

Discussion:

- I. The Christian Has A Perfect Pattern Of Holiness: "Be Ye Holy: For I Am Holy" (I Peter 1:16.)
 - A. Religion is imitation.
 1. Heathenism creates "god" according to its own corrupt mind. (Romans 1:21-23.)
 2. Heathenism then imitates "gods" created. (Rom. 1:23-32.)
 - B. The Christian is to imitate God. (Eph. 5:1, ASV.)
 - C. When one follows Christ (I Pet. 2:21), he imitates God. (John 14:9.)
- II. The Christian Is To Be Holy In "All Manner of Living." (I Pet. 1:15, ASV.)
 - A. In dealing with the *world*, (that sphere of lust and disobedience controlled by Satan, Eph. 2:1-3.) the Christian is:
 1. To be transformed, and not to conform. (Rom. 12:1,2.)
 2. To keep himself unspotted from it. (Jas. 1:27.)
 3. To refrain from making friends with the world. (Jas. 4:4.)
 - B. In marriage the Christian is to be different.
 1. Hold the marriage tie as sacred. (Matt. 19:1-9.)
 2. Be faithful to marriage contract. (I Thess. 4:3-6.)

- C. In business the Christian is to be different.
 - 1. He is to be honest. (Rom. 12:17.)
 - 2. He is to be industrious. (2 Thess. 3:10.)
- D. In recreation the Christian is to be different.
 - 1. Puts the kingdom first in life. (Matt. 6:33.)
 - 2. Seeks to let men see influence Jesus has had in his life. (Matt. 5:14-16.)

III. The Christian Is Motivated To Be Holy.

- A. He lives in view of Lord's return. (I Pet. 1:13.)
 - 1. The Christian interprets his thoughts and actions in the light of the second coming. (2 Pet. 3:10-12.)
 - 2. He is told to "watch" for Lord's coming. (Matt. 24:42-44.)
- B. The Christian knows that he must stand before God in judgment. (I Pet. 1:17; 4:5.)
 - 1. One must give account for deeds done in the body. (2 Cor. 5:10.)
 - 2. God shall judge men in righteousness. (Acts 17:30,31.)
- C. The Christian lives in gratitude for the death of Christ. (I Pet. 1:18,19.)
 - 1. The Lord died that men might be different. (Tit. 2:11-14.)
 - 2. One is reminded of Jesus' death when he eats the Lord's Supper. (I Cor. 11:23-26.)
 - 3. Isaac Watts beautifully expressed the idea:
 Were the whole realm of Nature mine,
 That were a present far too small,
 Love so amazing, so divine,
 demands my Soul, my life, my all.
 —"When I Survey The Wondrous Cross"—

Conclusion:

- 1. The Christian is not sanctified by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. The gospel call separates the Christian from the world. (I Peter 1:15; 2 Thess. 3:13,14.)
- 3. The Christian must "come out—and be separate". (2 Cor. 7:1.)
- 4. Holiness is necessary if eternal life is realized. (Heb. 12:14.)
- 5. People are being constantly pressured to conform, to follow the crowd; God's people are different! (I John 3:1.)

¹ William Barclay, *The Letters Of James and Peter*, (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1964), p. 222.

A CHRISTIAN IS A REDEEMED ONE

I Peter 1:18,19

Thesis: To Deepen appreciation for death of Christ and secure devotion to him.

Introduction:

1. Many ways to explain salvation.
 - A. Peter repeatedly refers to salvation in I Peter 1. (See verses 5,9,10.)
 - B. Peter calls salvation, "grace unto you." (I Peter 1:10.)
 - C. "Salvation" is having the soul purified from guilt of sin. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 - D. In these verses, Peter calls salvation "redemption." (verses 18,19.)
2. The word "redeem" denotes the purchasing of a slave with a view to his freedom.¹
3. "Redemption" involves the "forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:14.)

Discussion:

- I. Sin Is A Form Of Moral Bondage.
 - A. Sinners are in the worst form of bondage, viz., enslaved and often don't realize it. (2 Pet. 1:19.)
 - B. The life of the sinner is vain. (I Peter 1:18, RSV.)
 1. "Sin" means "missing the mark" (Romans 3:23.)
 2. Sin offers man what it cannot give; sin gives man what it did not offer. (Heb. 11:24,25.)
 - C. The sinner is dominated by the devil. (Eph. 2:1-3.)
 - D. The sinner is a bondservant of sin. (John 8:24, RSV.)
 - E. The sinner lives in ignorance. (I Pet. 1:14.)
 - F. The sinner is dominated by desire. (I Peter 1:14.)
 1. The term "lust" means unbridled or uncontrolled desire. (I Peter 2:1-.)
 2. "Lust" and "price" constitute "the world." (I John 2:15.)
- II. The Price Of Redemption.
 - A. The death of Jesus was the price heaven paid to free men from sin.
 1. Jesus have his life a *ransom*. (Matt. 21:28.) The ransom was the price paid to redeem the slave.
 2. God made Jesus a sin offering. (2 Cor. 5:21.)
 3. Men have redemption through the blood of Jesus. (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14.)
 - B. Redemption involves purging. (I Peter 1:19.)

1. Redemption is deliverance from the power of sin.
 2. Purgings is cleansing from the defilement of sin. (2 Pet. 1:9.)
 3. One is purged from sin by the blood of Jesus. (Heb. 10:1-4; 9:14.)
- C. The death of Jesus is heaven's declaration of:
1. God's love for man.
 2. Jesus' love for man.
 3. The possibility of freedom and cleansing from sin.

III. The Christian Has Been Redeemed To:

- A. Live in obedience to God. (I Pet. 1:14.)
1. Prior to redemption, one is enslaved to sin. (Rom. 6:16.)
 2. One is freed from sin to live as a servant, or slave, of righteousness. (Rom. 6:18.)
- B. Live a life of holiness. (I Pet. 1:14.)
1. "Holiness" means separation from the world of sin and dedication to the service of God.
 2. The Christian has "come out from the world." (2 Cor. 6:14; 7:1.)
- C. Pass the time of sojourning upon the earth in fear. (I Pet. 1:17.)
1. Fear of displeasing God that prompts one to work out his salvation. (Phil. 2:12.)
 2. Fear which moves one to serve God acceptably. (Heb. 12:28.)
- D. Live a productive life for God. (Titus 2:14.)
1. The Christian has been "redeemed from iniquity." (Tit. 2:14.)
 2. The Christian has been redeemed for "Good works," (Tit. 2:14.)

Conclusion:

1. No one could fully appreciate the magnitude of the price paid to free man from sin.
 "But none of the *ransomed* ever knew how deep
 Where the waters crossed. Or dark was the night that the Lord
 passed through, ere he found the sheep that was lost."
 —There Were Ninety Nine—
2. But to consider this demonstration of love and concern should prompt one to respond in obedience.
3. "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."—When I Survey The Wondrous Cross—
4. To be redeemed is to be purged by the blood of Jesus by being baptized into the Lord's death. (Romans 6:3,4.)

¹W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1966), Vol. VI, p. 263.)

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MAN AND THE BIBLE

I Peter 1:22-25

Thesis: To show the relationship of man and the Bible.

Introduction:

1. God's word is not a dead letter, the theology of man notwithstanding. (Heb. 4:12.)
2. The sinner is not so dead that the word is powerless. (Rom. 1:16.)
3. God's word is an able word. (Jas. 1:21.)
4. To study the nature of man and the nature of the Bible is to see how God designed the latter for the needs of the former.

Discussion:

- I Peter Wrote Concerning the Nature of Man.
 - A. He affirms the reality of man's soul. (I Peter 1:22.)
 1. The soul needs salvation. (I Pet. 1:9.)
 2. Fleshly lusts war against the soul. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 3. Jesus is Bishop and Shepherd of man's soul. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 4. God is Creator of man's soul. (I Pet. 4:19.)
 - B. Peter calls the "soul" the "heart." (I Pet. 1:22b.)
 1. James used "heart" as the "soul." (Jas. 4:8; I Pet. 1:22.)
 2. The heart of man is incorruptible. (I Pet. 3:4.)
 3. Therefore, man does have an immortal soul!
 - C. Man is capable of a new birth. (I Peter 1:22,23.)
 1. Jesus made a new birth imperative. (John 3:3-5.)
 2. The fleshly part of man is certainly incapable of a new birth. (John 3:3-6.)
 - D. The flesh (outward man, 2 Cor. 4:16) is as grass. (I Pet. 1:24,25.)
 1. How foolish, therefore, to neglect the spiritual for the "meat that perishes." (Matt. 10:26.)
 2. The flesh is temporal, the soul is eternal. (Ecc. 12:7.)
- II. Peter Set Forth The Nature of God's Word.
 - A. God's word is called "the truth." (I Pet. 1:22.)
 1. The "truth" is that body of factual information found in God's revelation, (the Bible).
 2. The truth must be known. (John 8:32; I Tim. 2:4.)
 3. The truth must be obeyed. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 - B. God's word is called "incorruptible seed." (I Pet. 1:22,23.)

1. In contrast to fleshly (human) seed.
 2. The New Birth is produced by seed.
 - a. Holy Spirit operates through the word of God producing faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. (John 3:5.)
 - b. The only connection water has with the kingdom is in the command to be baptized. (Eph. 5:26.)
 - c. Peter, speaking as the Holy Spirit gave utterance (Acts 2), commanded men to repent and be baptized for remission of sins. (Acts 2:38.)
 3. The seed has life! It is not dead! God's word is "seed."
- C. God's word is called the "gospel." (I Pet. 1:25.)
1. The facts, commands, and the promises of the good news of salvation in and by Christ are set forth in the Bible, and only in it!
 2. There is power in the gospel if men will believe it. (Rom. 1:16.)
- D. God's word is called "milk." (I Pet. 2:2.)
1. The word has the power to nourish spiritual life. (Acts 20:32; Heb. 5:11-14.)
 2. The Christian never outgrows his need of God's word.

Conclusion:

1. God's word is a complete revelation of His will to and for man. (2 Pet. 1:3.)
2. Have you obeyed the truth in order to be born again? (I Pet. 1:22.)
3. Are you desiring the milk of the word that you may grow thereby? (I Pet. 2:2.)
4. Man's need today is not for a miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit; he needs to believe and obey the message of the Spirit of God.

DOES MAN POSSESS A SOUL?

I Peter 1:22-25

Thesis: To set forth the true nature of man.

Introduction:

1. Importance of understanding the nature of man.
 - A. Vital part of appreciating *purpose* of life.
 - B. Give us hope in the face of death.
 - C. Give us comfort about our loved ones who have died.
 - D. Helps us feel our worth now!
2. What is the nature of man?
 - A. Totally material?
 1. Communists would say, "Yes".
 2. Evolutionists would say, "Yes".
 3. Many religious people would say, "Yes".
 - B. The only reliable source of information: Bible.
 1. Paul wrote of soul, spirit, and body. (I Thess. 5:23.)
 2. The Bible distinguishes "Soul" and "Spirit". (Heb. 4:12.)
 - a. "Spirit" is the Life principle.
 - b. "Soul" is the result of that life.
 3. Sometimes "soul" identifies the totality of the person. (I Pet. 3:20.)
3. A study of the "soul" in I Peter can be informative.

Body:

- I. The Soul Is Subject to Salvation. (I Pet. 1:9.)
 - A. God's great plan for human redemption implies the reality of the soul. (I Pet. 1:9-12.)
 1. Prophets inquired about the salvation of the soul.
 2. The suffering of Jesus was in behalf of the soul.
 - B. The contrast: Gold that perishes and faith that endures. (I Pet. 1:7.)
 - C. The "salvation" of the soul is reserved in heaven. (I Pet. 1:3-9.)
- II. The Soul Is Purified In Obedience. (I Pet. 1:22-25.)
 - A. The "soul" is called the "heart". (I Pet. 1:22,23.)
 1. The "heart" is called "hidden". (I Pet. 3:4.)
 2. The "heart" is the incorruptible spirit. (I Pet. 3:4.)
 3. The Lord is to be sanctified in the heart. (I Pet. 3:15.)
 4. A part of the heart is the conscience. (I Pet. 3:16.)
 - B. The "soul" is contrasted to the "flesh". (I Pet. 1:24.)
 1. The flesh is the outward man. (2 Cor. 4:16.)

2. The "inner man" does not perish.

III. The Powerful Application of the Truth About Man's Nature.

- A. Abstain from fleshly lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 1. Shall life be lived on animal/fleshly level?
 2. Lusts war against soul. (Gal. 5:17.)
- B. The Lord is shepherd and bishop of souls. (I Pet. 2:25.)
 1. The shepherd is good shepherd. (John 10; Ps. 23.) (He feeds, guides, protects.)
 2. The Bishop/overseer. He directs the lives of his people.

Conclusion:

1. God is the creator of souls. (I Pet. 4:19; cf. Heb. 12:9.)
2. Love God with soul. (Matt. 22:37. "The seat of will and purpose.")
3. Poet said, "Dust thou art to dust returnest was never spoken of the soul".

"The 'soul' in this passage, is man's higher nature, embracing the spirit, the immortal part of man directly derived from God." (Heb. 12:9) - Woods, *Commentary on Peter, John Jude*, p. 66.

OBEYING THE TRUTH

I Peter 1:22-25

Thesis: To assure people that God's truth can be known and obeyed.

Introduction:

1. There seems to be a tendency of man to minimize the power of God's Word.
 - A. Naaman the leper wanted a miracle instead of direction from God. (2 Kings 5:11.)
 - B. The rich man in Hades wanted a miracle. (Luke 16:30,31.)
2. Today people want:
 - A. Direct revelations from God.
 - B. Human testimonials as to the way God "saved them".
 - C. The philosophies of men.
3. Three significant aspects of this passage:

Body:

- I Identity of The Truth.
 - A. The Word of God, i.e., God's Word. (2 Tim. 3:16,17.)
 1. God's Word is powerful. (2 Pet. 3:5-7.)
 2. God's Word is a life-giving Word.
 - B. "Incorruptible Seed".
 1. There is life in seed.
 2. There is power in seed to produce new life.
 - C. "The Truth".
 1. God's Word is Truth. (John 17:17.)
 2. God's Truth must be "handled aright". (2 Tim. 2:15.)
 3. God's Truth must be obeyed.
 - D. Gospel (good news.) (cf. I Pet. 4:17.)
- II Importance of The Truth.
 - A. "Purifies the soul".
 1. People are concerned today about clean air, water.
 2. What about clean hearts, pure minds?
 3. "Soul": total life principle - needs purification.
 - a. Sin defiles the conscience. (Tit. 1:15.)
 - b. Sin defiles the mind. (Tit. 1:15.)
 - B. "Born Again".
 1. Popular expression, "a born again Christian".
 2. Is there any other kind?
 3. Jesus taught lesson on the new birth. (John 3:1-10.)

III. Incentives To Obey The Truth.

A. Flesh is as grass.

1. Temporal nature of fleshly body! (2 Cor. 4:16.)
2. Old age is coming.

B. Glory of man.

1. May keep man from obeying the Lord. (John 12:42,43.)
2. May be more important to man than the Lord.

Conclusion:

1. If we cannot know the truth then we cannot obtain these blessings.
2. Salvation and knowing the Truth are inseparably connected. (I Tim. 2:4.)

THE NEW BIRTH AND THE GOSPEL

I Peter 1:22-25

Thesis: To set forth the responsibilities of those "born again".

Introduction:

1. The apostle Peter wrote two of the N.T. epistles.
 - A. The theme of I Peter is: Hope.
 - B. The theme of II Peter is: Knowledge.
2. First Peter is the N.T. Scripture what Job is to the Old Testament.
 - A. God's people were being tried. (I Pet. 1:6.)
 - B. God's people are reminded of Satan's efforts to destroy them with suffering. (I Pet. 5:8,9.)
3. Trials may cause us to forget who we are.
4. So This Text became very significant:
 - A. Peter explains how these people had become God's children.
 - B. He also explains how this affected their lives.

Body:

- I The Explanation of The New Birth. (I Pet. 1:22-25.)
 - A. The power to produce new life: seed, (I Pet. 1:23.)
 1. Incorruptible-never dying word.
 2. Called the "word of the Lord".
 3. The word of the gospel, (vs. 25.)
 - B. The part of man that has new life.
 1. Not the flesh - it is like grass. (Isa. 40:6-8.)
 2. The "souls", (cf. 2:11; 2:25; 3:20; 4:19.)
 3. The "heart", (vs. 22.) (Thinks, reasons, purposes, loves, trusts)
- II The Expectation of The New Life.
 - A. Love fervently. (I Pet. 1:22.)
 - B. "Put away" five things: wickedness, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speakings.
 - C. Desire, long for, sincere milk.
 - D. The dimensions of the new life: (I Pet. 2:11 -3:13.)
 1. Self-control. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 2. Respect civil authority. (I Pet. 2:13-17.)
 3. Servants respect masters. (I Pet. 3:18-25.)
 4. Wife-Husband relationships. (I Pet. 3:1-7.)
 5. Godly attitude. (I Pet. 3:8.)

Conclusion:

1. Births are exciting.
2. The new birth is more exciting.
3. The new life that is brought forth by the new birth is one of purpose, peace, joy, and hope.
4. Why not "obey the truth", (I Pet. 1:22), and be born again?

GRASS, GLORY AND GOD

I Peter 1:22-25

Thesis: To urge God's people to establish true values for living.

Introduction:

1. Peter quotes from Isaiah. (Isa. 40.)
 - A. Isaiah lived during a time of political crisis.
 - B. He predicted (chapter 39) the Babylonian captivity.
 - C. However, the people are to anticipate the coming of *the* King and His Kingdom.
 - D. The one who would come to prepare the way for the King is called "The Voice". (Isa. 40:3; Matt. 3:3.)
2. A significant contrast: flesh, grass, and Word of God.
3. Many people need this lesson:
 - A. Many are living as if there were no eternity with a hell and a heaven.
 - B. Jesus knew people would have a problem getting life's values straight - so much of His teaching deals with this problem. (Matt. 6:19,20.)
 - C. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write about this problem. (Col. 3:1,2.)
4. The choices before us:

Body:

- I. Following The *Flesh*.
 - A. We identify with our fleshly bodies. (2 Cor. 5:1.)
 1. We see people using means to prolong life in a fleshly body: jogging, vitamins. (I Tim. 4:8.)
 2. We depend on medical science to keep us well.
 - B. What about people who neglect godly exercise. (I Tim. 4:8.)
 1. They do not read Bible, pray, attend worship assembly.
 2. They do not get involved in "doing good". (Gal. 6:10.)
 - C. Fleshly bodies are temporal. (2 Cor. 4:16 - 5:1.)
 1. Flesh is as grass.
 2. Grass now "dead".
- II. Glory of Man.
 - A. There are those who win the admiration and applause of their fellows.
 1. Some get attention by violation rules of society.
 2. Others get attention by serving.

- B. Sometimes people pay a price for acceptance.
 - 1. In schools - some may sacrifice purity.
 - 2. In business-do what others do.
- C. Sometimes people are reluctant to obey Christ because of what others will say.
- D. Pressure put on preachers to please people. (I Thess. 2:6.)
 - 1. Telling people to do what they want to do - makes one popular.
 - 2. Telling people one church is as good as another - popular.

III. God's Word Is Eternal.

- A. It reveals the true nature of man. (I Peter 1:22.)
 - 1. Peter's emphasis on "soul". (1:22; 2:11; 2:25; 4:19.)
 - 2. There is an eternal part of you. (2 Cor. 4:16-18.)
- B. God's Word is powerful - capable of producing a new birth. (I Pet. 1:22,23.)
 - 1. People can be made new! (2 Cor. 5:17.)
 - 2. God's Word is "incorruptible seed".
- C. God's Word can build us into a loving family. (I Pet. 1:22.)

Conclusion:

- 1. By God's Word we ultimately shall be judged. (John 12:48.)
- 2. The Savior contrasted the abiding nature of His Word with the temporal nature of Jerusalem and the earth. (Matt. 24:35.)

NEW BORN BABIES

I Peter 2:1-3

Thesis: To emphasize the connection in God's word and spiritual growth.

Introduction:

1. Those to whom Peter initially penned these words had been "born again." (I Peter 1:23.)
2. Therefore, they are compared to "new bom babes." (I Pet. 2:1,2.)
3. It is unnatural for babies not to grow. Natural for them to grow.
 - A. Do they grow without food? (Note: "thereby.")
 - B. Peter's closing admonition involved growth. (2 Pet. 3:18.)

Discussion:

- I. Desire Milk of God's Word.
 - A. Baby has innate desire for physical food.
 1. However, Christian must develop that desire. This is Peter's purpose in this admonition. (I Pet. 2:1,2.)
 2. The desire is based upon realized need.
 - B. Importance of God's word to the Christian.
 1. The Christian grows or dies spiritually. (Heb. 5:12-14.)
 2. God's word has power to reveal information about salvation. (James 1:22.)
 - C. Christian needs the *sincere* milk of the word.
 1. Sincere milk is unadulterated word. (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Pet. 3:16.)
 2. One cannot grow spiritually on worldly philosophies; social programs; vain speculations of pseudo-prophets.
- II. Word Teaches That Things Which Impede Growth Must Be Put Off.
 - A. Some things must be put aside so one can grow.
 1. Matters not how much study God's word, no growth until these hindrances are put aside.
 2. Common figure in the New Testament: discarding unfit clothing. (See: Col. 3:8-10; Eph. 4:22-24.)
 - B. Peter lists some specific sins that must be put off (or, out of one's heart and life.)
 1. Malice. (Evil disposition; desire to injure others.)
 2. Guile. (Craftiness; lit., to "catch with bait.")
 3. Hypocrisy (Deceptive and deceitful actions.)

4. Envy. (A spirit of unhappiness because of good fortune others have.)
5. Evil speaking. (Eph. 4:28; Col. 4:6.)

III. "If Tasted That The Lord Is Gracious." (I Peter 2:3.)

- A. Christian character must be built on solid experience.
- B. "If," or "since." Taste excites the appetite.
- C. The Christian has already had an experimental acquaintance with:
 1. Forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2:38.)
 2. Possibility of resurrection. (I Cor. 15:22; I Thess. 4:13-18.)
 3. Possibility of crown of righteousness. (I Pet. 1:4,5,9.)
 4. Possibility of word supplying every spiritual need. (2 Tim. 3:16,17.)

Conclusion:

1. A new birth is necessary. (John 3:3-5; I Pet. 1:22-23.)
2. A new life of spiritual growth is also required.
3. Are you stronger now as a Christian than you were five years ago; one year ago? If not, why not?

CHALLENGE OF A NEW LIFE

I Peter 2:1 -11

Thesis: To urge God's people to take the Christian life seriously.

Introduction:

1. Values of this lesson:
 - A. To non-Christian: see the possibilities and responsibilities of the Christian life.
 - B. To new Christians: see the challenge before you.
 - C. To mature Christians: a reminder of what we are supposed to do and become.
2. I Peter is a book of hope because the apostle is discussing suffering.
3. God's people suffer but out of suffering they will:
 - A. Identify with God's Son who suffered. (I Pet. 1:9-11; 2:21; 3:18; 4:1; 5:1.)
 - B. Have their characters developed. (I Pet. 1:5-8.)
4. It is because of suffering that God's people need to know their identify! (I Pet. 4:15,16.)
5. Christians are people who have been born again! (I Pet. 1:22-25.)
6. They are challenged to:

Body:

- I. "Lay Aside" Some Things. (I Pet. 2:1.)
 - A. Ungodly attitudes: malice, guile, envy.
 - B. Ungodly actions: hypocrisy, evil speaking.
 1. We live in a world of artificial things: flowers, butter, etc.
 2. God does not want "artificial", but real people - genuine from the heart.
- II. Desire God's Word. (I Pet. 2:2,3.)
 - A. Analogy of baby breaks down - physically babies do not need encouragement to eat.
 - B. Desire God's Word for spiritual growth.
 1. God's word is a purifier. (I Pet. 1:22,23.)
 2. God's word is a protector! (Psa. 119:11.)
 3. God's word is a provider. (Acts 20:32.)
 - C. "Tasted that the Lord is gracious".
 1. Think of how God's word has already blessed your life!
 2. God will continue to bless your life.

- II. Offer Up Spiritual Sacrifices. (I Pet. 2:5.)
 - A. Under law the people of God offered animal sacrifices.
 - B. Under the new covenant the sacrifices are "spiritual".
 - 1. "Spiritual": Things that have their origin with God and are consistent with His character.
 - 2. All sacrifices to God are to be spiritual.
 - a. Singing. (Heb. 13:15; Col. 3:15,16; Eph. 5:19.)
 - b. Giving. (2 Cor. 9:6,7.)
 - c. Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:27,28.)
 - C. Contrast with religion of convenience.
 - D. "Show forth God's praises" by: deed and worship.

- IV. Abstain From "Fleshly Lusts". (I Pet. 2:11.)
 - A. Fleshly lusts: uncontrolled desires of the flesh. (Gal. 5:17.)
 - 1. Unless controlled they work themselves out in life in one or more works of the flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21.)
 - 2. Control sin by controlling lusts. (Jas. 1:12-17.)
 - B. Why abstain?
 - 1. "Strangers and pilgrims": not a native of this world. (I Pet. 1:17; Phil. 3:20,21.)
 - 2. "War against the soul".

Conclusion:

- 1. God's people have been, by a new birth, brought to new life in Christ.
- 2. It is a challenging life!!
- 3. It is a rewarding life - now and eternally. (I Pet. 1:3-5.)
- 4. There is a price to be paid in order to become and be a Christian. (I Pet. 1:6-8.)
- 5. Jesus paid the price that we might become His people. (I Pet. 3:18.)

WORSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY

I Peter 2:5

Thesis: Worship and spirituality must be viewed as reciprocal.

Introduction:

1. Ritualism apart from righteousness reduces worship to entertainment by and for spectators!
2. Real worship is the loving sacrifice of saints; it is not a shallow performance of superficial "spiritual showmen."
3. Formality in worship without spirituality is like a body without the spirit.
4. "Spiritual": "Things that have their origin with God and which, therefore, are in harmony with His character." (Vine.)
 - A. Paul's discussion. (Rom. 8.)
 - B. Spiritual are those not overtaken in faults. (Gal. 6:1.)
 - C. Those who produce fruit of Spirit. (Gal. 5:22,23.)
5. How become spiritual and now worship fosters and demands it.

Body:

- I. Born Again! (I Peter 1:22-2:3.)
 - A. New Birth involves rebirth of man's spirit. (John 3:1-10.) (Potential for spirituality is in us because we have a spirit.)
 - B. Souls "purified". (Past perfect: completed!)
 - C. Love one another - why? (House/Family) May help or hinder people being spiritual.
- II. "Built Up House".
 - A. Babes potentially "stones"
 - B. Church often described as God's House.
 1. Isaiah's prophecy. (Is. 2:2-5)
 2. Paul challenge. (I Tim. 3:15.)
 - C. God's effort to make us spiritual.
 1. Spiritual message does not appeal to physical impulses (I Peter 1:24,25.)
 2. Spiritual birth. (I Peter 1:22,23)
 3. Spiritual kingdom. (John 3:5.)
 4. Spiritual blessings. (Eph. 1:3.)
 5. Spiritual life. (Gal. 5:22,23)
 6. Spiritual goal. (Col. 3:1-3)
 - D. This house/family is a family of holy priests! (Holy priesthood preceded by a preposition showing purpose.)

III "Spiritual Sacrifices." (I Peter 2:5.)

' A. "To offer"

1. Usual word for offering sacrifices, (cf. Heb. 7:27.)
2. "Literally to bring up to the altar."
3. Same word in v. 24, "Christ bore, i.e. bore up to the cross".

B. Spiritual Sacrifices.

1. Spiritual blessings. (Eph. 1:3.)
 - a Physical blessings come to evil/good. (Matt. 5; Ps. 73.)
 - b. Adoption, forgiveness, in church - spiritual blessings.
2. Worship designed by God is for spiritual emphasis.
 - a. Lord's Supper does not nourish body. (I Cor. 10:16.)
 - b. Spiritual songs. (Eph. 5:19)

C. *Sacrifices!* (Heb. 13:15.)

Conclusion:

1. Spirituality and worship are reciprocal.
2. One fosters the other.
3. "Acceptable to God"!

WHY THE CHURCH NEEDS SPIRITUAL ELDERS AND DEACONS

I Peter 2:5

Thesis: To show what spirituality is and, therefore, the need of spiritual leaders.

Introduction:

1. I will mention some things and you mentally register what comes to mind:
 - A. "Church Growth."
 - B. "Elders meetings".
 - C. "A Successful gospel meeting".
 - D. "The work of deacons".
 - E. "A successful Bible School program".
 - F. "Youth programs".
 - G. "Fellowship".
2. How many thought *exclusively* of material aspects of the church?
 - A. For example: "Church growth: increased membership, enlarging the building."
 - B. "Successful gospel meeting: number baptized, restored, and/or attendance".
3. There are some reasons why the church must have spiritual men in the leadership - as this lesson will discuss.
4. "Spiritual", defined: "Things that have their origin with God, and which, therefore, are in harmony with his character". (Vine, vol. IV, p. 64.)
 - A. Blessings in Christ are spiritual. (Eph. 1:3.) These include: God's election, adoption, redemption, salvation.
 - B. The "spiritual man" is one who:
 1. "Walks by the Spirit"/ (Gal. 5:16) Therefore, does not fulfill the lusts of the flesh".
 2. "Led by the Spirit" and is not, therefore, under the law of Moses. (Gal. 5:18, cf. 5:4.)
 3. "Lives by the Spirit". (Gal. 5:25.)
 4. Therefore, produces the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22,23.)
5. Why people like this are needed as leaders in the church.

Body:

- I. The Nature of The Church. (I Peter 2:5.) (2 uses of the word "spiritual".)
 - A. Who are these people identified as "living stones"?

1. God's elect/chosen ones. (I Pet. 1:1.)
 2. Heavenly-oriented people. (I Pet. 1:3-5.)
 - a. Sojourners on earth. (I Pet. 1:17.)
 - b. "Pilgrims" here. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 3. A holy people. (I Pet. 1:15.)
 4. A people redeemed. (I Pet. 1:18,19.)
 5. A purified people. (I Pet. 1:22-25.)
 6. People who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious" (I Pet. 2:3.)
- B. A spiritual house in contrast to the temple.
1. The Samaritan woman told Jesus that the Jews believed Jerusalem was the place to worship. (John 4:20.)
 2. Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem. (Matt. 24.)
 3. The church is now God's holy temple.
- C. Kind of sacrifices to be given in this "spiritual house" - "spiritual sacrifices". (I Pet. 2:5.)
1. The sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. (Heb. 13:15.)
 2. Doing good. (Heb. 13:16.)
 3. How do elders "do good"? (cf. Heb. 13:17. note context.)

II. The Constant Challenge of the World. (Rom. 12:1,2.)

- A. The power of secularism.
1. Defined, "The ordering of one's life as if God did not exist".
 2. When men reject God then they:
 - a. Make their own gods.
 - b. Lose absolute moral guidelines. (Rom. 1:20-32.)
 - c. Sacrifice human dignity on altars of lust, perversion, greed and conceit.
- B. See impact of secularism in Scientism (the philosophy that Science has answer to all of man's problems.)
1. Science can serve man, but Science cannot save man.
 2. Technology can produce a multitude of good, but it cannot produce goodness in a multitude.
 3. The world may satisfy man's selfish greeds, but the world cannot meet man's spiritual needs.
- C. How secular has the church become?
1. Where is the emphasis: material or spiritual?
 2. One man said, "When I hear the word 'fellowship', I smell coffee."

III. To Rescue People From The Secular. (Gal. 6:1.)

- A. People can be "overtaken".
- B. The false teachers had had a pronounced negative influence on the churches of Galatia. (Gal. 5:13-15.)
- C. The war continues between the "flesh" and "spirit" - some lose the battle. (Gal. 5:19-21.)
- D. Whom shall God use to "rescue the perishing"? - The spiritual!

Conclusion:

- 1. How develop "Spirituality"? (Not by miraculous working of the Holy Spirit.)
 - A. Spiritual food. (I Pet. 2:2.)
 - 1. Is that word being preached today? (cf. Acts 20:26,27.)
 - 2. Spiritual development is in direct proportion to the study of God's word.
 - B. Abstain from fleshly lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.) (note: "soul".)
 - C. Involvement in good works. (I Pet. 2:12.)
- 2. How many churches select leaders on the basis of spiritual qualifications as compared to material accomplishments?

A CHRISTIAN HAS PRECIOUS RELATIONSHIPS AND SIGNIFICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

I Peter 2:5-10

Thesis: To show that a Christian has relationships with and responsibilities to others.

Introduction:

1. One is not a Christian in isolation.
 - A. The Christian is part of a spiritual community.
 - B. The Holy Spirit, through Peter, rules out "solitary religion."
2. The relationships impose responsibilities.
3. Three figures describe some of these relationships.
 - A. The Christian is a living stone in a spiritual house. (I Pet. 2:5.)
 - B. He is in a holy priesthood. (I Pet. 2:5.)
 - C. He is a citizen of a holy nation. (I Pet. 2:9.)

Discussion:

- I. The Christian Is A Living Stone In A Spiritual House. (Matt. 16:18.)
 - A. Jesus called the church a building. (Matt. 16:18.)
 - B. This building has a sure foundation. (I Pet. 2:6,7.); Isa. 28:16.)
 1. The chief cornerstone holds the building together.
 2. It is a foundation tested by the greatest power over man, viz., death. (Isa. 28:16; Acts 2:24.)
 - C. This building is God's "holy temple." (Eph. 2:20-22.)
 1. The Old Testament temple was material.
 2. The New Testament temple is spiritual.
 3. The temple is a place of beauty and worship.
 - a. The church reflects the beauty of holiness.
 - b. The church worships God in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24.)
- II. The Christian Is In A Holy Priesthood. (I Peter 2:5,9.)
 - A. Under the Law of Moses, the priest officiated in worship.
 1. Christians are God's true worshippers today.
 2. Worship means: "Acts of reverence paid to deity (God)"—Webster.
 - B. These Christian priests offer up spiritual sacrifices.
 1. All items of worship demand heart involvement.

- a. "Sing . . . and make melody in your heart." (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15,16.)
 - b. Giving is to come from a purpose of heart. (2 Cor. 9:7.)
 - c. The Lord's Supper is to be eaten in a worthy manner, i.e., with heart in act. (I Cor. 11:17-28.)
 - d. Prayer is to be from a heart of faith. (Jas. 1:6.)
 - e. God's word is to be held in respect.
2. If one believes that worship is unto God, how could he:
 - a. Willfully miss the worship service?
 - b. Be inattentive during the worship service?
 - c. Fail to worship from the heart?

III. The Christian Is A Citizen Of A Holy Nation. (I Pet. 2:9.)

- A. The word "holy" means separation and dedication.
 1. The Christian is called from the world.
 - a. He has been called by the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14.)
 - b. He has been called "out of darkness." (I Pet. 2:9.)
 - c. He has been called "into God's marvelous light." (I Peter 2:9.)
 - d. He has been called unto great honor and love—to be the "people of God." (I Pet. 2:10; I Jn. 3:1-3.)
 - e. He has been called to mercy. (I Pet. 2:10; Jude 21.)
 2. A Christian is dedicated to God and His service. (I Cor. 19,20.)
- B. This holy nation is a monarchy with Jesus as King.
 1. A citizen of this holy nation cannot live as he desires, but as the Lord (ruler) directs. (I Pet. 1:14.)
 2. The people of the Lord are to be zealous of "Good works." (Titus 2:14.)

Conclusion:

1. The Christian does not take lightly the privilege of fellowship. (I Pet. 2:17; Note: "brotherhood.")
2. The Christian realizes that he has responsibilities to others.
3. He also enjoys rights and rewards.
4. Would you become a part of God's house (1 Tim. 3:15), God's priesthood, God's holy nation? You may, if you will.

WHAT GOD EXPECTS OF US

I Peter 2:9,10

Thesis: To challenge us so we will sense God's expectation of us.

Introduction:

1. There are many kinds of inspections in life.
 - A. In the military there are periodic inspections.
 - B. Restaurants have inspections.
 - C. Schools have self-studies to be accredited.
2. God inspects His church.
 - A. The expression, "I know Thy works" is found in 5 of 7 letters to seven churches of Asia. (Rev. 2,3.)
 1. To Smyrna God said, "I know your tribulation".
 2. To Pergamos God said, "I know where you dwell".
 3. God knows what we are!
 - B. The church is the church of the "living God". (I Tim. 3:15.)
3. The realization that God has certain expectations of His people should:
 - A. Keep us from spiritual complacency.
 - B. May bring some of us to penitence.
 - C. Help us realize that what God expects may be quite different from what the world expects of us.
4. According to I Pet. 2:1-10 God wants us to:

Body:

- I. Know What We Are: A Spiritual House. (I Pet.2:5-6.)
 - A. Christians are "stones" - stability and endurance.
 - B. The stones constitute a house.
 1. "Hermit" Christians are not genuine.
 2. "Free Lance" Christians are a contradiction.
 - C. How does this Bible Truth compare to the idea that one can be a good Christian and never in the church?
 - D. Purpose of this house?
 1. Offer spiritual sacrifices!
 2. "Spiritual": Things that have their origin with God and are consistent with His character.
- II. Know Who We Are. (I Peter 2:9,10.)
 - A. An elect race.
 1. Jesus was God's elect stone. (I Pet. 2:4.)
 2. Christians are God's elect people.
 - B. Royal priesthood, (cf. Exodus 19:6.)
 1. Priests have access to God.

2. Priests lead people to God.
- C. A holy nation. (Ex. 19:6.)
 1. Israel was the special object of God's providential care.
 2. Hard for people to understand that the church is God's Israel now!
- D. A people for God's own possession.
 1. Paul's emphasis to Titus. (Tit. 2:14.)
 2. God calls by the gospel, (2 Thess. 2:13,14), but *He Calls!*
- F. The people of God.
 1. People who not only belong to Him but,
 2. Take their nature from Him. (2 Pet. 1:3,4.)
- G. Obtained mercy.
 1. God has saved us by His mercy. (Tit. 3:5.)
 2. He continues His mercy by forgiving us.
- H. Contrast this with the way humanity is "put down" by:
 1. Songs.
 2. Television programs.
 3. Movies.
 4. Might get impression that there are no decent people around!

III. What We Should Do. (I Pet. 2:9)

- A. Show forth His "excellencies", or "promise", or "virtues".
- B. This is done by the church in heaven! (Eph. 3:10,11.)
 1. The church is a manifestation of how God can save sinful man.
 2. It is living proof of God's power.
- C. The church on earth should "show forth" God's praises:
 1. In worship..
 2. In evangelism.
 3. In life.
 4. By good works. (I Pet. 2:12.)

Conclusion:

1. God expects us to be what He designed the church to be.
2. This is done as each person takes his/her place in the living house.
3. The song: "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" - is a good summary of this lesson.

THE WAR

I Peter 2:11,12

Thesis: God's people must actively resist evil.

Introduction:

1. God's people are His people because they have been "born again." (I Pet. 1:22-25)
2. The "born again" ones are indeed the "people of God." (I Pet. 2:10)
3. However, God's people must realize that they are involved in a spiritual war.
 - A. Christianity is described as a warfare. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)
 - B. Christians are soldiers. (Eph. 6:10-18)

Body:

- I. Realize the Position They Have.
 - A. God's people are "strangers".
 1. Stranger. "Those who have no legal status where they sojourn." (cf. John 17:15)
 2. Heaven is the "native country" of Christians. (Phil. 3:20,21)
 3. Christians in the world are like Israel in Egypt - Egypt is not home.
 4. Abraham realized that he was a stranger and sojourner. (Gen. 23:4; Heb. 11:9,10)
 - B. God's people are "pilgrims", i.e., "a traveler on a journey."
- II. Abstain From Fleshly Lusters.
 - A. Abstain means, "to hold back from", "to hold oneself from..." (Vine)
 1. This is an indirect command which literally means, "to keep on abstaining from."
 2. The possibility of abstaining is implied. (I Thess. 5:22)
 3. In old west there was a saying "don't carry a gun if you don't intend to use it."
 - B. "Fleshly Lusters."
 1. The problem is not the flesh, but "fleshly lusts."
 2. "The flesh is a good servant, but a bad master."
 3. Lusts: passions, or - uncontrolled desire.
 4. "Flesh" so often abused that Bible calls it "sinful". (Rom. 8:1-3)
 - C. Some of these "lusts" are listed in scripture.
 1. Drunkenness, intemperance, idolatry.

2. Fornication is one of the lusts. (I Thess. 4:3)
- D. How does the challenge to "abstain" appeal to a permissive age?

III. Sensitive to Influence.

- A. People will "behold" (vs. 12 - "to view carefully, as a personal witness.)
- B. Power to encourage us to guard our lives.

IV. Be Involved Positively.

- A. Active in "good works" - beautiful goodness which strikes the eye.
- B. Good works constitute a practical Christian.
 1. People who condemn may be converted.
 2. This approach is recommend in dealing with a non-Christian marriage partner. (I Peter 3:1-5)
- C. "Good works" can lead men to God.
 1. Jesus declared this fact. (Matt. 5:16)
 2. People who condemn may be led to glorify God.

Conclusion:

1. God's people are to "war" the good fight so men may obey God - so there can be a "day of visitation."
 - A. "Visitation" some word translated "Bishop", (I Peter 2:25)
 - B. God is the "overseer" of men.
2. Design of Christianity: God's glory!
 - A. God created man for His glory
 - B. Man may in Christ realize the potential of glorifying God.

GOD'S CALLED CHILD

I Peter 2:9, 21

Thesis: The gospel call produces change in the life of a person.

Introduction:

1. To see God's definition of a Christian should:
 - A. Cause one to appreciate the honor of being recognized as God's child.
 - B. To be keenly aware of the responsibility one has if he is a child of God.
2. Peter had declared that God calls men to become His people. (Acts 2:39.)
3. This call will be one of two ways:
 - A. Direct, mysterious, miraculous.
 - B. Through the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14.)

Discussion:

- I. The Christian Has Been Called "Out Of Darkness." (I Pet. 2:9.)
 - A. "Darkness" means: ignorance and sin.
 - B. There is a kingdom or power of darkness controlling the minds and lives of men. (Eph. 5:17-19.)
 - C. "Darkness" is controlled by the devil. (Eph. 6:12.)
 - D. Christians have been "translated out of the power of darkness." (Col. 1:12-14.)
 - E. Paul's mission was to turn people from darkness. (Acts 26:16-18.)
- II. The Christian Has Been Called "Into God's Marvelous Light." (I Peter 2:9.)
 - A. "Light" means truth, purity, and goodness.
 - B. A Christian has the "light of life." (John 8:12.)
 1. "Light" of purposeful life. (Ecc. 12:13,14.)
 2. "Light" of powerful life. (Matt. 5:14-16.)
 3. "Light" of rewarding life. (John 10:10.)
- III. The Christian Has Been Called "Unto" A Life Exemplified By Jesus Christ. (I Peter 2:21.)
 - A. A life of doing good. (I Pet. 2:20; Gal. 6:10.)
 - B. A life of patiently suffering. (I Pet. 2:20; 4:15,16.)
 - C. A life of purity. (I Pet. 2:22; Eph. 5:24-27; Jas. 1:27; 4:4; I Jn. 2:15-17.)

Conclusion:

1. Peter admonished Christians to make their "calling sure"! (2 Pet. 1:10.)
 - A. One can become entangled with and overcome by the world. (2 Pet. 2:20-22.)
 - B. One can add Christian graces and never fall. (2 Pet. 1:5-11.)
2. Christians should walk worthy of the calling—are you? (Eph. 4:1,2.)

THE CHRISTIAN IS ABSTAINING AND ATTAINING I Peter 2:11,12

Thesis: To remind God's people to be careful about their lives.

Introduction:

1. The Christian is aware of his responsibilities to others of the "brotherhood."
2. He also has a duty and an opportunity to those outside the church.
3. It is impossible to live in sin and live for the Savior at the same time.

Discussion:

- I. The Christian "Abstains" From Lustful Indulgence.
 - A. An explanation:
 1. "Abstain": "To keep oneself back, to refrain *voluntarily*."
 2. "Fleshly": human nature apart from God. (Barclay.)
 3. "Works of the flesh." (Gal. 5:19-21.)
 4. "In indirect command (to keep on abstaining from)."¹
 - B. Reason for abstaining:
 1. A Christian is a "stranger in the world of lust and sin." (Same word is translated "foreigner in Ephesians 2:19.)
 - a. He is not a permanent resident upon earth. (Heb. 9:27; John 14:1-3.)
 - b. "This world is not my home." (Phil. 3:20,21.)
 2. "Fleshly lusts" war against the soul. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 - a. Lust produces sin which brings death. (Jas. 1:13-16.)
 - b. "Death" of the soul. (See James 5:19,20.)
- II. The Christian Is Attaining:
 - A. A winsome, good, lovely manner of life, (conversation, KJV.)
 1. "Honest" is from *Kalos* (good, winsome, lovely.)
 2. The Christian's life is a force for good.
 - a. The life of the wife may win the husband to Christ.
 - b. The life of the Christian should adorn, or beautify, the gospel. (Tit. 2:10.)
 - B. A life of active goodness.

1. The Christian is known for "good works." (I Pet. 2:12.)
 - a. These works are "good", i.e., winsome, attractive.
 - b. The books of Titus emphasizes "good works."(Tit. 2:7,14; 3:1,8.)
2. The scriptures furnish one to "every good work." (2 Tim. **3:16,17.**)
 - a. "Good works" are, therefore, the things God tells us to do in His service.
 - b. The book of Titus emphasizes "Good works."
3. Paul stressed the importance of "doing good." (Gal. 6:10.)
 - a. It is good to restore the erring. (Gal. 6:1.)
 - b. It is good to bear burdens. (Gal. 6:2.)
 - c. It is good to support preaching and teaching of God's word. (Gal. 6:3-9.)
 - d. It is good to help the poor. (Acts 9:36.)

Conclusion:

1. One cannot attain the life of Christian influence unless he abstains from fleshly lusts.
2. To indulge in fleshly lusts is to forfeit eternal life.
3. To forfeit eternal life means that hell forever is inevitable.

¹A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1933), Vol. VI, p. 99.

A CHRISTIAN IS ONE WHOSE LIFE IS A SERMON I Peter 2:11; 3:7

Thesis: To show the importance and power of Christian influence.

Introduction:

1. There is great power in influence for good or bad.
 - A. There is power for evil in wrong kind of influence. (I Cor. 5:6.)
 - B. There is power for good in right kind of life. (Matt. 5:13-16.)
2. The Christian uses his life and influence for the glory of God. (I Peter 2:12.)
3. This lesson will deal with four areas of life where the Christian preaches by the life he lives.

Discussion:

- I The Christian Abstains From Fleshly Lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.)
 - A. What are fleshly lusts?
 1. "Lust" means uncontrolled desire. (James 1:13-16.)
 2. "Fleshly" means human nature apart from God; life without the standards, help, grace, and influence of Christ.
 - B. The Christian will abstain from practices designed to arouse lusts.
 1. He will not feed his mind on pornography, i.e., books and magazines designed to arouse lusts.
 2. He will not patronize "adult only" movies.
 3. He will turn off lewd television programs.
 4. He will not participate in the modern dance.
 5. He will not indulge in promiscuous petting.
 - C. His motives for abstaining are:
 1. "Fleshly lusts" war against the soul. (Matt. 16:26.)
 2. He is but a sojourner in the world. (I Pet. 2:11; Phil. 3:20,21; Col. 3:1-4.)
 3. He is but a pilgrim on earth but briefly, but in eternity forever. (James 4:13,14.)
 4. He is aware of the opportunity to use his influence by doing good. (I Peter 2:12.)
- II. The Christian Preaches Good Citizenship. (I Pet. 2:13-17.)

- A. Christians were often falsely accused of being law-breakers. (Acts 17:7.)
 - 1. Christians recognized civil authority as sanctioned by God. (Romans 13:1-7.)
 - 2. In order to obey God, one must respect civil authority. (I Peter 2:13.)
 - 3. Their submission would put to silence these ignorant accusations. (I Peter 2:15.)
- B. Christians could not use "liberty" as a license to violate the law. (I Peter 2:16.)
- C. The Christian recognizes one law as superior to civil authority, viz., God's law. (Acts 5:29.)

III. The Christian's Business Life Is A Sermon. (I Peter 2:18-24.)

- A. The principles outlines in the New Testament call for:
 - 1. Respect. (I Pet. 2:18,19.)
 - a. Let employer show it for employee.
 - b. Let employee show it for employer.
 - 2. The dignity of work.
 - a. All is done to glory of God. (I Cor. 10:13.)
 - b. Work is not done for any earthly master; or for personal prestige; or for money; work is done for God.²
- B. Let both Christian employer and employee remember the power of a godly life. (I Peter 2:12.)

IV. The Power Of A Godly Life In The Home. (I Peter 3:1-7.)

- A. Peter acknowledges the possibility of the wife being unable to teach, by words, her unbelieving husband. (I Peter 3:1.)
 - 1. Men must obey the word. (I Peter 3:1; 1:22-25.)
 - 2. The wife may not be able to persuade the husband by what she says. (I Peter 3:1.)
 - 3. Her godly life may win her husband for the Lord. (I Peter 3:1.)
- B. The dedicated life is attractive. (I Peter 3:2-4.)
 - 1. Externals will not compensate for lack of internal quality. (I Peter 3:2-4.)
 - 2. There is a "beauty of holiness."
- C. The wife is to be in subjection to her husband. (I Peter 3:5.)
- D. The husband is to respect the wife. (I Peter 3:7.)

Conclusion:

- 1. "The best argument for Christianity is a real Christian."
- 2. The Christian preaches by the life he lives. (Matt. 5:16.)

3. Poem: "The Gospel According To You"

¹William Barclay, *The Letters Of James and Peter*, (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press), p. 237.

²William Barclay, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

A SUFFERING SAVIOR

I Peter 2:21

Thesis: To show that suffering has purpose.

Introduction:

1. I Peter is a book about suffering. The subject is discussed in each of the five chapters.
2. Peter is writing to saints who were suffering. (I Pet. 1:6,7.)
3. Surely these people would find encouragement in remembering the sufferings of their Savior.
 - A. Therefore, Peter discussed the sufferings of Christ in this epistle.
 - B. It becomes evident that the Savior's suffering had a purpose.
4. This lesson will trace the inspired statements about the Savior's suffering so God's people will be encouraged to:
 - A. Love the Savior as Lord and, therefore, serve Him faithfully.
 - B. See that the sufferings of the Savior had purpose.
 - C. Encourage saints to identify with the sufferings of Christ, that is, to pay any price to be a Christian.

Body:

- I. Suffering Predicted. (I Peter 1:10,11.)
 - A. The prophets had predicted that the Christ, the Messiah, would suffer.
 1. Therefore, the sufferings of Christ were not accidental.
 2. The sufferings were foreseen and foretold.
 - B. David had vividly described the suffering of the Messiah. (Psalm 22.)
 - C. Isaiah had so emphatically declared the suffering of the Christ that the prophet used the past tense in speaking of a future event. (Isa. 53:3-6.)
- II. The Personal Aspect of Suffering. (I Peter 2:21.)
 - A. He suffered "for you!"
 1. The Savior was innocent of sin. (Heb. 4:15.)
 2. He "took our sins and our sorrows".
 - B. The crucifixion of Christ is a historical fact. However, we need to see the personal reason and result of that fact. (Rom. 5:6-10.)
 - C. The pull of the cross (John 12:32,33) comes when we see that he died for *you* and *me*!

- III. The Suffering Had Purpose. (I Peter 3:18.)
- A. He suffered "for sins", that is, to save people from sins. (Ga. 1:4; Titus 2:14.)
 - B. He suffered death by crucifixion! (Luke 23:33.)
 - C. Imagine the pain of being nailed to a cross!
 - D. Jesus could endure the suffering because there was a purpose for it and a joy to follow the suffering! (I Peter 1:11; Heb. 12:2.)
- IV. The Suffering of A Person. (I Peter 4:1.)
- A. The Savior had identified with humanity. (Heb. 2:14; 2:9; Phil. 2:5-9.)
 - B. The Savior knew what it was like to be:
 - 1. Verbally attacked. (Matt. 12:24-34.)
 - 2. Mocked and ridiculed. (Matt. 27:29-31.)
 - 3. Physically tortured; He was scourged! (Matt. 27:26.)
 - 4. Nailed to a cross! (Luke 23:33.)
- V. The Suffering In Personal Application. (I Peter 4:13.)
- A. Those who suffer *for* Christ suffer *with* Christ. (Rom. 8:17.)
 - B. Those who were experiencing suffering knew something of what their Savior had experienced.
 - C. Suffering for a Suffering Savior - what an honor! (See Acts 5:41.)
 - D. Suffering for the Savior means God's approval. (I Pet. 4:14.)

Conclusion:

- 1. The Christ suffered. There was no other way for man to be saved. (Matt. 26:39,42.)
- 2. The suffering of our Savior had a purpose! Saints now suffer with purpose.
- 3. Isaac Watts captured the theme of the Suffering Savior in his song, "Alas, And Did My Savior Bleed".

THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP

I Peter 3:1 -7

Thesis: To show relationship of Christian wives and husbands to each other.

Introduction:

1. Four reasons why subject is important.
 - A. One can be an example to non-believing marriage partner. (I Peter 3:1.)
 - B. One can follow example of holy women. (I Pet. 3:5.)
 - C. Wife and husband can have a mutual hope of heaven. (I Pet. 3:7.)
 - D. Improper relationship can hinder spiritual relationship. (I Pet. 3:7.)
2. Marriage is designed by God. (Matt. 19:3-8.)
3. God who designed marriage should know how to control the relationship.

Discussion:

- I The Wife: (I Peter 3:1-6.)
 - A. The wife is to be in subjection to her husband. (I Pet. 3:1,5.)
 1. Not as slave to tyrant; a relationship based on loving subjection to a loving husband. (Eph. 5:23-25.)
 2. Woman to be in subjection "as unto the Lord." (Eph. 5:22.)
 - B. Basis of right conduct:
 1. Pure character springs from "fear of God." (I Pet. 3:2; Ecc. 12:13.)
 2. Recognition of value of internal adornment. (I Pet. 3:3,4.)
 - a. Manner of life "adorns" doctrine. (Tit. 2:10.)
 - d. Manner of life "becometh gospel." (Phil. 1:27.)
 - C. The pattern for conduct of Christian woman:
 1. Not Hollywood stars, worldly idols.
 2. Godly women such as Sarah. (I Pet. 3:5,6.)
- II The Husband: (I Peter 3:7.)
 - A. "Dwell with wife according to knowledge." (I Pet. 3:7.)
 1. Marriage is to be built on an intelligent basis.
 - a. Marriage is to be directed by God.
 - b. Marriage is built on mutual esteem.
 2. The husband must be understanding.
 - a. Of psychological characteristics of female.

- b. Of physiological make-up of wife.
- B. Give honor to wife as "unto weaker vessel." (I Pet. 3:7.)
 - 1. "Honor" is same Greek word translated "precious." (I Pet. 1:19.)
 - 2. Love of wife means love of self. (Eph. 5:28.)
- C. Husband and wife are "heirs together of grace of life." (I Pet. 1:7.)
 - 1. Husbands and wives have equal spiritual rights. (Gal. 3:26-28.)
 - 2. Relationship cannot be right with God if it is wrong with wife.
 - 3. "Grace of life", eternal life is a gift of God's grace.

Conclusion:

- 1. Relationship of husband and wife should be as Lord's relationship to church. (Eph. 5:23-33.)
- 2. Marriage not produced by human laws.
- 3. "Marriage is of God." (Heb. 13:14.)

SUBMISSIVE WIVES OF SMART HUSBANDS

I Peter 3:1 -7

Thesis: To clearly declare God's guidelines for the Husband-Wife relationship.

Introduction:

1. In the last verses of chapter two Peter had discussed Christian relationships.
 - A. The relationship of Christians to civil government.
 - B. The relationship of servants (employees) to masters (employers.)
 - C. The key idea is "submission, or subjection."
2. The importance of this lesson is seen in:
 - A. The number of families having disrupting problems.
 - B. Effort being made to blur the distinction between male and female. (Some imagine that sex distinction is discrimination.)
3. The Scriptures furnish us completely. (2 Timothy 3:16,17.)
4. God has some true guidelines for wives and husbands.

Body:

- I. Submissive Wives are not Inferior. (Verses 1-6)
 - A. The wife is to be in "subjection". Why?
 1. God says be in subjection.
 2. Possibility of winning the husband to Christ. (Vs. 1)
 - B. Good explanation: "meek and quiet spirit"
 1. "Meek", not weak, strength under control. (Praus)
 2. Quiet: tranquillity arising from within which causes no disturbance to others.
 - C. "Adorn".
 1. *Kosmos* (from which we get cosmetics)
 2. Harmonious arrangement: hence, world, or universe divinely arranged.
 3. Peter is not forbidding wearing gold, clothes - matter of emphasis (cf. John 6:27)
 - D. Godly Examples. (Vs. 5,6)
 1. "Holy Women".
 2. Daughters of Holy Women!
- II. Smart Husbands Are Not Superior. (Vs. 7)
 - A. "Knowledge": "with an intelligent recognition of the nature of the marriage relation." (Vincent) (Ignorance is

- enemy of happy marriages!)
- B. "Give Honor". (Same word translated "Precious" in chapter 1:19)
 - C. Three reasons to "get smart" in dealing with a wife.
 - 1. "as unto the weaker vessel". (The wife is not surrendered to the husband; she is entrusted to him.)
 - 2. Heirs together of the grace of life.
 - 3. Prayers be not hindered.

Conclusion:

- 1. Husband-wife relationship is the closest, most sacred of human inter-relationships.
- 2. We may let God direct us in this precious relationship, or we may follow man's ways.

LEARNING TO LOVE LIFE

I Peter 3:8-13

Thesis: To encourage God's people to be excited about life.

Introduction:

1. A strange text in a significant book!
 - A. I Peter is a book about suffering. (I Peter 4:16; I Pet. 1:6-8.)
 - B. We live in a world of suffering. (Some philosophers are certain that human suffering proves that God does not exist. How could a holy God permit suffering?)
 - C. In a book which openly discusses suffering, Peter quotes Psalms 34 about loving life!
 - D. "Life is difficult", Dr. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Travelled*.
2. Do you love life?
 - A. Some evidently do not - so suicide is a real problem.
 - B. Many depend on drugs.
3. How to love life.

Body:

- I. A Daily Decision. (I Pet. 3:10.)
 - A. People may live in the sorrow and/or sin of the past. (cf. to Phil. 3:13,14.)
 1. Some people dwell on mistakes they have made.
 2. Poet said, "let the dead past bury its' dead".
 - B. People may attempt to live in the uncertain future. (Jas. 4:13-17.)
 - C. Jesus said live one day at a time. (Matt. 6:34.)
- II. "Tie The Tongue". (I Pet. 3:10.)
 - A. Think how much trouble we get into by a careless use of the tongue!
 1. In the home: criticism, unkind words.
 2. In life generally.
 - B. Tongue has to be restrained. (Cf. James 3.)
 1. The tongue cannot be tamed. (James 3:8.)
 2. So easy to sin with the tongue. (Jas. 1:19.)
 - C. The lips should speak "no guile". (I Peter 3:10.)
 1. Guile: "a bait, snare, deceit". (Vine, Vol. II, p. 185.)
 2. Season the speech. (Col. 4:6.)
- III. Escape/Turn Away From Evil.
 - A. Influence: one can identify "evil".
 1. Some things specifically condemned. (Gal. 5:19-21.)

2. Some things harm our spiritual enthusiasm.
- B. The positive approach! "Do good". (I Pet. 3:11.)
 1. One must develop such a love for doing good - no time for evil. (III. Woman and little boys belt.)
 2. Parables of Jesus: doing, (John 15; Matt. 25 - talents.)
 3. Statements of Scripture. (Eph. 2:10; Gal. 6:10.)
 4. Have a reason to live: *to do good!*

IV. Pray Persistently. (I Pet. 3:12.)

- A. God's people have the privilege of prayer!
- B. God's people are urged to pray. (Luke 18.)
- C. One's view of God has influence on prayer!

Conclusion:

1. With trust in God how can we be afraid? (I Pet. 3:13.)
2. Life is opportunity!
3. Life is, for the Christian, an unexpected dividend; not a note coming due!
4. The poet said, "Tell me not in mournful numbers life is but an empty dream..."
5. God has a way for His people to "love life".

LOVING LIFE

I Peter 3:8-12

Thesis: We must apply God's formula for successful living.

Introduction:

1. Every day - 76 die by own hand.
2. Mental health is a real problem.
 - A. Sometimes related to physical health.
 - B. One of real problems facing us today.
3. This passage talks about a possibility of: loving life, seeing "good days"! (Quoted from Psalms 34:12-18)
4. "Finally", Peter says in concluding the guidelines about various relationships of life.
 - A. Loving life involves proper relationships with:
 1. The Lord, (vs 12)
 2. Others, (vs. 8-11)
 - B. If one "would love life" - requirements are set forth for loving life.

Body:

- I. Loving The Brethren, (vs. 8)
 - A. Division in the church may produce:
 1. Tensions, physical problems.
 2. Makes unhappy people.
 - B. "Be like minded." (character is both determined and revealed by that which one minds. Prov. 4:23; 23:7)
 1. Let Spirit of Lord control our minds. (Eph. 3:1-3)
 2. Let peace of Lord rule in our hearts. (Col. 3:15)
 - C. Have compassion. (Sympathetic)
 1. We are to: weep with those who weep." (Rom. 12:15)
 2. Sympathy and selfishness do not co-exist.
 - D. Tenderhearted.
 1. "Familiarity breeds contempt."
 2. So much suffering about us we could become callous.
 - E. Humble-minded.
 1. Humility comes from a realization of dependence on God.
 2. Humility comes from a standard which is perfect. (I Peter 2:21)
- II. Control The Tongue. (vs. 9,10)
 - A. Correlation of tongue and life.
 - B. Potential of tongue to bring hurt to ourselves and others.

1. Great fires from small fires. (I Peter 3:5)
2. Tongue is an unruly evil. (James 3:8)

III. Leave *Evil* Alone.

- A. Note number of times Peter talks about "evil" - 5 times.
 1. Opposite of "righteous." (vs. 12)
 2. *Kakos*: "Base, wrong, wicked, troublesome, destructive." (Thayer)
 3. "Evil shall slay the wicked." (Ps. 34:21)
- B. Evil is subject to identification • can know what it is. (cf. Heb.5:14)
- C. One way to depart from evil is by "doing good" - power of positive involvement.

IV. Look For Peace.

- A. Some who evidently encouraging strife!
- B. Possible to be "peacemakers." (Matt. 5:9)
- C. Make peace with God. (Rom. 5:1)

V. Pray to God. (vs. 12)

- A. Prayer God's antidote for Anxiety. (Phil. 4:6,7)
- B. Prayer is the Christian's safeguard against overwhelming discouragement. (Luke 18:1)

Conclusion:

1. The "face of the Lord" is against those who do evil. (vs. 12)
2. In day of Isaiah sinful Israel had caused God to hide his face from the people. (Isaiah 59:1,2)
3. Do you love life, or do you hate it? (see Ecc. 2:17)
 - A. Remember God in youth to enjoy pleasant memories of age. (Ecc. 12:1)
 - B. Then one can go to his "long home".. (Ecc. 12:5)
4. Psalm of life.

SUFFERING

I Peter 3:10-21

Thesis: Preparation for suffering.

Introduction:

1. There is much *suffering* in this world.
 - A. Physical - more obvious.
 - B. Psychological/emotional.
 - C. Combination: physical manifestation of emotional.
2. How much preparation do we make for it?
3. Peter is New Testament Book - corresponding to Job.
 - A. Sufferings of Christ. 1:11; 2:21,23; 3:18; 4:1; 4:13; 5:1 - 8 times.
 - B. Sufferings for Christ and right. 2:19,20; 3:14; 3:17; 4:15; 4:16; 4:19; 5:10-8 times.

Body:

- I Suffer For Righteousness Sake. (vs. 13-16)
 - A. God's will calls for people to suffer. (2 Tim. 3:12)
 1. Restraining force. (2 Cor. 12)
 2. To reach others. ("Doc" Greene - "give eyesight any day for my wife's soul.")
 3. Maturing force! (2 Cor. 4:15,16. "works for us...")
 4. Means of identifying. (2 Cor. 1:4)
 - B. One must be willing to pay the price to be God's person. (I Pet. 4:1.)
- II Suffer for Evil Conduct, (vs. 17)
 - A. May suffer because of wrong choices. (I Peter 2:20)
 - B. What suffer?
 1. Penalties of law. (I Peter 2:14; Rom. 13)
 2. Pain of guilt. (I Peter 4:15)
 3. Loss of "life". (I Peter 3:10)
 4. Loss of hope. (I Peter 3:15)
 5. God's acceptance. (I Peter 3:12)
 - a. God is a God of righteous judgment.
 - b. He is active in this moral universe.
- III Our Example: Christ the Sufferer, (vs. 18)
 - A. Christ has suffered for us. (I Peter 4:1; 2:21)
 1. Voluntary.
 2. Vicariously.
 - B. Identifying with Christ. (I Peter 4:12,13)
 - C. Glory of Survival! (I Peter 3:21-22)

1. Darkest hour in world - Calvary
2. Out of darkness arose Sun of Righteousness.

Conclusion:

1. Suffering is not, in the final analysis, the most important thing - how we react to it.
 - A. Fight fear! (I Peter 3:14)
 - B. Do not think suffering to be strange. (I Peter 4:12)
 - C. Not ashamed. (I Peter 4:16)
2. Commit soul to God! (I Peter 4:10)
3. Poem by Robert Louis Stevenson.

To see the infinite pity of this place,
the mangled limb, the devastated face,
The innocent suffered smiling at the rod -
A fool were tempted to deny his God.
He sees, he shrinks. But if he gaze again,
Lo, beauty springing from the breast of pain!
He marks the sisters on the mournful shares;
And even a fool is silent and adores.

A REASON FOR THE HOPE

I Peter 3:15

Thesis: To urge God's people to defend the faith.

Introduction:

1. This is an age of *inquiry*.
 - A. In the field of science men are searching, experimenting, analyzing.
 - B. Christianity encourages honest investigation. (Acts 17:11)
2. In religion people are looking for something dependable.
 - A. In an age of rapid change people need stability.
 - B. People need *answers* to real issues of life: man's origin, purpose, and destiny.
3. God's people have a *reason* to give and they should be willing to give it.

Body:

- I. A Reason For *Hope*.
 - A. Peter has emphasized Christian hope.
 1. God's people are "begotten to living hope". (I Peter 1:3)
 2. They are urged to hope for grace. (I Peter 1:13)
 3. Basis for hope. (I Peter 1:21)
 4. They have in them a hope. (I Peter 3:15)
 - B. Hope means "favorable and confident expectation." (Vine)
 - C. Hope is a vital aspect of salvation. (Romans 8:24)
 - D. Hope anchors the soul in the storms of life. (Hebrews 6:19,20)
- II. *Reason* For The Hope
 - A. Much religion today denies the intellectual basis of Christianity.
 1. Emphasis on emotion.
 2. Christianity is a religion of truth. (I Peter 1:22,23)
 - B. "Give an answer" translates a legal term which describes an attorney who "talked his client off from a charge."
 - C. The reason for hope is *faith*. (Hebrews 11:1)
 1. "Faith" is not merely a subjective response.
 2. There is a revealed faith. (Jude 3)
 - D. Christianity is not a myth. (2 Peter 1:16-21)

III. Relationship To Lord.

- A. He must be *sanctified* in the heart.
 - 1. "Sanctify": set apart.
 - 2. He must be the Lord of the heart. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)
- B. Two reasons for sanctifying Christ Jesus:
 - 1. To have hope.
 - 2. To be able to give a reason.

IV. Response Of Godly Life. (I Peter 3:16)

- A. The necessity of a good conscience, (vs. 16; 3:21)
- B. Power of this argument as seen in Chapter 2. (I Peter 2:15)
- C. A way to "prove" that God's will is good. (Rom. 12:2)

Conclusion:

- 1. The spirit of a right response: meekness and fear.
- 2. God's people have a reason to hope!
- 3. Song: "Whispering Hope".
- 4. Many today think that religion is a mere crutch.
 - A. In 1912 the Titanic made maiden voyage from Liverpool to N. Y. 1600 passengers. Ship hit iceberg. Orchestra played "Nearer My God to Thee."
 - B. In 1915 Lusitania was sunk by German U-Boat. A group of singers *The Royal Welch Male Choir* sang, as their lifeboat disintegrated, "Abide With Me."

WHY BE A CHRISTIAN?

I Peter 4:1 -6

Thesis: To stir people so they will live up to the demand of Christianity.

Introduction:

1. In this chapter we find two significant concepts: Christian and suffering. (I Peter 4:16)
2. Does it pay to be a Christian when one is not excused from suffering?
3. Does it pay to be a Christian when one may have to suffer because he is a Christian? (I Peter 1:6,7; 3:14)
4. Four reasons given in opening verses of I Peter 4.

Body:

- I. Sufferings of Christ, (vs. 1)
 - A. Predicted by the prophets. (I Peter 1:9-11)
 - B. Redeemed by His blood. (I Peter 1:18,19)
 - C. He suffered for us! (I Peter 2:21,24)
 - D. He suffered for sins to bring sinners to God. (I Peter 3:18)
 - E. Gratitude for Christ's sufferings!
- II. Enough Is Enough? (Vs. 3)
 - A. Let others control your life long enough ("The will of the gentiles.")
 - B. Vain life is received by tradition. (I Peter 1:18,19)
 - C. You have seen the folly of sin.
- III. Impact of Your Life! (vs. 4)
 - A. Influence is strong force.
 1. "Salt" (Matt. 5)
 2. "Light"
 - B. There was a noticeable difference in the lives of these people.
- IV. Judgment Is Coming, (vs. 5,6)
 - A. All shall *give account!*
 1. Judgment is as sure as death. (Heb. 9:27)
 2. All will appear. (2 Cor. 5:10)
 - B. The Judge is ready! (I Pet. 4:5,6)
 - C. Motive for preaching - get men ready for judgment, (vs. 6) (2 Tim. 4:1,2)

Conclusion:

1. It isn't uncommon for people to give excuses for not being a Christian.
2. We have presented four scriptural reasons to become and be a Christian.
3. You must decide if it is reasonable and right to become and be a Christian.

REASONS NOT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

I Peter 3:15

Introduction:

1. It is not uncommon for people to explain why they are not Christians.
 - A. Some of the reasons are philosophical - problems of believing in God and Christ.
 - B. Some of the reasons are emotional: "afraid I can't hold out"; "too many hypocrites in the church"; "can't know what is right or what to believe".
2. Who is a "Christian"? (I Peter 1:14; 22,23; 4:17.)
3. There are some valid reasons for not becoming a Christian.
4. This lesson is not designed to discourage anyone from becoming a Christian.
 - A. This lesson is in the approach of Jesus. (Luke 14:25-33.)
 - B. One needs to know what is expected of him.

Body:

- I. Christians Have To Suffer, (I Pet. 4:1,2.)
 - A. All people suffer. (Job 14:1,2.)
 - B. Sometimes we suffer because we are Christians.
 1. Put to grief through trials. (I Pet. 1:6-9.)
 - a. The power to stand is love for Christ. (I Pet. 1:8.)
 - b. The strength to go on is by faith! (I Pet. 1:8.)
 - c. The hope of victory is in the example of Jesus' suffering. (I Pet. 1:10-12.)
 2. Suffer for well-doing. (I Pet. 3:17.)
 - C. What will you suffer today?
 1. Depends, to some extent, on where you are. (In some countries suffer loss of friends, family, maybe finances!)
 2. Ridicule. (I Pet. 4:4.)
 3. Rejection by friends, perhaps, family.
 - D. Jesus suffered!
- II. Can't Do What You Want To Do! (I Pet. 4:3,4.)
 - A. The World says:
 1. "Do as you please".
 2. "Enjoy yourself. You only come around once".
 3. "Live it up".
 4. "Do what everybody else is doing". (Peer pressure.)
 - B. The World also reasons, "Freedom is a license"!

- C. Paul's statement: "You cannot do the things that you would". (Gal. 5:17.)
- D. Christians recognize Jesus as Lord. (I Pet. 3:15.)

III. Have To Constantly Battle Satan. (I Pet. 5:8,9)

- A. He is always there attempting to deceive or seduce Christians.
- B. A new Christian faces: temptations and discouragements.
- C. One can get weary in this battle. (Heb. 12:3-6.)
 - 1. Teenagers may think, "I'll have to battle Satan now, but later, I won't, he'll leave me alone".
 - 2. Middle-age people may think, "when I'm old Satan will leave me alone".
 - 3. The elderly fight Satan too!
- D. There is hope of victory.
 - 1. Christians will have their V-E Day (Eternal Victory.)
 - 2. Hope for the young. (I John 2:14-17.)
 - 3. Hope for all. (Eph. 6:10-18.)
- E. In Revelation we see: The Devil's doom and the Saints' victory! (Rev. 20:10; Rev. 21,22.)

Conclusion:

- 1. These are valid reasons not to be a Christian.
- 2. Not all people are willing to pay the price to follow Christ.
- 3. Song, "I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord" seems an appropriate conclusion.

WHAT ABOUT BAPTISM?

I Peter 3:17-22

Thesis: Through baptism we are saved from sin but not from suffering.

Introduction:

1. Subject of these verses is - suffering, (vs. 17,18; 4:1)
2. Christ suffered to "bring us to God."
 - A. "All suffering is evil." (cf. verse 18)
 - B. Suffered to the point of death.
3. Conquered death by the Spirit, (cf. Rom. 1:4)
 - A. By Spirit He preached to "spirits in prison."
 - B. Spirit of Christ in prophets. (I Peter 1:11; cf. 2 Pet. 2:5 - Noah was called a preacher.)
4. Salvation is not deliverance from suffering!
5. What is it?

Body:

- I. Preview of Salvation. (I Peter 3:20,21)
 - A. What happened to the evil people of Noah's day?
 1. It was a "world of ungodly." (2 Peter 3:5)
 2. People were disobedient. (I Peter 1:20)
 3. They perished. (2 Peter 3:6)
 4. But when Peter wrote this letter they were "in prison."
 - B. Noah and his family were *saved*.
 - C. This was a type of our salvation.
- II. The Purpose of Baptism: Salvation. (I Peter 3:21)
 - A. "Baptism doth now save us.": True or false?
 - B. Fundamental issue: Does baptism *declare* salvation or enable one to *acquire* salvation?
 1. Baptism precedes salvation. (Mark 16:16)
 2. Baptism precedes remission of sins. (Acts 2:38)
 - C. Why does baptism save? (Rom. 6:3-5)
 - D. What is the nature of the salvation?
 1. Not saved from suffering!
 2. Not a political deliverance.
 3. Not the "salvation to be revealed," (I Peter 1:5). This is a now salvation.
 4. Not a "putting away of filth of flesh". (I Peter 1:21)
 5. Deliverance from perishing! (2 Peter 3:6; 2:9)
 6. "an appeal to God for a good conscience." (NASV. cf. Heb. 10:22)

III. Power Behind The Command. (I Peter 3:21,22)

- A. The resurrection of Christ guarantees His *position*.
 - 1. Peter declared the resurrection and therefore the Lordship of Christ. (Acts 2:32-36)
 - 2. Paul connected resurrection and judgment. (Acts 17:30,31)
- D. Jesus was raised from the death to reign!
 - 1. He has all authority. (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - 2. He has stated terms of pardon from sin!

Conclusion:

- 1. Various Views of Christ preaching to spirits in prison.
 - A. Calvinism: Verified damnation. (Why only those at Time of flood.)
 - B. Second-chance advocates. (Word for preach is not evangelize but, *kerusso*)
- 2. Context-salvation from "prison" - not suffering!

THE CHRISTIAN'S HEART

I Peter 3:15-22

Thesis: To show how the Lord must control the heart of the Christian.

Introduction:

1. What one is in his heart is, in reality, what he really is.
 - A. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23.)
 - B. "As he thinketh ... so is he." (Prov. 23:7.)
2. What will control man's heart, or mind?
 - A. Lord? (2 Cor. 10:5.)
 - B. Lust? (2 Cor. 11:3; I John 2:15,16; 2 Pet. 1:4; Note: "The corruption in the world through (by, ASV lust.")

Discussion:

- I. The Lord Is Sanctified In The Christian's Heart. (I Peter 3:15.)
 - A. To "sanctify" is to "set apart."
 1. The Lord dwells, by faith, in the heart of the Christian. (Ephesians 3:17.)
 2. Christ lives in the Christian. (Gal. 2:20.)
 3. One must possess the "Spirit of Christ." (Rom. 8:9.)
 - B. Christ must be the Lord (ruler) of the heart of man.
 1. Every thought must be brought into captivity unto Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5.)
 2. The Christian must have the mind of Christ. (Phil. 2:5-11.)
 - C. The Lord is sanctified in the Christian's heart as the word dwells in and controls the heart. (Col. 3:16.)
- II. Hope Lives In The Christian's Heart. (I Peter 3:15.)
 - A. Christ dwelling in the Christian's heart provides the Christian with the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27.)
 - B. The Christian has the hope (desire with expectation) of an inheritance:
 1. Incorruptible: Imperishable, enduring reward.
 2. Undeiled: permanently clean. (Rev. 21:27.)
 3. Fadeth not away: permanent in beauty.
 4. Reserved in heaven. (I Pet. 1:4.)
 - C. The Christian hopes (desires and expects) grace or favor from the Lord at His second coming. (I Pet. 1:13.)
- III. The Christian Has A Good Conscience. (I Pet. 3:16.)

- A. The conscience is: "Lit., a knowing with, i.e., a co-knowledge with oneself."¹
 - 1. The word "conscience" or "conscious" means the same thing. (Heb. 10:2, compare KJV and ASV.)
 - 2. The conscience is a safe guide only when it is safely guided. (Acts 23:1, cf. Acts 27:9.)
- B. The good conscience is very important to the Christian.
 - 1. Paul included the "good conscience" in his summary of Christianity. (I Tim. 1:15.)
 - 2. He admonished Timothy to "hold a good conscience" in connection with a preservation of his faith. (I Tim. 1:19.)
- C. In baptism one manifests a good conscience. (I Pet. 3:21.)
- D. In living the Christian life, the conscience must be sensitive and clean.
 - 1. Some have consciences seared "as with a hot iron." (I Tim. 4:1-4.)
 - 2. These people can sin without feeling any inner condemnation. (Eph. 4:19.)

Conclusion:

- 1. "God looks upon the heart." (I Sam. 16:7.)
- 2. The Christian must "set his mind" on things above. (Col. 3:1,2; ASV.)
- 3. The words of the song, "Is Thy Heart Right With God?" seems to offer an appropriate conclusion to the lesson.

¹W. E. Vine, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 228.

PRAYING PEOPLE

I Peter 3:12

Thesis: To encourage God's people to pray more.

Introduction:

1. Jesus is the Christian's example or pattern. (I Pet. 2:21.)
 - A. The Christian seeks to reproduce the life Jesus lived. (I Cor. 11:1.)
 - B. Christ lives in the Christian. (Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27.)
2. One who does not pray is hardly following a praying Christ.

Discussion:

- I. Prayer Is The Privilege Of The Christian.
 - A. Prayer has a unique way of purifying the mind and unburdening the soul. (Luke 18:1.)
 1. If one is afflicted physically or mentally, he may pray for help. (James 5:13.)
 2. Paul urges prayer as an antidote for anxiety. (Phil. 4:6,7.)
 3. Through prayer the Christian may cast his anxiety upon the Lord. (I Peter 5:7.)
 4. Song: "peace is forfeited; pain is born", why? "All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."
 - B. Prayer is a vital part of God's plan for forgiveness when a Christian repents and confesses his sins. (I John 1:7-9; Acts 8:22.)
 - C. Prayer is communication with the Almighty.
 1. Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you." (Matt. 7:7.)
 - a. One must ask according to God's will. (I John 5:14.)
 - b. One must not ask selfishly. (James 4:3.)
 2. God does not have to work a miracle in order to answer prayer.
- II. Prayer Is The Responsibility Of The Christian.
 - A. Jesus taught men to "always pray." (Luke 18:1.)
 1. The Lord emphasized the necessity of persistence in prayer. (Luke 18:2-8.)
 2. He connected faith and prayer. (Luke 18:8.)
 - B. The apostle Paul admonished: "Pray without ceasing." (I Thess.5:17.)
 - C. He urged the saints at Rome to "continue instant in prayer." (Romans 12:12.)

- D. Christians are taught to pray for others. (I Tim. 2:1,2.)
- E. Christians are instructed to pray everywhere (I Tim. 2:8.)

III. Some Things Hinder Effective Praying.

- A. Mistreating a marriage partner. (I Peter 3:7.)
- B. Failing to refrain tongue from evil. (I Pet. 3:10; Note: context of I Peter 3:12.)
 - 1. Blessing and cursing should not come from the same mouth. (James 3:10.)
 - 2. The speech of the Christian should be carefully guarded. (Col. 4:6.)
- C. Engaging in evil practices. (I Pet. 3:11.)
 - 1. God hears and answers prayers of a righteous man. (Jas.5:16.)
 - 2. See: Psalms 66:18.)
 - 3. The prayer of a spiritual rebel is repulsive in God's sight. (Prov. 28:9.)
- D. Lack of faith hinders prayers. (James 1:6. See II-A above.)
- E. Ingratitude hinders prayers. (Col. 4:20; Phil. 4:6.)

Conclusion:

- 1. Someone has said that prayer is like writing checks on the bank of heaven.
- 2. Jesus' life was one with prayer as a vital force.
- 3. The Supreme Court of the United States has not banned:
 - A. Private praying.
 - B. Praying in a public worship assembly.
- 4. Have you banned prayer from your life?

REASONS FOR SERVING GOD

I Peter 4:1 -6

Thesis: To secure obedience to God's will in becoming and being a Christian.

Introduction:

1. Man has a choice: he may serve God or Satan. (Joshua 24:15.)
2. To serve the devil will bring pleasure now, but it will mean eternal hell after this life. (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 11:24,25.)
3. To serve God means life now and eternally. (John 10:10; Rom. 6:23.)
4. Peter outlines some reasons for serving God.

Discussion:

- I. The Death Of Christ. (I Peter 4:1.)
 - A. Jesus' death was a demonstration of God's love and care for man. (John 3:16; Romans 5:6-9.)
 - B. God's love for man should prompt man to respond with a love for God. (I John 4:19.)
 - C. Love for God will cause one to obey God. (John 14:15; I John 5:3.)
 - D. Paul reminded Titus to urge people to a zealous life by reminding them of the sacrifice of Christ. (Titus 2:14.)
- II. Peter Says That These People Had Sufficiently Served Sin. (I Pet. 4:3.)
 - A. Irony: If you feel that you are a debtor to sin, you have now paid that debt. (Rom. 8:12.)
 - B. Some specific sins listed:
 1. Lasciviousness. (Unbridled lustful excesses.) (2 Pet. 2:7; 2 Corinthians 12:21.)
 2. Lusts. (See: I Pet. 2:11,12.)
 3. Winebibbings. (ASV. Drunkenness, Robertson.)
 4. Revellings. (Drinking and dancing parties.)
 5. Idolatries. (Putting something in life before God. Col. 3:5; I John 5:21.)
- III. So One May Influence Others To Serve God.
 - A. There was an observable and recognized change in the lives of those who had become Christians. (I Pet. 4:4.)
 1. The criticism of the sinners was an admission of the change that God's people had experienced.
 2. They had turned from sin to serve God. (I Thess. 1:9.)

- B. God's people are the "salt of the earth" and "the light of the world." (Matt. 5:14-16.)
- C. There is a power in influence to lead men to serve God. (Matt. 5:16.)

IV. All Must Give An Account To God. (I Peter 4:5.)

- A. Judgment is as sure as death. (Heb. 9:27.)
- B. All shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ. (2 Cor. 5:10.)
 - 1. We shall not be judged by the criticisms of sinners.
 - 2. We shall be judged by Christ.
- C. Judgment will produce a great separation. (Matt. 25:31-46.)
- D. Judgment will result in eternal blessings or condemnation. (Matt. 25:46.)
- E. Those who had already died when Peter wrote would also face God in judgment. (I Peter 4:6.)

Conclusion:

- 1. These four reasons should prompt an individual to serve God.
- 2. One must serve God with reverence and respect. (Heb. 12:28.)
- 3. One serves Satan at the expense of his soul. (Rom. 6:23.)
- 4. To serve God is life and peace. (Rom. 8:6.)

MOTIVES FOR MORALITY

I Peter 4:1 -5

Thesis: To inspire people to become and be dedicated Christians.

Introduction:

1. There is a possibility of one knowing God's will and yet failing to do what the Lord commands. (James 4:17.)
2. People today, both saints and sinners, may, like Israel of old, "halt between two opinions." (See I Kings 18:21.)
3. Most people need to be motivated to do what God says.
4. There are four things in I Peter 4:1-5 that will motivate us.

Discussion:

- I. Gratitude For What Christ Has Done For Us. (I Peter 4:1,2.)
 - A. "He gave himself for us." (Titus 2:14.)
 - B. The Lord "tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.)
 - C. Only one out of ten lepers returned to thank the Lord. (See: Luke 17:11-19.)
 1. Ingratitude is a base sin.
 2. The old song says, "O, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be"!
 - D. Love begets love! (I John 4:19.)
- II. We Have Already Had "Fling" With Sin. (I Pet. 4:3.)
 - A. Peter's statement is one of irony: More than enough time has already been given to ungodly living!¹
 - B. What is the "Fruit", or "end" of ungodly living? (Rom. 6:21-23.)
 - C. Any time spent in sin is wasted time! (Rom. 13:11,12.)
 - D. Picture a man who spends 40, perhaps 50 years on earth living in sin at the expense of *eternal* salvation!
- III. Influence One Has On Others. (I Peter 4:4.)
 - A. The "evil speaking" by former associates was an indication that they *recognized* a change had taken place in lives of saints!
 - B. There is a power in example or influence.
 1. Paul urged Timothy to be an "example of believers. (I Tim 4:12.)
 2. Paul urged Titus to be a "pattern of good works." (Tit. 2:7.)
 3. Jesus said to and about His disciples: "You are the

salt of the earth and the *light* of the world." (Matt. 5:14-16.)

C. The Christian influences others:

1. He has an influence in the home.
2. He has an influence on the job or in the office.

Conclusion:

1. We all need motivation to do what we know we should do. (James 4:17.)
2. Peter sets forth in these verses adequate motivation to serve God.
3. Will you take these to heart?

'Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on I Peter*, p. 108.

LIVING IN VIEW OF THE END

I Peter 4:7-11

Thesis: Motivation for Christian living.

Introduction:

1. The context (historical and scripture) of I Peter is important in understanding the "end" which was at hand.
 - A. Historical: This epistle was written about 65 A.D. (5 years before destruction of Jerusalem and just before the intense persecution of Christians by Nero).
 - B. Peter talks much of suffering -
 1. a "fiery trial" is coming, (vs. 12)
 2. Many trials are coming. (I Peter 1:6.)
 3. Christ has suffered in the flesh - "arm yourselves with the same mind." (I Peter 4:1.)
 4. Commit soul to God. (I Peter 4:19)
2. Practical Lesson -
 - A. "End" of time cannot be ascertained. (2 Peter 3:10)
 - B. Need to live in state of readiness. (2 Peter 3:11)
 - C. Who knew what future holds? Persecutions may come again, if so, this lesson is practical.

Body:

- I. Call to Sobriety - Be of Sound Mind.
 - A. Sanity sees things in proper proportion.
 - B. Sanity distinguished the important from the unimportant.
 - C. Peter has much to say about soberness.
 1. Part of true Christian perspective. (I Peter 1:13)
 2. Resisting the Devil. (I Peter 5:8)
- II. Call To Prayer.
 - A. There is an emphasis in I Peter on praying.
 1. God's ears are open to prayer. (I Peter 3:12)
 - a. Prayer is one of the privileges of the Christian.
 - b. God hears and answers prayers!
 2. Prayers may be hindered. (I Peter 3:7)
 - B. "Watch", means "be calm, collected in spirit" and pray!
 - C. Jesus said pray and do not faint. (Luke 18:1)
- III. Call To Love.
 - A. John is usually identified as the "apostle of love."
 1. Peter said we are to "love fervently." (I Peter 1:22)

2. In giving the Christian graces Peter says "love". (2 Peter 1:7)
- B. "Fervent" love.
 1. "fervent" means to stretch out - as a runner stretches for the wire.
 2. Lessons:
 - a. Christian love is not an easy, sentimental reaction.
 - b. Have to love the unlovable.
 - c. Have to love in spite of injury.
 - d. Have to love even when it is spurned.
- C. Love covers sins. (Prov. 10:12)
 1. God's love does.
 2. Man's love does.

IV. Call To Service.

- A. Hospitality.
 1. Think how gospel depended on it - early missionaries.
 2. Churches often met in homes. (Rom. 16:5; Philemon 2)
 3. Elders were men given to hospitality. (I Tim. 3:2)
- B. Special Service - gifts -
 1. Speaking - God's oracles.
 - a. *Logia* - pagans used the word to identify words of their gods.
 - b. Words of God revealed.
 2. Ministering.

Conclusion:

1. Glorify God.
 - a. Reason Jesus said "let light shine." (Matt. 5:16)
 - b. All Christian does is to be done to God's glory. (I Cor. 10:31)
2. There are powerful, practical lessons for us in these words of Peter.

A CHRISTIAN IS A GOOD STEWARD

I Peter 4:10

Thesis: Emphasis on Christian living and giving.

Introduction:

1. The "gift" (I Pet. 4:10) refers specifically to miraculous gifts characteristic of the apostolic age. (See: I Cor. 12:8-11.)¹
2. The "steward" was the manager of a household or estate.²
3. The English word *steward* comes from "sty-ward"; "sty" was a place for cattle; "ward" was the keeper.
4. The principle of stewardship needs a constant emphasis.

Discussion:

- I. The Scope of Stewardship.
 - A. Christians have varied talents. (Matt. 25:14-30.)
 - B. Christians must be active in the *Lord's* work. (I Cor. 15:58.)
 - C. The Christian has material blessings in a trust. (2 Cor. 9:6,7.)
 1. The secret of Christian liberality: give self to the Lord. (2 Cor. 8:5.)
 2. The Christian belongs to the Lord. (2 Cor. 6:19,20.)
 - D. Christians have the gospel in trust. (I Thess. 2:4.)
- II. Successful Stewardship
 - A. Emphasis on maximums and now how little one may do and still please God. (Luke 17:10.)
 - B. Faithfulness is necessary. (I Cor. 4:2.)
 - C. Duty must be met and fulfilled. (I Pet. 4:10; Matt. 25:19-27.)
- III. The Seriousness of Stewardship:
 - A. One redeemed by Christ becomes a servant to Christ. (I Pet. 1:18,19; Rom. 6:17,18.)
 - B. The Christian recognizes God's ownership. (I Cor. 4:7; 6:19,20.)
 - C. The Christian recognizes stewardship as a positive duty. (I Pet. 4:10; I Cor. 9:17.)

Conclusion:

1. The Christian knows that all he is and has must be dedicated to Christ.
 - A. Personality or influence belongs to the Lord. (Matt. 5:14-16.)

- B. Time belongs to the Lord. (Eph. 5:15,16.)
- C. Material possessions belongs to the Lord. (Psalm 24:1.)
- 2. Believe what Lord said about stewardship. (Matt. 10:39.)
- 3. Paul recognized stewardship. (Gal. 2:20.)
- 4. The Christian knows that Lord has a claim, not on a mere 10%. 50%, but on all!
- 5. Song: "Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord to thee."

¹Guy N. Woods, *A Commentary on The New Testament Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude.* (Nashville, Tennessee: Gospel Advocate Co., 1954.)

²A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in The New Testament,* Nashville: Broadman Press.)

GOD GIVES STRENGTH TO MINISTER

I Peter 4:7-11

Thesis: To urge God's people to rely on God for help in serving.

Introduction:

1. Can sufferers serve?
 - A. Surely those who are not suffering can serve God.
 - B. What about those whose faith is being tried? (I Pet. 1:6,7.)
 - C. Can people who have physical illness serve God?
 - D. Can those who have heart-breaking family problems serve God?
 - E. Can teenagers who are ridiculed because of their faith serve God?
2. If sufferers cannot serve God then not many of us can serve Him, because suffering is a part of life.
 - A. Peter said, "arm yourselves to suffer". (I Pet. 4:1.)
 - B. He said that we share in Christ's sufferings. (I Pet. 4:12-16.)
3. If sufferers can serve through the strength that God gives, then all of us can minister!

Body:

- I. The Mind to Minister. (I Pet. 4:7.)
 - A. "End is near".
 1. Some commentators identify the "end" as the destruction of the Temple and Judaism.
 - a Destruction of Jerusalem is a guarantee of the Lord's coming. (Matt. 24:34-36.)
 - b. The lesson is the same.
 2. From God's perspective. (2 Pet. 3:8.)
 3. From perspective of our earthly life. (Jas. 4:13,14.)
 - B. Jesus explained the matter as "watching". (Matt. 24:42; 25:13.)
 - C. The Lord is ready!
 1. To judge. (I Pet. 4:5.)
 2. To *reveal eternal salvation*, (I Pet. 1:5.)
 - D. "Therefore": (I Pet. 4:7.)
 1. Have a "sound mind". Means to be in one's right mind. (Mark 5:15.)
 - a We cannot afford to lose our mental and moral balance in this sinful and intemperate world.
 - b. We must reject life of sinful indulgence. (I Pet. 4:3,4.)
 - c. We must practice self-discipline.

- d. We must live to serve!
2. Pray! (I Pet. 4:7.)

II. Motivation to Minister. (I Peter 4:8-10.)

- A. Fervent love for brethren.
 1. Note: "above all things", (cf. Col. 3:14.)
 2. "Fervent" love, (*ektenes*: the taut muscle of sustained effort of an athlete.)
 3. Love's action:
 - a. Covers a multitude of sins. (We forgive one another.)
 - b. Is hospitable.
 - c. Does not murmur.
- B. We are stewards. (I Pet. 4:10.)
 1. We have something put in our trust.
 2. Illustration: Parable of talents. (Matt. 25:14-ff.)
 3. God has trusted us to:
 - a. Speak/teach His word. (I Pet. 4:11.) (cf. Matt. 28:18-20.)
 - b. Minister/serve others.
 4. Ideal: "Good stewards". (I Pet. 4:10.)

III. Means For Ministering (Serving.)

- A. Recognition of *God's gift*. (I Pet. 4:10.)
 1. Gifts must be exercised. (Illustration: some have a gift to sing, must be enhanced by use.)
 2. Various gifts. (Rom. 12:4-8.)
- B. God's gives the strength to serve. (I Pet. 4:11.)
 1. Note: God "supplies" (equips, sustains) us in His service.
 2. People involved in personal work have experienced this.
 3. People involved in patiently teaching one for a long period of time.
- C. How does God give us strength?
 1. Through His word. (Acts 20:32. Illustration: we give one another encouragement, strength by words. (Heb. 3:12,13.)
 2. Through worship. (Heb. 10:24,25.)
 3. Through prayer. (I Pet. 4:7.)
 4. Through encouragement of others.

Conclusion:

1. The objective of ministering/serving is not the applause of men. (I Pet. 1:24; Matt. 6:2.)
2. The glory of God! (Matt. 5:16.)

3. God recognizes and rewards the service we give Him! (Matt. 6:3,4.)
4. The song, *Rescue The Perishing*, says, "strength for thy labor the Lord will provide".
5. If we believe this then let us serve God daily, faithfully • to His glory.
6. The place *to* serve God is in His kingdom. (Heb. 12:28.) Are you in it? Have you been born again? (John 3:1-10.)

GOD'S DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN

I Peter 4:12-19

Thesis: To challenge God's people to live up to the demands of the name "Christian".

Introduction:

1. Names identify and the name Christian identifies a special people.
2. Always used in the Scriptures as a noun.
 - A. Christians are disciples. (Acts 11:26.)
 - B. Christians are persuaded. (Acts 26:28.)
 - C. Then the passage from Peter gives several characteristics.

Body:

- I. People Who Pay Any Price to Follow Christ. (I Peter 4:12-15.)
 - A. A cross-bearing religion. (Matt. 16:24-26.)
 1. Not from a persecution complex.
 2. Willing to pay the price.
 3. Song: "Must I Be Carried to the Skies".
 - B. Persecution in Acts: Examples.
 1. Apostles first. (Acts 4,5.)
 2. Stephen. (Acts 7.)
 3. Church. (Acts 8.)
- II. People With Ethical Guidelines. (I Peter 4:15.)
 - A. People may suffer for wrong doing. (I Peter 2:20.)
 - B. May suffer as:
 1. Murderer - conscience, society's penalty.
 2. Thief - conscience, society's *penalty*.
 3. Evil doer - conscience, society's penalty.
 4. Busybody - conscience, society's penalty.
 - C. Christian follows Christ.
- III. People in God's *Family*. (I Peter 4:17.)
 - A. Church is God's house. (I Tim. 3:15.)
 - B. "Christian out of the church". Then:
 1. God's child out of God's family!
 2. God's child without being "born again". (I Peter V.22,23.)
- IV. People Who Have *Obeyed The Gospel!* (I Peter 4:17.)
 - A. "Obey gospel" is a Biblical statement, (cf. II Thess. V.7-9.)

B. Gospel *defined*.

C. Facts to be believed - commands to be obeyed.

Conclusion:

1. The definition of a Christian shows the real demands that are made on one who wears the Lord's name.
2. There is honor in identifying with the Lord Jesus. (I John 3:1,2.)
3. Can you afford not to become and be a Christian?
 - A. Will you pay the price?
 - B. What will it cost you? (Luke 14:26-31.)
4. Can you afford not to become and be a Christian? (I Pet. 4:5,6.)

RESPONDING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

I Peter 4:15,16; 3:10-12

Thesis: To show how the Lord demands personal purity and positive good of His people.

Introduction:

1. One glorifies God by being what a Christian is: Elect, called, holy, redeemed.
2. One does not glorify God by merely wearing the name.

Discussion:

- I. A Christian Controls His Tongue. (I Peter 3:10)
 - A. Control of the tongue is one mark of Christian maturity. (Jas. 3:1,2.)
 1. James wrote of the power of the tongue. (James 3:5.)
 2. He emphasized the need of tongue control. (Jas. 3:6-10.)
 3. James stressed the possibility of controlling the tongue. (Jas. 3:9,10.)
 - B. The speech of the Christian must be carefully guarded. (Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:29.)
 - C. The Christian defends his hope. (I Pet. 3:11.)
- II. The Christian Turns Away From Evil. (I Pet. 3:11.)
 - A. The implication is that one can know difference in good and evil.
 1. Men may find themselves in a state of moral confusion. (Isaiah 5:20.)
 2. One may lose ability to "discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14.)
 3. The criterion of good and evil is God's word. (2 Tim. 3:16,17.)
 - B. The Christian "abstains" from evil. (I Thess. 5:22.)
 - C. The Christian "abhors" that which is evil. (Rom. 12:9.)
 - D. The Christian learns to hate evil.
 1. He has learned to love God. (2 Pet. 2:6-8.)
 2. God hates all evil, therefore cannot be tempted by evil. (Jas. 1:12-17.)
 3. The Christian knows that evil dooms and damns the soul.
- III. The Christian "Does Good." (I Pet. 3:11.)
 - A. Lord's last three parables emphasized "doing."
 1. Parable of vine and fruit-bearing branches. (Jn. 15.)

2. Parable of wise and foolish virgins. (Matthew 25.)
3. Parable of the talents. (Matthew 25.)
- B. Paul stressed importance of doing good. (Gal. 6:10.)
 1. It is "good" to restore erring. (Gal. 6:1.)
 2. It is "good" to bear burdens. (Gal. 6:2.)
 3. It is "good" to support the preaching of the gospel. (Gal. 6:3-9.)
 4. It is "good" to help those in physical need. (Acts 9:36.)"

IV. The Christian Seeks Peace. (I Pet. 3:11.)

- A. He has made peace with God. (Rom. 5:1.)
- B. He enjoys the peace of God. (Phil. 4:6,7.)
- C. He strives to make peace. (Matt. 5:9.)
- D. The peace of God rules in his heart. (Col. 3:15.)

Conclusion:

1. The Christian loves life because he has purpose in living and hope in dying.
2. He lives an abundant life. (John 1-:10.)

COMMIT THE SOUL TO THE CREATOR

I Peter 4:19

Thesis: To show that man has a soul to save.

Introduction:

1. Peter had stressed the importance of the soul:
 - A. The soul needs to be saved. (I Pet. 1:9.)
 - B. The soul needs to be purified. (I Peter 1:22.)
 - C. Fleshly lusts war against the soul. (I Peter 2:11.)
 - D. Christ is called the Shepherd and Bishop (overseer) of souls. (I Peter 2:25.)
 - E. The soul needs to be committed unto God. (I Pet. 4:19.)
2. The soul of man is the heart of man. (I Pet. 1:22,23.)
 - A. The heart of man is the "hidden man." (I Pet. 3:4.)
 - B. The "hidden man of the heart" is incorruptible. (I Pet. 3:4; 2 Cor. 4:16.)
3. God's people often suffer for righteousness sake. (I Pet. 4:19.)
 - A. Suffering for Christ may cause one to become discouraged.
 - B. Suffering may cause one to become stronger spiritually. (I Pet. 1:6,7.)

Discussion:

- I. The Soul Needs To Be Committed To God. (I Pet. 4:19.)
 - A. God is the Creator of the Soul. (Heb. 12:9.)
 - B. The word "commit" is a banking term, and means "to deposit."
 1. Jesus used this word when he died. (Luke 23:46.)
 2. Paul had committed his soul to God. (2 Tim. 1:12.)
 - C. Too many people commit their souls, to:
 1. Material things. (Luke 12:15-21.)
 2. Pleasure. (Eph. 2:1-3.)
 3. Pursuit and acquisition of this world. (Matt. 10:26.)
- II. The Soul Must Be Deposited To God In Service Unto Him. (I Peter 4:19.)
 - A. One cannot deposit his soul to God if that person is serving sin. (Matt. 6:24.)
 - B. Service to God is called "well-doing."
 1. Sometimes man suffer from the world for well-doing. (I Peter 2:20.)
 2. Men may become weary in well-doing. (Gal. 6:9.)
 - C. Why should man commit his soul to God?

1. Man belongs to God by right of creation. (Gen. 1:27.)
 - a. Man's origin is traced to Divine Creation, not spontaneous generation and biological evolution!
 - b. The whole duty of man is to serve God. (Ecc. 12:13.)
2. The Christian belongs to God by right of redemption. (I Peter 1:18,19.)
 - a. God paid a price to redeem man from sin. (I Cor. 6:19,20.)
 - b. Note: "Ye are not your own!"
3. The Christian has an example to follow: the Lord. (I Peter 2:21.)
 - a. Jesus went about doing good. (Acts 10:38.)
 - b. Jesus did and taught. (Acts 1:1.)

III. A Woman Whose Life Was Filled With "Doing Good." (Acts 9:36-42.)

- A. Dorcas was full of good works.
 1. She had demanded a love and respect for her goodness.
 2. Her goodness was no mere negative goodness; she did good.
 3. A part of her goodness involved helping people with physical needs. (Jas. 2:14-16; I John 3:16-18.)
- B. There is much good that needs to be done today. (Gal. 6:10.)

Conclusion:

1. Man has a soul to save for heaven or to lose in hell. (Matt. 10:26.)
2. If one commits his soul to God while living, that person can commit his soul to God in death. (Luke 23:46.)
3. "Dust thou art to dust returned." was never spoken of the soul.

THE ENEMY, THE DEVIL

I Peter 5:8,9

Thesis: To make the audience aware of the constant threat of evil and how to withstand Satan.

Introduction:

1. There are several significant terms used in Sacred Scripture to describe the devil.
 - A. Devil (I Pet. 5:8.) (An accuser or slanderer.)
 1. He accuses man to God. (Job 1:6; 2:1-5.)
 2. He accuses God to man. (Gen. 3:1-5.)
 - B. Satan. (Matt. 4:10.) (An adversary.)
 1. He is an adversary of God and Christ. (Matt. 4:10.)
 2. He is an adversary of God's people. (Acts 5:3; Rom. 16:20.)
 3. He is an adversary of mankind. (Acts 26:18.)
2. "Satan" is not a mere personification of evil influences in the heart:
 - A. His personality is asserted in both Old Testament and New Testament.
 - B. He tempted Christ, in whose heart no evil thought could ever have risen. (John 14:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15.)

Discussion:

- I. The Christian Recognizes The Devil As:
 - A. An adversary, or one who is really opposed to God's children.
 1. Devil attempts to seduce men into thinking that God is withholding good things from man. (Gen. 3:1-5; Jas. 1:13-17-wrote verse 17 in light of context.)
 2. Devil seeks to corrupt man's *mind*. (2 Cor. 11 :3-.)
 3. One must not be discouraged by unjust criticisms and unholy implications.
 - a. Devil is the "accuser of our brethren." (Rev. 12:10.)
 - b. James was falsely accused. (Matt. 12:24.)
 - B. A powerful one, i.e., a "roaring lion." (I Pet. 5:8.)
 1. One must rely on God's strength to help him withstand the devil. (Eph. 6:10.)
 2. The Christian must put on "God's Whole Armour." (Eph. 6:10-18.)
 - C. A destroyer. (I Pet. 5:8.)
 1. The word "devour" literally means to "drink down"; the devil seeks to utterly destroy God's people.

2. This passage implies the possibility of apostasy. (Jas. 5:19,20.)
3. Sin is not a trivial and insignificant thing. (Rom. 6:23.)

II. The Christian Withstands the Devil. (I Peter 5:9.)

- A. He withstands by being *sober*. (I Pet. 5:8.)
 1. "Sober" signifies to be free from the influence of intoxicants.¹
 2. The mind may be intoxicated on:
 - a. Pride. (Prov. 16:18; I Cor. 10:12.)
 - b. Carelessness. (Note: "Sober" and "vigilant." Matthew 26:41.)
 - c. Lusts. (Gal. 5:19,20.)
- B. He withstands by being vigilant (watchful). (I Pet. 5:8.)
 1. Doctrines he hears. (2 Cor. 11:14, 15; I John 4:1; 2 John 9,10.)
 2. Friends and associates. (I Cor. 15:33.)
 3. Thoughts. (2 Cor. 11:3.)
 4. Actions. (I Cor. 10:12.)
- C. He withstands by being steadfast in the faith. (I Pet. 5:9.)
 1. Devil seeks to destroy our faith. (Luke 22:31,32.)
 2. He seeks to "shipwreck" our faith. (I Tim. 1:19,20.)
 3. He seeks to lead men away from the faith. (I Tim. 4:1-4.)

Conclusion:

1. James said, "resist the Devil and he will flee from you." (James 4:7.)
2. Jesus is our example of using God's word to resist the Devil. (Matt. 4; Psalm 119:11.)

¹Vine, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 44.

"CHRISTIAN"

I Peter 4:16; Acts 11:26; 26:28

Thesis: To emphasize the fundamental implications in the name "Christian."

Introduction:

1. The term "Christian" appears three times in the New Testament. (I Peter 4:16; Acts 11:26; 26:28.)
2. In each of these scriptures, a basic idea of a Christian is set forth.

Discussion:

- I. A Christian Is A Disciple of Christ. (Acts 11:26.)
 - A. A disciple is a learner.
 1. Christianity is a taught religion. (John 6:44,45; Matt. 28:18-20.)
 2. One does not become a Christian through:
 - a. Dreams and/or visions. (John 8:31,32.)
 - b. Direct working of Holy Spirit independent of God's word. (James 1:18; I Peter 1:22.)
 3. The process of becoming and being a Christian is a learning process. (2 Peter 3:18.)
 - B. A disciple is a follower of Christ
 1. Jesus left an example of life to be followed. (I Peter 2:21.)
 2. The standard for Christian conduct is not:
 - a. Worldly philosophy. (Col. 2:8.)
 - b. The law of Moses. (Col. 2:14-16.)
 - c. Mysticism. (Col. 2:18.)
 - d. The crowd. (Matt.7; 13,14.)
- II. A Christian Is One Who is Persuaded. (Acts 26:28.)
 - A. The Christian is convinced in his mind that Christianity is true.
 1. Paul sought to persuade men at Ephesus. (Acts 19:8.)
 2. He sought to persuade men at Corinth. (2 Cor. 5:10,11.)
 - B. The Christian is persuaded that he can live the Christian life. (2 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 4:13.)
 - C. He is persuaded that Christianity is worth the price that one must pay to become a Christian.
 1. Denial of self. (Matt. 16:24-26.)
 2. Supreme love of the Lord. (Lk. 14:26-29.)
 3. Sacrifice any and everything that stands between one

and faithful service to Christ. (Philippians 2:7,8.)

D. Hard to persuade people today.

1. So many attempts to persuade by advertisements and door-to-door salesmen.
2. One is persuaded on basis of needs:
 - a. Need security. (I Pet. 5:6,7; 3:12.)
 - b. Need purpose. (Ecc. 12:13,14.)
 - c. Need happiness and peace. (Rom. 5:1; Phil. 4:4-6; Matt. 11:28-30.)

III. A Christian Is One Who Is Willing To Suffer For Doing Right. (I Pet. 4:15,16.)

A. Suffering is all about us.

1. Some suffering is the result of living in a world of physical pain and death.
2. Some suffering is the result of foolish and sinful living, poor choices in life. (I Pet. 4:15.)
3. Some suffering is the result of doing God's will. (I Pet. 4:16; 3:14.)
 - a. All who live godly lives shall suffer. (2 Tim. 3:12.)
 - b. Suffering may be in the form of unjust criticism and evil statements. (I Pet. 4:4; 2:15.)
 - c. Suffering may be in form of physical pain inflicted (I Peter 4:12.)

B. A Christian is willing to suffer for the Lord's sake.

1. Early Christians were persecuted. (Acts 8:1-4.)
2. Apostles rejoiced in suffering. (Acts 5:41.)

IV. A Christian Is One Who Is Not Ashamed. (I Peter 4:16.)

A. He is not ashamed of the Lord's Word. (Mark 8:38.)

B. He is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. (Rom. 1:16.)

C. He is not ashamed to be part of a religious minority. (Matt. 7:13,14.)

Conclusion:

1. The Christian is one who glorifies God. (I Peter 4:16.)
 - A. He glorifies God by being a disciple of God's Son. (Heb. 1:1,2.)
 - B. He glorifies God by living for God.
2. He is not ashamed for the world to know where he stands and for what he stands.
3. The song, "I'm Not Ashamed To Own My Lord," expresses the true sentiment of the Christian

THE HEART OF SERVICE

I Peter 5:1-7

Thesis: To urge God's people to really get involved in service.

Introduction:

1. The theme of I Peter is "hope". This was so important to God's people because they were suffering. (I Pet. 1:6,7.)
2. Peter urged suffering people to "serve one another". (I Peter 5:5.)
3. The inspired discussion of service and suffering goes to the "heart" of serving.

Body:

- I. The Great Example of Serving. (I Pet. 5:1.)
 - A. Peter *witnessed* the sufferings of Christ.
 - B. Peter saw a manifestation of the servant attitude when Jesus washed the disciples feet. (John 13:1-7.)
 1. The lesson: see John 13:16.
 2. Same lesson He had attempted to teach them earlier. (Mark 10:42-45.)
 - C. Jesus had to suffer to serve! (I Pet. 2:21-25.)
 1. Christ suffered death in order to serve. (I Pet. 1:18.)
 2. Do we want to serve without paying the price?
- II. Elders (Leaders) as Examples of Service. (I Pet. 5:2-4.)
 - A. Elders are to be examples. (I Pet. 5:3.)
 - B. Their service:
 1. "Tend (feed) the flock."
 2. "Oversee the flock"
 3. Be examples.
 - C. Their service is to be characterized by:
 1. Willing service. (I Pet. 5:2.)
 2. A ready mind. (I Pet. 5:2.)
 - D. Elders suffer to serve.
 1. Peter points them to the sufferings of Christ.
 2. Elders suffer criticism!
 3. Elders suffer heartache when members go astray.
- III. Everyone Is To Serve. (I Pet. 5:5.)
 - A. Younger people are to *serve* the older ones.
 1. This is practical truth today. (Greying of America".)
 2. God wants all His people to know that they are important!
 3. The young can show love, helpfulness, for the old.

- B. Older are to serve younger. "All gird to serve". (I Pet. 5:5.)
- C. Service in personal application:
 - 1. Servants of the State (a society of people.) (I Pet. 2:13-17.)
 - 2. Servants at work. (I Pet. 2:18.)
 - 3. Servants in the home. (I Pet. 3:1-7.)
 - a. Wives be in subjection.
 - b. Husbands to serve! (I Pet. 3:7.)
 - c. What if *both* became servants of each other!
- D. We must be humble enough to depend on God and, therefore, obey God by serving. (I Pet. 5:6.)
- E. We may have to suffer as servants. (I Pet. 5:7.)

Conclusion:

- 1. The heart of serving is an attitude of humility.
- 2. Paul had emphasized this in talking to the Romans about serving. (Rom. 12:3-8.)
- 3. Those who want to be served do not have the spirit of Christ.

NEED FOR GREAT SHEPHERDS IN THE CHURCH I Peter 5:1-4

Thesis: To urge elders to view themselves as shepherds.

Introduction:

1. What we are really considering:
 - A. Church growth.
 - B. Unity in congregations.
 - C. Practice of New Testament Christianity.
2. Peter *exhorted* elders. (I Pet. 5:1.)
 - A. Elders need exhortation, encouragement: often they hear only problems, criticisms, and complaints.
 - B. Exhortation needed because elders are human beings - humans get discouraged. (Gal. 6:9.)
3. Peter was an *elder!* Implied exhortation! If Peter could be an elder - you can!
 - A. Peter was impetuous. (Matt. 16:21-23.)
 - B. Peter lacked courage: denied Christ.
 - C. Some of our people set such high qualifications for elders that:
 1. Very few angels could qualify, and
 2. No men!
4. Church identified as God's flock; elders are to tend it.

Body:

- I The Emphasis In the Passage.
 - A. What idea prevails in this passage: "Board of Directors" or "Shepherd"?
 1. Which is easier, less time consuming? "Board of Directors" approach or "Shepherd" approach?
 2. Shepherds are involved with their sheep.
 - B. "Tend the flock": to act as a shepherd.
 - C. Illustration from the Old Testament. (Ezek. 34:1-6.)
 1. Failure of shepherds.
 2. Fate of sheep.
 1. Sheep scattered.
 2. Became food for wild animals.
- II The Challenge: Function as Shepherds.
 - A. "Tend the flock" (*poimaino*, to act as a shepherd.) noun form "Pastor" - Eph. 4:11.
 - B. The Shepherd:

1. Feeds. (Sheep can die from *malnutrition*.)
2. Guides. (Sheep can err from the way.)
3. Protects. (Danger from wolves. Acts 20:28,29.)
4. Restores. (Sheep can go astray. Luke 15.)

III. The charge: Take oversight!

A. Positive aspects:

1. Willingly.
2. According to God's will.
3. With a ready mind. (This adverb found only here in NT. and implies *zeal* and enthusiasm.)

B. Negative:

1. Constraint.
2. Filthy lucre.

Conclusion:

1. The church faces many challenges today.
 - A. Identity *crisis!* *Who* are we?
 - B. Purpose crisis! *Why* are we?
 - C. Battle is on for the minds of men! (2 Cor. 10:3-6; Rom. 12:1-3.)
 1. Humanism is for real!
 2. Hedonism is for real!
 3. Hopelessness is for real!

Conclusion:

2. Blessing of Leading as an elder.
 - A. Not material gain.
 - B. Not even love/appreciation of some
 - C. Crown: Source - Lord! Not men!
3. Let Chief Shepherd be your example and you will be a great Shepherd! (John 10:1-17.)

EXHORTING ELDERS

I Peter 5:1 -4

Thesis: To arouse bishops to greater devotion to the Lord's work.

Introduction:

1. Elders have a position of honor. (I Peter 5:4.)
 - A. Some elders are worthy of double honor. (I Tim. 5:17.)
 - B. Elders are to be respected. (I Tim. 5:18.)
2. Elders have a position of responsibility.
 - A. They are involved in *work*. (I Tim. 3:1.)
 - B. Therefore, they must meet God's qualifications. (I Tim. 3; Tit. 1.)

Discussion:

- I. The Elders Are Exhorted To "Feed The Flock." (I Pet. 5:2.)
 - A. The noun form of *feed* (tend, ASV) is *pastor*.
 1. The pastors are shepherds. Christ is the chief Shepherd. (I Peter 5:4.)
 2. Shepherds must tend the flock, otherwise, they are not shepherds.
 - B. The flock is "of God."
 1. The flock belongs to God, not to the shepherds.
 2. The elders are looking after God's possessions!
 - C. Shepherds should strive to:
 1. Keep the "sheep" from straying.
 2. Bring straying sheep back to the fold.
 3. Protect sheep.
 4. Feed the sheep.
- II. Elders Are Exhorted To Serve From Pure Motives.
 - A. Negative:
 1. Not "of constraint."
 - a. One must strive to please God. (I Tim. 3:1.)
 - b. The service must not be a forced service.
 2. Not "for filthy lucre."
 - a. Elder must serve to give not get. (Matt. 20:26,27.)
 - b. See: Titus 1:7.
 3. Not "lord it over God's heritage."
 - a. Note: flock does not belong to the elders.
 - b. Prestige and power are often greater temptations to men than is money.
 - c. Peter's emphasis is on the abuse of power, not the proper use of it.

B. Positive:

1. Serve willingly. (I Pet. 5:2.)
2. Serve with willing mind. (I Peter 5:2.)

III. Elders Are Exhorted To Be Examples.

- A. "Take heed to self" precedes "take heed to the flock."
(Acts 20:28.)
- B. There is a great power in example. (Matt. 5:14-16; I Pet. 2:21.)
- C. Elders are to lead the flock by the examples of godliness, consecration, and service the flock sees in the lives of the elders.
- D. Christians are to follow the example of faithful elders.
(Heb.13:7.)

Conclusion:

1. There are great opportunities for service in the eldership today.
2. Acute need of leadership in the church today.
3. The Lord knows and He shall reward the service (work) of faithful elders. (I Peter 5:4.)

THE REASON AND REALITY OF HUMILITY I Peter 5:5-7

Thesis: Stir God's people to practice humility.

Introduction:

1. In this passage Peter exhorts God's people to practice humility.
 - A. The apostle shows two ways humility will show itself:
 1. In subjection. (I Peter 5:5) (Jas. 4:6-7)
 2. In service. ("Be clothed," only here in New Testament and pictures a (1 Peter 5:5 ASV) slave girding himself.)
 - B. He also shows the blessings of humility.
2. Humility defined:
 - A. Not:
 1. Self-depreciation.
 2. A show-rich wearing "poor" clothes.
 - B. Humility: "a modest sense of one's own merit." (Standard College Dictionary)
 - C. Can Be developed - otherwise Peter's admonition has no meaning.
3. The blessings:

Body:

- I Reception of God's Grace. (I Peter 5:6)
 - A. *Peter* quotes Proverbs 3:34.
 - B. James had quoted the same passage. (Jas. 4:6)
 - C. Similar to "poor in spirit." (Matt. 5:3)
 - D. Proud do not need God. (cf. Luke 18) (Luke 18:4)
- II. Realization of God's Power. "Mighty Hand."
 - A. Symbol of God's willingness and ability to help.
 1. The Lord's hand can save. (Is. 59:1,2)
 2. God brought Israel out by mighty hand! (Deut. 9:26; 26:8)
 - B. Can save and will help those who need Him.
- III. Rejoice In God's Promised Exaltation. (I Peter 5:6)
 - A. Men may exalt themselves.
 1. Man's glory is short-lived. (I Peter 1:24)
 2. Song, "Pass and be forgotten with the rest."
 - B. Men may be exalted by their peers who want to exploit them.

- C. God will exalt "in due time."
 - 1. God's glory described. (Rom. 8:14-17)
 - 2. Made like Jesus. (I John 3:1-3; Phil. 3:20,21)
 - 3. The promised inheritance. (I Peter 1:3-9)

IV. Release From Anxiety. (I Peter 5:7)

- A. World is filled with anxieties.
 - 1. Business cares.
 - 2. Home burdens.
- B. Anxieties of sin.
 - 1. Fear of exposure.
 - 2. "wicked flee when no man pursueth."
- C. How escape?
 - 1. Live *one* day at a time.
 - 2. Accept God's providence.

Conclusion:

- 1. Lesson Helps us deal with one of life's greatest problems and perils-pride!
 - A. Pride made a devil. (I Tim. 3:6)
 - B. Pride leads to destruction. (Prov. 16:18)
- 2. "Humble Self!"
 - A. Accept lowly task as involving highest honor.
 - B. Surrender to the Lord's discipline.

AWARE OF THE ADVERSARY!

I Peter 5:8,9

Thesis: God's people must withstand the Devil!

Introduction:

1. Context shows the importance of the lesson:
 - A. Christians, by putting on humility, have access to:
 1. God's grace.
 2. God's mighty hand.
 3. God's sure exaltation.
 - B. However, the Christian has an adversary so the Christian must be sober and watchful!
2. Peter had just warned of the danger of pride when he emphasized the necessity of humility (the opposite of pride)
 - A. Pride produced the Devil. (I Tim. 3:6)
 - B. Therefore, Christians need to be aware of the adversary.
3. This lesson will have two basic parts:
 - A. The adversary recognized.
 - B. The adversary resisted.

Body:

- I. The Adversary: Recognized.
 - A. The Devil. "an accuser, a slanderer".
 1. Accused God to man. (Gen. 3)
 2. Accused man to God. (Job)
 3. Called the "accuser of the brethren". (Rev. 12:10)
 - B. A Roaring Lion!
 1. Powerful and fierce.
 2. Imagine having to fight a lion. What preparation would you make?
 - C. The "lion" walks about.
 1. You do not have to go to him, he will come to you!
 2. He found Jesus in the wilderness. (Matt. 4)
 3. He found Judas an apostle. (John 13:27)
 4. He found Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5)
 - D. "Seeking" to devour.
 1. He doesn't merely seek to discourage - but, to destroy.
 2. "Devour": "to swallow down".
- II. The Adversary. Resisted
 - A. The possibility:
 1. The devil and be withstood. (I Peter 5:9)

- a. To "withstand" is to "resist successfully" (Webster)
- b. The evil can be withstood by those who take God's armour. (Eph. 6:13)
- 2. James used the word "resist". (Jas. 4:7)
- 3. God's people have God's help. (I Pet. 1:5)
- B. Resist in sobriety. (I Pet. 5:8)
 - 1. Sober "denotes of sound mind, hence, self-controller" (Vine)
 - 2. One may think soberly. (Rom. 12:3)
 - 3. One may be taught to think soberly. (Tit. 2:4)
- C. Resist by watchfulness.
 - 1. Jesus often used the word "watchful". (Mark 13:35, 37; Matt. 26:40,41)
 - 2. Areas to watch:
 - a. Associates/friends, (cf. I Cor. 15:33)
 - b. What is experienced visually: movies, books. T.V.
 - c. Teaching to which one is exposed.
- D. Resist in knowledge. (I Peter 5:9)
 - 1. Source of suffering. (I Peter 1:8,9)
 - 2. Scope: all parts of the world, (vs. 9)

Conclusion:

- 1. Popular T.V. comic used to say, "the devil made me do it".
- 2. The devil may make us rebel against God and be lost.
- 3. The devil can be withstood.
- 4. The devil's doom is decreed! (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

THE JOY OF FIGHTING LIONS

I Peter 5:6-10

Thesis: To encourage God's people to be strong in the ongoing struggle with sin.

Introduction:

1. Some of God's great men have been lion fighters.
 - A. David slew a lion and rescued a lamb from it's mouth. (I Sam. 17:34-37.)
 - B. Daniel was cast into a den of lions. (Dan. 6:18-23.)
2. Circuses feature "lion tamers".
 - A. Have you seen men and women who would enter a circle of lions?
 - B. We admire the ability of men to control beasts like lions.
3. God's great men today are lion fighters! (I Pet. 5:6-10.)

Body:

- I. Learning About The Lion We Must Fight.
 - A. A roaring lion. (He is "hungry".)
 - B. "Walks about" (He is possessed of restless energy.)
 - C. "Seeking". (He is persistent in his search for would-be victims.)
 - D. "Devour". (To gulp down, utterly destroy".)
 - E. How does he work?
 1. Uses suffering to discourage us. (I Pet. 1:7.)
 2. Why does God permit suffering?
 - a. To try our faith. (I Pet. 1:7.)
 - b. To strengthen us!
 3. God Himself suffers. (I Pet. 3:20,21.)
 4. Jesus suffered. (I Pet. 4:1-4.)
 - F. Satan appeals to lusts. (I Pet. 2:11.)
- II. Lean on God's Mighty Hand.
 - A. God's mighty hand delivered Israel. (Deut. 5:15.)
 1. 7 times in Deuteronomy Moses referred to God's "mighty hand".
 2. How had Israel escaped Egypt? God's mighty hand!
 - B. Isaiah's inspired statement. (Isa. 59:1,2.)
 - C. "Humble yourself under God's mighty hand".
 1. May be proud and try to intellectually solve the dilemma of human suffering.
 2. Job learned that there were questions that he could not answer - so, trust God!
 - D. "Cast anxiety on God". (I Pet. 5:6.)

1. "Cast" is deposit.
2. Verb is aorist tense - once for all action!

II. Look To Faith For The Victory.

- A. Daniel "believed in his God". (Dan. 6:23.)
- B. The nature of faith in Christ. (I Pet. 1:3-12.)
- C. Do you believe God when He warns of:
 1. The lusts of the world? (I John 2:15-17.)
 2. The power and persistency of Satan?
- D. Do you believe God when He warns of the consequences of sin? (I Pet. 3:20,21; Heb. 11:7.)
 1. If you do, then be baptized.
 2. If you do, fight Satan!

Conclusion:

1. Imagine David's joy when he defeated the lion!
2. Imagine Daniel's joy when he was delivered from the lion's den.
3. Great moments of joy in life when we win over Satan!
4. We can, under God's mighty hand, withstand!
 - A. Resist. (Jas. 4:7.)
 - B. Draw near and stay close to God! (Jas. 4:8.)
5. The joy of fighting lions is when you win - and with God's help we shall win!!

GROUNDED IN GRACE

I Peter 5:12

Thesis: God's people must be urged to respond to God's grace.

Introduction:

1. Peter has written to urge people to "stand in God's grace."
 - A. He has "testified" (I Peter 5:12) so God's people will stand in God's grace regardless of sufferings. (I Peter 1:6-9)
2. Peter writes about God's *true* grace.
 - A. Grace may be abused. (Jude 4)
 - B. God gives grace. (I Peter 5:5)
 - C. Men must respond by obeying the teaching of grace (Tit. 2:11,12) and by standing in grace. (I Peter 5:12)
3. What has Peter written about God's grace?

Body:

- I There Is A Manifestation of Grace. (I Peter 1:10-12)
 - A. Salvation is beautifully described as "grace unto God." (I Peter 1:10)
 - B. Salvation is by God's grace - grace makes salvation available unto men. (Eph. 2:8-9)
 - C. There are two aspects of salvation:
 1. An immediate salvation. (I Peter 1:22,23)
 - a. The soul is purified from the guilt of sin.
 - b. There is a new birth - one becomes a new person in Christ.
 2. There is an ultimate salvation. (I Peter 1:5)
 - a. This deliverance is to be *revealed*.
 - b. The revelation will take place when Jesus comes.
- II There Is Coming A Revelation of Grace. (I Peter 1:13-21)
 - A. God's grace is coming. (I Peter 1:13)
 - B. In view of the coming grace Peter urges God's people to be:
 1. Obedient children. (I Peter 1:14)
 2. To be holy. (I Peter 1:15)
 3. Pass time of sojourn in fear. (I Peter 1:17)
 - C. All of these admonitions surely show the necessity of men "standing in God's grace."
 1. There is a state of grace - and that state is love for God and obedience to God.
 2. Obedience to God does not nullify grace.

3. Obedience is a means whereby man accepts God's grace. (cf. Eph. 2:8-9. Note: *By grace - through* faith.)

Conclusion:

1. Paul wrote about "standing in God's grace." (Rom. 5:1-11)
 - A. Men a justified by faith. (Rom. 5:1)
 - B. By faith men have access into grace. (Rom. 5:2)
 - C. Those who "stand in grace" rejoice in hope. (Rom. 5:2)
 - D. God's love has prompted His grace. (Rom. 5:6-10. Note especially verse 8)
2. The faith Paul writes about in Romans is not a dead inactive faith - it is an obedient faith. (Rom. 1:5; 16:26)
 - A. Faith that produces obedience in penitence and baptism. (Acts 2:38)
 - B. Faith that produces obedience in living the Christian life. (2 Peter 1:5-11. Note, "In your faith supply.." (ASV.)

THE CHOICE!

I Peter 5:5-11

Thesis: To urge men to choose to serve God.

Introduction:

1. Joshua told Israel: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." (Joshua 24:15.)
2. God and Satan become two magnets attracting men:
 - A. Satan appeals to man through lusts and ignorance. (Eph. 2:1-3; John 8:44.)
 - B. God appeals to man through the truth, ideals, lasting values. (John 8:32; Phil. 2:7,8; 3:16; Matt. 16:26.)
3. Study Peter's description of both; then see right choice as to whom you will serve.

Discussion:

- I. Satan. (I Peter 5:8,9.)
 - A. He is man's adversary. (I Pet. 5:8.)
 1. Technically, adversary means an opponent in a law suit. (Woods.)
 2. The trial concerns life and death! (Matt. 25:41,26.)
 - B. He seeks to devour man. (I Pet. 5:8.)
 1. The devil seeks to conquer man's mind. (2 Cor. 11:3.)
 2. He seeks to enslave man to the desires of the devil. (John 8:44.)
- II. God. (I Peter 4:5-7,10.)
 - A. Cast anxiety upon God. (I Pet. 5:7; Psalm 55:22.)
 1. Worry can be a heavy burden for one to bear.
 2. God can work all things for good. (Rom. 8:28.)
 - B. God who is able, cares! (Rom. 5:6-9.)
 1. If father and mother forsake us, (they would be last people on earth who would), God still cares. (Psalm 27:10.)
 2. God can provide for our needs. (Matt. 6:25-33.)
- III. The Choice To Serve God Means:
 - A. Humbles himself under God's mighty hand (power).
 1. One recognizes dependence upon God.
 2. One will be obedient to God. (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:8,9.)
 - B. All anxiety is cast upon God, therefore:
 1. The Christian rejoices in the Lord. (Phil. 4:4.)
 2. Has hope of eternal life. (I Peter 1:5-9.)

3. Has peace passing understanding. (Phil. 4:6,7.)
- C. Resists the devil. (I Peter 5:9.)
 1. James admonished: "Resist the devil." (James 4:7.)
 2. Jesus resisted the devil with God's word. (Matt. 4:1-12.)
 3. One cannot serve God and the devil. (Matt. 6:24.)
- D. One is called unto eternal glory. (I Peter 5:10.)
 1. God calls men by and through the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13,14.)
 2. He calls men to salvation from sin. (Rom. 1:16.)
 3. He calls men to eternal salvation in heaven. (I Pet. 1:5-9.)
 4. This eternal salvation involves glory, honor, and immortality. (Romans 2:7.)

Conclusion:

1. It is easy for man to reverse in practice the instruction of these verses.
 - A. Too often men resist God. (Matt. 23:37.)
 - B. Too often they draw nigh unto the devil. (James 4:7.)
2. One may choose to serve the devil; he thereby chooses the destiny of the devil. (Matt. 25:41.)
3. He thereby deprives himself of the privilege of being a child of God with all the present and future blessings of being a Christian.
 - A. One can be purified from sin. (I Peter 1:22.)
 - B. One can be redeemed from sin. (I Peter 1:18.)
 - C. One can have hope. (I Peter 1:3.)
 - D. One can be guarded by God's power. (I Peter 1:9.)
4. What choice have you made?