

Week Six: Reimagining the Church

Participant Sheet

Session 6: Week of October 27, 2024

A Home for the Homeless - 1 Peter 1:1-2, 3:8-9

Brewster Baptist Church, Brewster MA

Connecting Does anyone have a “God sighting,” – a story or testimony of how you saw God at work in the last week that you can share?

Background: *1 Peter* was likely written during the reign of the Roman emperor Flavian (73-91 AD), and seems addressed to a primarily rural audience, including groups of displaced people far from their homes living in Asia Minor. Scholars estimate that the population of Asia Minor in this period was 8.5 million people with Christians being a small minority totaling perhaps 85,000 people.

1 Peter 1:1-2, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood: May grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1 Peter 3:8-9, Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing.

Questions

1. **Context and Audience:** Who are the "exiles of the Dispersion," and what significance does this term have in understanding the recipients of Peter's letter?
2. **Divine Purpose:** What do you think it means to be “chosen and destined by God the Father,” and does this influence your own understanding of your journey of faith? Why or why not?

3. **Role of the Holy Spirit:** In what ways does being "sanctified by the Spirit" affect the daily lives of believers? What does sanctification look like in practice?
4. **Obedience to Christ:** How can we actively demonstrate obedience to Jesus Christ in our lives, and what challenges might we face in doing so?
5. **Unity and Love:** What are practical ways to cultivate "unity of spirit" and "love for one another" within a church community (*1 Peter 3:8*)?
6. **Characteristics of Community:** How do "sympathy," a "tender heart," and a "humble mind" contribute to healthy relationships among believers? Can you share an example from your experience?
7. **Response to Wrongdoing:** What are some common ways people respond to "evil for evil" today (*1 Peter 3:9*)? How does Peter's instruction to "repay with a blessing" challenge those responses?
8. **Practical Application:** Can you think of a situation where you found it difficult to "repay with a blessing"? How might you handle a similar situation differently in the future?

Closing Prayer

Gracious God, we thank you for the new identity we have because of our faith in Jesus Christ. Thank you for choosing us so we have purpose and meaning and for giving us the Holy Spirit so we may live in obedience to Christ and become more like Jesus every day of our lives. We thank you for the new community and home we have in this world called the church which helps us as we seek to follow Christ. Help everyone of us to do all we can to build the cohesiveness and strength of the church by having unity of spirit, a tender heart, a humble mind, and a willingness to serve one another. In Jesus name and for His sake. Amen.