



Vibrant Living WEEK 2 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In this message of the series entitled, *Out of Darkness - A Study in the Book of 1 Peter*, we will discover how to live a hope-filled life—even in the darkest of times.

DISCUSSION

Peter understood what it meant to be pressured to conform. Christians who refused to engage in the ungodly activities everyone else was participating in were heavily persecuted, and in some cases, even put to death. Such extreme pressure to conform to the culture around them tested their faith.

- Have you ever felt the pressure to conform to culture? Have you ever been persecuted for your faith? If so, how did you respond?

How To Live Holy In Dark Times:

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hopefully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (1 Peter 1:13)

1. Prepare your mind.

Verse 13 reads: ***Therefore gird up the loins of your mind...*** The concept of “girding up” means you’re prepared—ready to fight, ready to run, and ready to move. Here, Peter is talking about us having our minds prepared for our race in life. How do we prepare our minds? Peter just told us in the first twelve verses—“Know who are you in Christ. Don’t forget who you are. Fully embrace and daily reinforce your new identity!” In **1 Peter 5:8**, we also learn that we need to ***be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*** The enemy wants to exploit our thoughts. So it’s important to be aware of everything we put in our minds.

- How can we "gird up the loins of our minds" and continually reinforce our identity in Christ in our daily lives? Share personal strategies and experiences.
- How can we support one another to ensure that our minds remain prepared and fortified against the enemy's schemes? What role does accountability and prayer play in this process?

1 Peter 1:14-16 says, ***As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”*** Just as God is holy and separate, so should our thoughts, values, allegiances, and appetites be holy. God sent Jesus to show us how to manage this tension...*to be in the world, but not of the world*. When we believe God’s highest value is on our happiness—we believe delays, frustration, and even pain can’t ever be a part of His plan for us. If we are not careful, we can replace the one true God with the false, happy gods of convenience, comfort, and pleasure, etc. The one true God says we’re called to holiness first—not happiness.

- In a world that often prioritizes happiness and immediate gratification, how can we ensure that we are not replacing God with false gods of convenience, comfort, and pleasure? How do we align our priorities with God's call to holiness rather than merely seeking happiness?
- How can we strike a balance between being engaged in our communities and culture while maintaining our commitment to holiness? Share examples of how you've navigated this tension in your own life.

2. Walk in power.

Our greatest power sources are the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. Remember, Peter says in **verse 22: ...obeying the truth through the Spirit...** All the power we need is available to live holy as we abide daily, spend time in the Word, and are filled with the Holy Spirit. This gives us the power to walk holy and break strongholds off our lives.

- What are some common strongholds that believers may face in their lives? How can the combination of God's Word and the Holy Spirit's guidance help individuals break free from these strongholds and walk in holiness?

Peter continues, teaching us that since you now have this power source in the Holy Spirit, you have power to lay aside some things. **1 Peter 2:1-3** tells us: ***Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.***

- How can we choose daily to walk in God's power and rely on the Holy Spirit? What are some practical choices each of us can make every day?

3. Stick together.

In **1 Peter 2:4-5**, we learn that God builds and places His people together. Peter describes us as "living stones" that are intentionally and strategically placed together. **1 Peter 2:9-10** says, ***But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God...*** We are a new people, called to proclaim God's goodness to a dark world. We are built up together as a spiritual house. Jesus is the Cornerstone; we are the living stones. God sets people for a purpose—to proclaim.

- Peter describes us as "living stones." How does this imagery of being part of a larger spiritual structure impact our understanding of community and unity within the church? What role does each individual play in this "spiritual house"?
- How can we effectively proclaim God's truth and share His light in the darkness?

LIFE CHALLENGE

Refer back to the three ways to live holy in dark times—preparing your mind, walking in power, and sticking together. Ponder on which one you are strongest in and which one you need to improve. Take steps this week to grow in that area of your life and walk with God.

PRAYER REQUESTS & CLOSE IN PRAYER