

# The New Inductive Study Series

## LIVING WITH DISCERNMENT IN THE END TIMES

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by **Kay Arthur**

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## **1 PETER**

### ***Difficult Times***

These are difficult times. Christians are being restricted more and more in how they can express their beliefs. Morality has plummeted to new lows. Divorce is rampant. Love and commitment have all been given new definitions. Crime is more violent than ever. Sensuality is the predominant selling tool in advertising. Pornography is prevalent on television and in the movies. Sexual promiscuity is the norm among the youth. We live in a world of materialism. We spend all our energies on achieving and all our resources on obtaining. Temptations to yield to the former lusts are at times overwhelming.

How can believers resist all these influences that tend to woo us away from following the example of Christ? How can we stand when so many are falling?

Peter gives us the answers. In 1 Peter we have recorded what Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote to the believers who had been scattered abroad due to the intense persecution of their day. These were difficult days for them, and it looked as if it was going to get worse. Peter writes to encourage the believers to stand firm during these difficult times.

His message is relevant for us today. We too are facing some difficult situations in our own lives. We need to be encouraged. In 1 Peter we will receive that exhortation as well as some practical instructions on standing firm during difficult times. You may be surprised to discover what Peter uses to motivate believers to “hang in there.”

Once you understand and apply the principles given in this book, beloved of God, you will be able to stand firm in difficult times.

Week 1

## **What Happened?**

When you believed in Jesus Christ and were “born again,” you received eternal life! Should that salvation experience have any effect on your everyday life? How should that event affect your responses, your relationships, your resolve?

Let’s see what Peter had to say about it.

### ***DAY ONE***

When you study a book of the Bible, it is advantageous to read through the book as many times as possible. The more you read it, the easier it will be to understand what the book is about. Begin today to familiarize yourself with the content of 1 Peter by reading the entire book in one sitting. As you read, mark every reference to the author in a distinctive way or color. *The New Inductive Study Bible* suggests, when studying an epistle, mark the author in blue. This gives consistency to your marking system. When you mark the author, don’t forget to mark personal pronouns.

As you do this, watch for any statement as to the author’s purpose in writing. When you see this, record the author’s name and his purpose in the appropriate place on the 1 PETER AT A GLANCE chart on page 56. When you finish, record what you learn about the author in your notebook.

### ***DAY TWO***

Read chapter 1 of 1 Peter. This time, mark every reference to the recipients, including the personal pronouns (*you, your*), in a distinctive way or color. *The New Inductive Study Bible* suggests you use the color orange.

What is your first impression of the recipients? Record your thoughts in your notebook. Now, look at the map on page 17 to get a better visual understanding of the exact territories where “those who reside as aliens” were scattered.

### ***DAY THREE***

Now read chapter 1 again. This time analyze every reference to the recipients. If the reference answers any of the “5 W’s and an H” questions—who, what, when, where, why, and how—record in your notebook what you learn about the recipients. At this point, don’t record any of the instructions from the author. We’ll deal with those later.

Just record those things that are specific about the recipients. Your lists would begin something like this:

### THE RECIPIENTS

1. reside as aliens (1:1)
2. are chosen (1:1)
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Put the chapter and verse next to each observation for future reference. Also, leave room in your notebook for other insights you’ll discover about the recipients as you observe the remaining chapters of 1 Peter.

### ***DAY FOUR***

Read chapter 2 today, marking in your Bible and listing in your notebook your observations regarding the recipients. Don’t forget to put the chapter and verse with each observation.

### ***DAY FIVE***

You guessed it! Chapter 3 is your assignment for today. Follow the same procedure as for yesterday.

### ***DAY SIX***

Finish the book of 1 Peter today by dealing with chapters 4 and 5 in the same way you did the previous chapters. If you have time when you finish your assignment for today, prayerfully read down through your observations on the recipients and record in your notebook the major subjects Peter discusses in this letter.

### ***DAY SEVEN***

Store in your heart: 1 Peter 1:3-5. Read and discuss: 1 Peter 1:1-16; 5:10-12.

### ***QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY***

- • Who is the author of this epistle? How does he describe himself?
- To whom is this letter written? What did you learn about them? Where are they? Why are they there? How are they described?
- What were the recipients going through at this time? How were they responding? What would they obtain as an outcome of their faith?

- How did the prophets serve the recipients? What did the prophets bring to them?
- Why did the author write to the recipients? Where is this purpose stated? How does what you learned about the recipients in 1 Peter relate to the purpose of the book?
- What subjects did Peter discuss? How do they relate to the purpose of the book? Were any of these subjects of special interest to you? Why?
- Are you going through any trials at this time? Are you standing firm?
- Does your life in any way parallel the recipients in 1 Peter? How?
- What did you learn as a result of your study this week? Did any insight you recorded speak to you in a personal way?

### ***THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK***

Our focus this week has been on the recipients of 1 Peter. They did not live in an ideal situation or in perfect circumstances. To the contrary, they were going through various trials that resulted in much suffering. It almost sounds like a current report on the Christian life today—anxious situations, false accusations, slanderous remarks, intimidation, unfair treatment, and harsh bosses. Because believers live “in” the world but are not part “of” the world, they are like aliens and strangers. They are in constant conflict with those who reside on planet Earth but have not yet experienced “the true grace of God.” Because this is true, there will always be tension between believers and unbelievers.

Peter encouraged them to stand firm regardless of the circumstances. They could only do this by His grace and their obedience. Although those who had been scattered abroad had experienced the grace of God, they needed to be reminded of exactly what that grace was and how it affected their everyday lives. They also needed to be reminded of what they were to *do* and *not do* in response to all the abrasive situations they were in so they could maintain their testimony in the community and bring glory to God in all their relationships.

God showed them where they were spiritually, who they were in Christ, what was going on in their lives, what was going to come their way, and how they were to respond. Everything they needed for whatever they were told to do, He had already provided for them by His grace! And the same is true for you. What a life! In need of everything but lacking nothing! His provision—grace and peace—is always in the fullest measure! May you experience the same, beloved.

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