



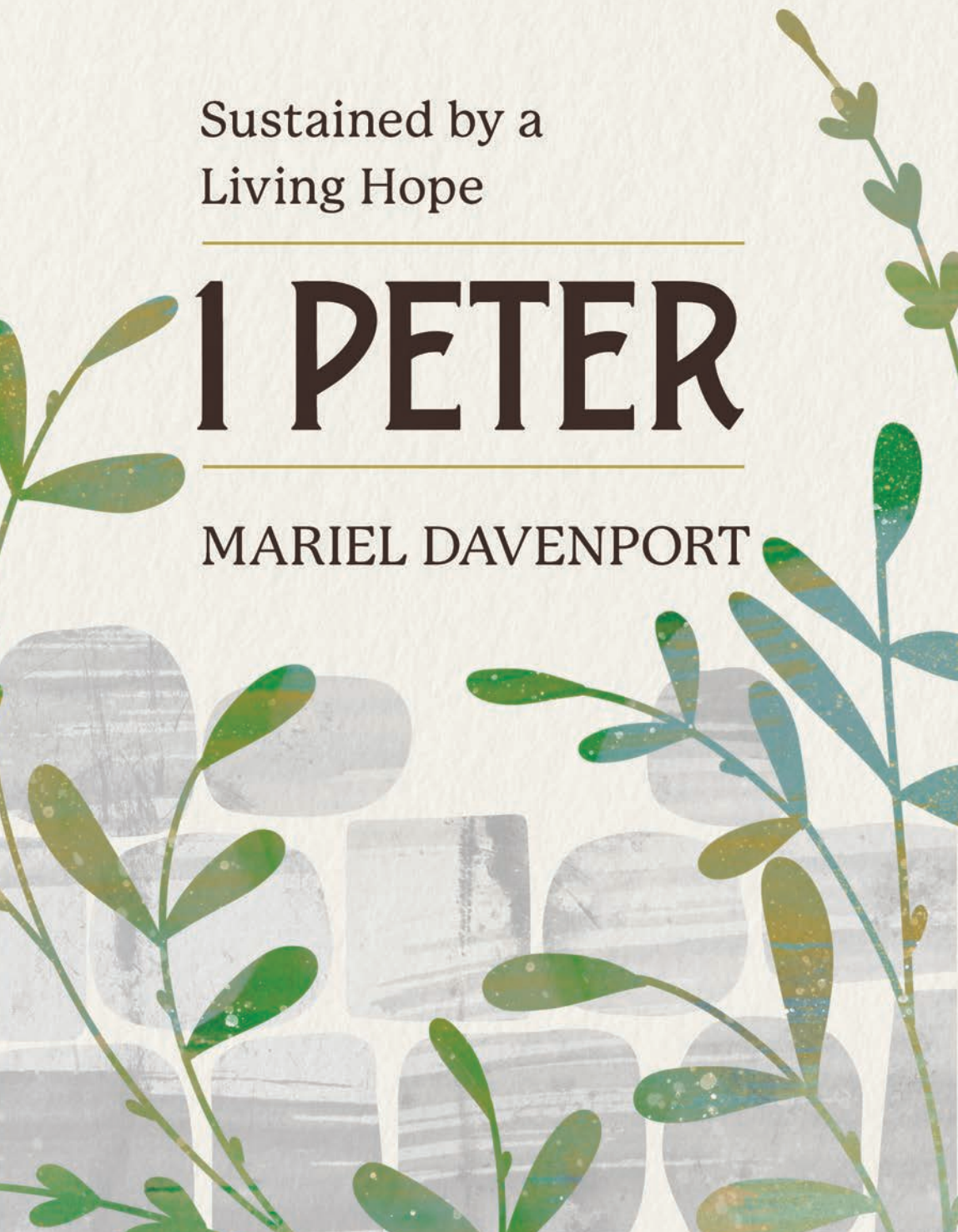
TEND Your Soul Bible Study Series

A 5-WEEK STUDY

Sustained by a  
Living Hope

# 1 PETER

MARIEL DAVENPORT



TEND Your Soul Bible Study Series

# 1 PETER

Sustained by a Living Hope

A 5-WEEK STUDY

MARIEL DAVENPORT



Our Daily Bread  
Publishing®

*1 Peter: Sustained by a Living Hope*

© 2026 by Mariel Davenport

All rights reserved.

Requests for permission to quote from this book should be directed to: Permissions Department, Our Daily Bread Publishing, PO Box 3566, Grand Rapids, MI 49501; or contact us by email at [permissionsdept@odbm.org](mailto:permissionsdept@odbm.org).

Published in association with Mary DeMuth Literary, [mary@marydemuthliterary.com](mailto:mary@marydemuthliterary.com).

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the Authorized Version, or King James Version, of the Bible.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com).

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Interior design by Michael J. Williams

ISBN: 978-1-64070-479-4

*Printed in the United States of America*

26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 / 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# CONTENTS

*Introduction*

*Setting the Context*

- Week 1 | From Hopeless to Hopeful, 1 Peter 1
- Week 2 | From Stones to a Spiritual House, 1 Peter 2:1–21
- Week 3 | From Suffering for Evil to Suffering for Good,  
1 Peter 2:22–3:17
- Week 4 | From Sinful to Forgiven, 1 Peter 3:18–4:14
- Week 5 | From Shepherding to Sheep, 1 Peter 4:15–5:14

*A Closing Thought*

*Appendix A: Which Bible Translation Should I Use?*

*Appendix B: Resources for Further Study*

*Notes*

# INTRODUCTION

Caring for an aging parent, launching your youngest child into the world, or navigating anxiety and insecurities can leave your soul depleted and needy. You'd be a rare person to remain untouched by the sufferings and pains of life. As followers of Jesus, we are not exempt from heartache as we navigate this broken world.

Besides our personal blend of loneliness, disappointment, and exhaustion, the culture around us often provides even more reasons to toss and turn through the night. The darkness in the world seems to sandblast us at every opportunity. On every level—from social media to news updates to family conflicts—we feel the sting of hopelessness. In this first letter, Peter acknowledges this heartache and offers a sustaining hope. John Piper says that 1 Peter “is relevant because our world is increasingly like the world [1 Peter] was written to.”<sup>1</sup>

The recipients of Peter's letter felt the weight of the sufferings around them and within them. They knew this broken world was not their permanent home—but here they were, facing difficulties and pain that left them with doubts. As a man who had walked closely

and personally with Jesus for the three years of His earthly ministry, Peter knew hope in the most tangible sense.

Peter was one of the three in Jesus's inner circle (along with James and John) and the leader among the Twelve. Yet, in a moment of fear and panic, Peter dropped that hope on the coals of the fire in a courtyard (Mark 14:66–68). We feel that tension too, don't we? Desperate for hope, yet quick to release it when fear takes over.

But we find, as Peter did, that grace still holds us. After his denial of Jesus in Matthew 26:69–75, he is commissioned by Jesus to return to serve the church (John 21:15–25). And with a refreshed hope, Peter does. His passion is evident as he pens the letter of 1 Peter near the end of his life: Peter urges the suffering, persecuted believers of his day to stand strong in an increasingly hostile culture by continuing to do good, even in the midst of their suffering. They are called to keep their eyes on the tangible hope of the inheritance kept in heaven for them. According to 1 Peter 1:3, our living hope is the eternal gift we gain through the resurrection of Christ.

Knowing God through His Word is imperative in today's culture characterized by instability and perversity. In his letter, Peter emphasizes this to his readers while encouraging them to persevere in adversity because of the living hope that awaits them—and that awaits us. Let's lean in together and seek to know God as He sustains us by this living hope.

## **My Atheist Eyes Opened**

As a young woman, I didn't know real hope until I surrendered my life to Jesus after reading Genesis in a Bible borrowed from a coworker. Unsure what the Bible held in its pages, and in an attempt to guard my insecure heart, I approached Scripture with much skepticism.

One evening as my newborn lay asleep and my young husband sat watching the news, I opened the Bible for the first time. Never could I have imagined what would happen in the days ahead as I continually returned to the complicated storyline of dysfunctional people in

Genesis—to whom I could relate all too well! My eyes were opened! Every day at work, I peppered my coworker with questions, and she never seemed to tire of sharing the gospel with me. By the reading of the last chapter of Genesis, I surrendered my life to this one and only God who had given His perfect Son for me.

I jumped in with both feet to every Bible study my church offered, desperate to know God’s Word and my Savior Jesus, who saved my soul. A fire to know God had been lit in me!

I surrendered my life to the Lord in my early twenties. But life has a way of sifting us. After years of writing Bible studies, teaching women, and serving in multiple ministries, I entered a severe season of sifting that nearly undid me. I, like Peter, made the terrible, seemingly hopeless choice of denying Jesus with my actions and attitude. That season felt like a weighted blanket pressing down on me for months.

I avoided time in the Word, thinking the repentance required would be impossible. I stopped praying, telling myself God didn’t want to hear my prayers anymore. Although I continued going to church, I had built a wall around my heart. A wall that successfully kept people out and my sin hidden inside. Until one Sunday afternoon when I felt the gentle nudge of God reminding me that my sin had not been a surprise to Him. And He had already paid the price for my sin through the sacrificial death of His Son. The dam inside of me broke. I felt the warmth of grace wash over me as I, through tears, poured out my heart to Him in confession and repentance.

My failures, like Peter’s, didn’t take God by surprise. He stood ready and willing to extend grace and forgiveness the moment I turned toward Him. Since that season many years ago, I felt like a kindred spirit with Peter. When you have walked with Jesus and then denied Him so blatantly, the freedom that comes when He restores is uncontainable.

In turning back in repentance, we are called to strengthen others. Jesus said to Peter in Luke 22: “I have prayed for you that your faith may

not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers” (v. 32). In his first letter, Peter does exactly this—strengthening and encouraging the church with the assurances of their salvation. May we, the modern-day church, find our strength in the same sustaining hope.

## **Tending Your Soul**

As we lean in to learn from 1 Peter, it can feel intimidating to approach Scripture, and even more so, to rightly live in response to it. After many years of living dependent on other people’s Bible studies, I yearned to hear God’s voice through His Word for myself. I studied how to dig into the Bible inductively, which is a practice of observing and seeking to rightly interpret the text based on the context before applying it to your life.

As I sat in my backyard salsa garden and learned to tend the young plants there, God taught me how He desired to tend my soul by His Word. In the process, the TEND method was born and has been my guide for many years through Scripture. TEND is an inductive approach to discovering God’s Word but is simpler than traditional inductive studies and encourages us to slow down and listen carefully to the heart of God and to draw near to Him.

## **As You Begin**

Just as a gardener gathers her tools before heading into the garden, you will want to gather yours. All you will need:

- *Your favorite Bible* (having access to various translations on a phone or laptop can be helpful too).
- *Pen or pencil of your choice.*
- *This guided journal.* Throughout the journal, there will be some suggestions for further study; some of these resources are listed in Appendix B. These resources are extra and certainly not *needed* to begin tending your soul by the Word, but they are helpful for digging deeper as you grow in your study of the Bible.

## How to Use the TEND Method

TEND is an acronym that guides you through a simple four-step method to engage with God’s Word for yourself. (To learn how to TEND through a Bible passage, scan the video podcast QR code on page 10.)

- **T** stands for Take time to pray. As you begin the study, simply pray and ask the Holy Spirit who teaches us truth (John 14:25–26) to lead and direct your mind and heart as you study His Word.
- **E** stands for Examine the Scriptures. Write down the verses from the day’s Bible text. (If you need help with choosing a translation, check out Appendix A.) As you copy down God’s living words, consider the subjects and verbs in the verses. Pay attention to repeated words. Place yourself in the scene.
- **N** stands for Notice the lessons. Rather than jumping to application, we want to pause here to consider what the author was saying to the original reader or hearer of these words. Ask yourself, *What is being taught here? Is there a characteristic of God being revealed?* Then write out the attribute of God displayed. This step will take practice, but the time and effort are worthwhile because the goal of time in the Bible is to know and love God more. That begins by identifying what the verse is teaching about God.
- **D** stands for Do what it says. We want to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only (or readers only), deceiving ourselves, as James 1:22 warns against. In this final step of TEND, we want to respond to what God is teaching. Consider the insights from Scripture in light of your own life, your relationships, and your circumstances. How will you respond to who God is and to the lesson you gleaned today through your relationships or circumstances?

Some days you might respond by praising God, repenting, or journaling. Other days you might respond by texting an

apology to someone or encouraging someone the Lord brings to mind. We will never look like Jesus if we have a head full of learning but lack applied knowledge. If that's the case, we will remain weak-willed and increasingly vulnerable to the enemy (2 Timothy 3:1-7).

**New to the TEND method? Join me, using the QR code below.**



# SETTING THE CONTEXT

**T**he background of a book of the Bible gives context and is a necessary foundation to lay before we jump in, just as a gardener prepares a garden before planting.

## 1. What Genre Is This Book Written In?

*First Peter is a letter, called an epistle, which is simply a long formal letter.*

The New Testament is largely written in letter form, as twenty-two of the twenty-seven books are epistles. These epistles were mostly intended to be read aloud to a congregation as a substitute for the author speaking to the church in person. Likely, most of the letters were circulated from church to church to offer encouragement, instruction, and spiritual sharpening to the congregations. Early on, these letters—written by men who walked with Jesus and were filled with the Holy Spirit—were accepted as divinely inspired Scripture, equivalent to the Old Testament writings.

In the ancient world, letters were essential to long-distance communication. Because many people were illiterate, scribes were often hired to take dictation and then to read the letters upon delivery.<sup>1</sup>

Letters were carried by hand, often through a courier. While the

Roman Empire had a postal system, it was restricted to governmental use. Silvanus is identified as the courier of 1 Peter (1 Peter 5:12). He likely traveled to all the Asia Minor churches, reading the letter aloud at each stop.

Acknowledging that 1 Peter is a letter helps give us context for what is written—and even for what is not. In a letter, the author addresses a specific audience about specific issues, exhorting them to take a particular action. As we TEND through this letter, it is important to keep in mind Peter’s audience, as well as Peter’s identity as an apostle and his personal perspective.

## 2. Who Wrote the Book?

Or in this case, who wrote the *letter*? *Peter, the apostle.*

Out of the gate, Peter identifies himself as the author of the letter. The rich, meaningful details about Peter’s life found in Scripture and in church history can help us uncover more about who Peter was. He was a disciple of Jesus along with his brother, Andrew, who, incidentally, introduced Peter to Jesus. He was the son of John/Jonah (see Matthew 16:17; John 1:42). Peter is referred to as *Cephas*, which is Aramaic for “rock.” He is also called *Simon*, which was his Hebrew birth name.

Peter’s character was outspoken and bold, even to the point of being rebuked (Mark 8:33). He openly denied Jesus after His arrest (Matthew 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62; John 18:15–27). Yet he was one of three disciples making up Jesus’s inner circle, who were with Him at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–9; Mark 9:2–9; Luke 9:28–36) and the resurrection of the synagogue leader’s daughter (Mark 5:21–42). Peter was the only one who walked on water with Jesus (Matthew 14:22–33).

Peter had a rich, deep relationship with Jesus and knew Him better than most. So, we can rest assured this letter is not only inspired by the Holy Spirit, as is all Scripture, but also colored by a vibrant relationship with Jesus.

### 3. To Whom Was the Book Written?

Peter opens by identifying his audience. First Peter 1:1 tells us, “To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.”

Many were Jewish believers who were exiled from Israel. Scholar William Barclay writes, “The term *dispora* was commonly used to refer to the Jews who lived among the Gentiles outside of Israel. . . . The word *dispersion* means ‘scattered.’ This key theme of being scattered and living in a foreign land that is not one’s home frames the entire letter.”<sup>2</sup> However, as evidenced by 1 Peter 2:10, Peter’s audience was likely not just Jewish believers in Christ but also gentile believers.

### 4. When Was This Letter Written, and When Did Its Events Occur?

According to church tradition, Peter was martyred in Rome in the mid-60s AD by Nero. Since 2 Peter was written after 1 Peter but obviously before his death, a likely date for 1 Peter is around AD 62. Although this was before Nero’s persecution of Christians in Rome, likely there were already indications of more severe persecutions approaching.

As we consider where in the storyline of Scripture this particular letter falls, we want to look at the metanarrative of Scripture. According to Impact 360 Institute, “The metanarrative is the big picture of the Bible. Though it is essential to take a deep dive into specific pieces of scripture and meditate over them, it is easy to forget that the Bible is one big story of a family. It begins with Adam, leads to Jesus, and continues through us.”<sup>3</sup>

The metanarrative of Scripture:

**Creation → Fall → Redemption → Consummation**

**Creation** happened at the beginning of time as outlined in the first chapters of Genesis. The **fall** of humanity followed when Adam

and Eve chose to sin against God, ushering sin into the world and damaging our relationship with God. Before the fall, Adam and Eve had direct access to their Creator. Consequences of Adam and Eve's sin included their removal from the garden of Eden and loss of constant communication with Him. Still, God pursued humankind, foreshadowing the direct access to Himself that He would offer in His Son, Jesus.

Jesus would reconcile humanity back to God. Born of a virgin and without sin, Jesus Christ was sacrificed in the place of God's people at the cross, which brought **redemption** for those who would trust in the Messiah Jesus. Jesus was then resurrected. He returned to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. He also sent the Holy Spirit to indwell those who surrender to Jesus until the day of **consummation**, when God's people will be eternally together in His presence.

We live in the time between Jesus's redemption and the consummation of humankind—a time that spans much of the New Testament. The Gospels tell of Jesus's life on earth and end with the crucifixion and ascension. The book of Acts and the epistles were written in this period between redemption and consummation, the timeline that also encompasses Peter's life and authorship of 1 and 2 Peter. As they did, we are still waiting for the final consummation.

## **5. What Is the Main Theme or Keywords of the Letter?**

Throughout the book, we see *suffering* and *doing good* repeated multiple times. Peter is making the point that even in suffering, as his audience was, believers of Christ are still called to do good. Our actions in the midst of suffering are intended to reflect the goodness of our Savior to a lost world.

Hope is also a recurring theme. Peter speaks to “elect exiles,” those who live in a broken world away from their heavenly home. Throughout the letter, Peter directs his readers to keep their eyes on the eternal and living hope they have in Jesus, even as they navigate life in this hurting world.

When you slow down to write the verses throughout the study of 1 Peter, pay attention to repeated words. You might consider looking up these words in resources like BibleHub.com.

As you lean in to know and love God through what He reveals to you in 1 Peter, remember this is not just to gain head knowledge but rather to cultivate intimacy with God. Ask God to reveal Himself to you as He sustains you by His living hope.

---

# WEEK 1

---



# FROM HOPELESS TO HOPEFUL, 1 PETER 1

I've failed the Lord—walking near to Him in one season, only to deny Him with my heart and actions in another. Thankfully, the moments when we have failed the Lord aren't captured in the Bible, as is the case for some men and women we see in Scripture. For example, the gospel of Luke recounts this moment of Peter's denial of Jesus:

But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he has said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly. (22:60–62)

Peter—the one who looked into the eyes of his closest friend and rabbi, Jesus, after he betrayed Him a third time—is the same man who later penned two powerful epistles of hope. Peter knew the life vest that true living hope provides. Surely, he carried the weight of hopelessness and its implications when Jesus died. But just as Jesus had prayed (Luke 22:31–32), Peter was restored and then returned to strengthen the believers with power, hope, and sound doctrine.

God redeemed and empowered Peter. God is willing to redeem and empower you too, friend. Your past, your sin, and your failures do not get the last word. Your Redeemer does. Peter knew this. As you and I tend our souls with the life-changing truths in this letter, may we—by God's grace—be encouraged by the hope He offers.



# DAY 1

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

VERSES: *1 Peter 1:1–5*

## **T. Take time to pray.**

Ask the Lord to speak to you through His Word today.

**TENDING TOOL:** Peter’s letter opens like most letters of the time—by identifying the author. He was a husband, uncle, brother, and fisherman, among other things. Yet the words he chose to identify himself with are “an apostle of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:1).

Let’s consider why Peter chose this identification. He first identifies himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ—that is, Peter centers his identity in Christ. The Greek word for apostle that he uses is *apostolos*, meaning “one sent on a mission.” Peter knew and identified with his God-given purpose and calling. As an apostle, he held authority in the church, and calling himself one would give weight to his words for his readers.

For us, it’s worth considering how we identify ourselves. Am I first a wife, mother, friend, writer, or a disciple of Jesus the Promised One? It’s easy to see ourselves in relation to the world and our relationships. But what would happen if—in our work, within our families, and in our communities—we began to define ourselves primarily by our relationship with Jesus?

## **E. Examine the Scriptures.**

Write out the verses from your Bible below. Pay attention to the details in these verses, such as any action taking place and repeated words or keywords used.



## N. Notice the lessons.

What do these verses teach about God? Remember the original audience and what the passage meant to them. In these verses, is there a sin, promise, action, command, or example to follow or not follow? Write down the lessons.

**TENDING TOOL:** Peter, dubbed “the apostle of hope” by Bible scholar and pastor David Walls, highlights a powerful truth for his persecuted readers—the promise of being born again to a living hope. Peter defines *living hope* as the inheritance we gain through the resurrection of Christ (1 Peter 1:3).

According to Walls, Peter encourages us that “amid present and difficult dangers we are justified in viewing the future with optimism because we are securely attached to the God who deals in futures.”<sup>1</sup> Despite his past failures and his ongoing fears, Peter was sustained by a living hope—and God offers the same to you and me. How might your day today be affected by the reminder of this life-giving truth?

#### **D. Do what it says.**

Consider how you might respond to a lesson you identified. Write down your plan to carry out this lesson today. With God's grace and guidance, go do it!

**Join me as we TEND through Week 1, Day 1, together.**





## DAY 2

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

VERSES: *1 Peter 1:6–9*

### **T. Take time to pray.**


Ask the Lord to speak to you through His Word today.

## E. Examine the Scriptures.

Write out the verses from your Bible below. Pay attention to the details in these verses, such as any action taking place and repeated words or keywords used.

**TENDING TOOL:** When using the TEND method to dig into a book of the Bible, I mostly use the English Standard Version (but check out Appendix A for a list of other wonderful translations). Yet sometimes looking up a verse in another translation can offer insight or a fresh perspective. Such is the case here.

The New Living Translation renders verse 9 as “the reward for trusting [God] will be the salvation of your souls.” The salvation we receive for simply trusting our trustworthy God is a reward. Thinking of God as *the One who rewards us* reveals how encouraging He is to His children. God doesn’t just instruct us to follow Him for our own good, though He could. But, rather, God rewards us with the undeserved salvation of our souls. How, then, can you grow in trusting Him today?



## Gain Strength for Today and Hope for Tomorrow!

Whether you're new to the Bible or you've read it for years, *1 Peter: Sustained by a Living Hope* helps you embrace your eternal inheritance and God-given identity. Gather your friends and gain courage for today as you study Peter's first letter to persecuted Christians.

A TEND Your Soul Bible Study, this fresh approach for studying Scripture provides unique benefits and insights through guided journaling pages and study tools that lead you to

- Take time to pray
- Examine the Scriptures
- Notice the lessons, and
- Do what it says

Mariel Davenport uses the TEND method in the Bible studies she leads. Scan the QR code provided with Week 1, Day 1, and see the beauty of digging into God's Word in community. Whether on your own or in a group, you—like the original readers of this letter—will learn to face this broken world with renewed hope.



**Mariel Davenport** is the creator of the TEND Your Soul Bible Study Series, empowering women to experience God through a dynamic inductive study of Scripture. For more than 20 years, Mariel has taught women from all over the world how to study the Bible. She lives in Wilmington, North Carolina, with her husband.

The TEND Your Soul Bible Study Series is part of the God Hears Her collection, designed to bring inspiration and encouragement to women every day. Connect with us at [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org) and [marieldavenport.com](http://marieldavenport.com).

GQ821

RELIGION / Biblical Studies / New Testament /  
General Epistles

  
**GOD HEARS HER.**



**Our Daily Bread  
Publishing.**

ISBN 978-1-64070-679-6



9 781640 704794