



Having seen the gospel 'indicative' in 1v3-12 (what God has done for us), in 1v13-2v3 we see the gospel 'imperative' – what we are to do with these truths.

We begun by noting Peter's command, in v13, that we are to set our hope on the coming grace. We took comfort that, by giving it as an instruction and telling us to do it alertly and soberly, Peter seems to be acknowledging that we may not always find it the easiest or most automatic thing to do.

Peter will spend the rest of the letter unpacking how we are to do this, but he gives two guiding principles in this introductory chapter:

### **1 – live like God (1v14-21)**

Because we are now God's children, we are to live like our dad. We are to: "be holy in all you do" (v15). And this holiness will need to begin in our hearts. Peter tells us to forsake the "evil desires" of our hearts (v14) and imitate God in the way we love, long, dream, wish and imagine, as well as in the things we do.

Peter also writes that we should be holy because God is our judge (v17), our redeemer (v18-19), and the one who has a plan (v20-21).

### **2 – love like God (1v22-2v3)**

Peter next tells us to love each other sincerely, deeply, and from the heart (v22). Because God's word is imperishable, we have been given new life that is imperishable (v23-25). We are now part of a community that will endure forever! The Christians we love now, we could be worshipping alongside forever!

Again, Peter zooms in to the issues of the heart. He asks us how we feel about each other in moments of struggle, frustration and conflict, and calls us to give up all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander (2v1).

If all this sounds too hard, he concludes that we have all that we need to live and love like God in Christ. Peter tells us to "crave pure spiritual milk" (2v2), living in utter dependence upon Christ, his word and his people, that Christ might give us what we need and grow us up in our salvation, that we might be more like him.

Here are a few questions you might want to use with your group...

1. How are you finding setting your hope on the coming grace at the moment?  
→ When do you find it easier? When do you find it harder?
2. If a friend were to come to you tomorrow in their struggle and ask you how they could keep hoping in Jesus, what do you think you would say?  
→ How close is what you might say to what Peter says?
3. What comfort can we take that Christians are *instructed* to set their hope on Jesus?
4. Why does holiness matter so much?  
→ Why doesn't Peter spell out more clearly what holiness looks like?  
→ How will we go wrong if we forget that holiness begins in the heart?  
→ Which image spurring us towards holiness do you find most helpful – God as father, judge, redeemer or planner? Why?  
→ Whichever image we choose, why is it so important in our trials that we remember that we stand before God first and foremost?
5. Why do you think Peter jumps to talking about the church community? What's the link?
6. Why does how we relate to our Christian brothers and sisters matter so much?  
→ What impact should knowing that the church will last forever make to how we conduct our relationships within the church now?
7. In what situations do you feel your heart tending towards the sins Peter describes in 2v1?  
→ What can you do when you feel those sins within you?
8. What do you think it means to "crave pure spiritual milk"?  
→ How is that a solution and a help to the challenge of this passage?