****

**STUDY QUESTIONS FOR WEEK ONE: *To the Exiles***

READ 1 Peter 1:1-16

God’s Story

1. According to 1 Peter 1:1, to whom is Peter writing? (Find a Bible map and locate the cities listed. Estimate how far these cities are from Rome.)
2. Read 1 Peter 1:2, how does Peter describe the people to which he is writing that shows their special relationship to God?
3. In 1 Peter 1:3-4a, Peter says that the beleaguered exiles have been given a living hope despite their unfortunate and threatening circumstances. What is the source of their hope? How does that source give them a different perspective to view their situation?
4. Peter says that there may be a purpose in suffering, even if the suffering itself is an unfortunate occurrence. Read 1 Peter 1:6-7. What can suffering do that is worth more than gold?
5. 1 Peter 1:8-9 virtually defines *faith*. What are the components of faith according to this passage?
6. Read 1 Peter 1:10-12. Peter says that someone spoke about salvation by faith in the way he is describing it. Who does he say spoke these things before the death and resurrection of Jesus?
7. 1 Peter 1:13-16 is an appeal to Christians to be holy. If the word *holy* means being set apart or separated from the whole, how does being exiled from the world create a situation where Christians should more easily see their special purpose in the world. Read this passage several times before answering.

My Story

1. Think of your life in the present moment. In what ways do you identify as a person in exile? What are you prevented from doing? Who are you prevented from seeing? In what ways do these circumstances make you feel captive?
2. Think of your relationship with God, established in baptism. How does your special relationship with God help you address your feelings about your exile and your captivity? Even if you remain physically or emotionally exiled, is it possible to still be free? Explain your answer?
3. If you step back and look at your life and your current experiences from the perspective of eternity, through the lens of the resurrection, what current fears or threats in your life seem important enough to acknowledge and respect but not worthy of the amount of energy you are contributing to them?
4. Think of a time in your life when you experienced suffering. Even though you wouldn’t wish that suffering on yourself again or anyone else, what good came out of the unfortunate experience? Did it affect your relationship with God? If so, how?
5. Faith is a deeply personal thing. Read 1 Peter 1:8-9. With Peter’s definition of faith as a guide, how might you describe faith in your own words?
6. Think about the people in your life who shared their faith with you. In what ways did the demonstration of their faith shape how you view your faith?
7. Consider a time when you felt left out, cut off, or made to stand out from the crowd. What was the experience like for you? This uncomfortable experience can make or break people, but it is a golden opportunity for personal discovery. What positive thing did you learn about yourself from the unfortunate experience?

