



The Apostle Peter was the first to stand up and boldly share the good news of Jesus' life, death and resurrection following the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church on the day of Pentecost, as told in the Book of Acts. Peter also wrote this passage we read today. The word "hope" he uses represents the Hebrew understanding of hope, which is an indication of certainty and trust, a strong and confident expectation. In our culture the idea of hope is more of a wish or to expect but without certainty.

*With Peter's bold understanding of "hope" in mind as you read the passage again, do you notice any changes in your thoughts about the phrases "new birth" and "living hope"?*

*Can you incorporate a strong and confident expectation of resurrection power being available to you throughout this day?*

.....  
.....  
.....

Luke was a partner in ministry with the Apostle Paul. Luke is credited to be the author of both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. In our passage today Luke provides a snapshot of what life looked like for the Church in the early days. New believers now join those who had been following Jesus before his death and resurrection. Their life together is so completely flooded with grace that every distraction is set aside and the mission to spread the good news of Jesus Christ unites them in every way.

*The believers recognized that God's grace was being poured out on them in a powerful way. How do you think this knowledge influenced their choices about daily needs?*

*Do you believe God is willing to send this "much grace" into your life today? If so, what will that look like?*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

The Apostle Paul writes these words as he is being held in prison. But his deepest longing here is not release from his captors. Instead, he wants to "know Christ" and fully experience the power of his life. Paul views the power of Jesus' resurrection as something much bigger than power over death. It not only proves God's power over death of the body, it also proves God's power to give life to a dying soul. It would be easy to see life come back to a dead body. It is much more difficult to see life come back into a dying soul.

*What is it about the power of Jesus' resurrection that provides more freedom for Paul in this moment than receiving release from his prison walls?*

*How might Paul's situation and the thoughts he shared impact any situation you may encounter today?*

.....  
.....  
.....

The Apostle John wrote as an eyewitness to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He helps us hear, see and feel what he intimately remembers. Jesus is made present to generations who have never actually seen or heard Jesus except by the eyes and ears of faith. John uses the phrase "Word of life" to point to Jesus. In the Gospel of John he uses similar phrases such as "in the beginning was the Word," "the Word was with God" and "the Word was made flesh" to help the reader understand the eternal and divine nature of Jesus. God, the Creator, came in the flesh. In Jesus, both the power of God and the vulnerability of the human body were made visible together.

*How does John's testimony, or eyewitness account, of Jesus' life, death and resurrection affect your thoughts concerning God's desire to be present in your life today?*

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....