



FIRST QUARTER 2026  
10 March

**DISCUSSION ON HOMEWORK** – We saw from the NIV version of the third commandment that it tells us not to MISUSE the name of God. Jen will discuss this topic in detail, but what is your present understanding of what it means to “misuse” God’s name?

**1 PETER**

**1 Peter 1:1-2** – Peter tells his readers in his opening paragraph that one reason believers are chosen by God the Father is “for **obedience** to Jesus Christ”. If you did the marking assignment for this week, you saw that Peter repeatedly contrasts the fruit of obedience with the consequences of disobedience throughout the remainder of his letter. If you haven’t yet marked your booklets, I encourage you to do so. And when I marked my own booklet, I realized that just highlighting the targeted words in yellow failed to make them stand out very well, so I also circled the positive forms in **green** and the negative ones in **red**, with a red X through them, as illustrated at the bottom of this page. For your convenience, here is a list of all the verses in 1 Peter containing the words to mark:

1:2,14,22      2:8      3:1,6,20      4:17

There are a couple of perspectives on this topic of biblical “obedience” that struck me as being especially pertinent and helpful. One is a quote from the book I am currently reading, *The Disciple Maker’s Handbook*: “We need a heart that is open to correction and responsive to the Lord. This means that the Bible will often say things that we don’t want to hear. Mark Twain once said, ‘Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture which they cannot understand; but as for me, I have always noticed that the passages of Scripture which trouble me most are those *which I DO understand*.’ In other words, the real problem is not our intellectual grasp of the Bible. It’s the heartfelt understanding that leads to conviction and action. We may understand, but if our understanding fails to lead to obedience, we’ve not truly grasped it with approval and joy. For example, it’s not natural to love your enemies and forgive those who have hurt you. But once we grasp Jesus at the center—and our hearts see who He is and what He has done for us—it transforms our study of the Bible.”

The other is something that Brenda Popovich pointed out in her class two years ago, i.e. that **disobedience** and **unbelief** are actually two sides of the same coin. In many cases in the Old Testament, the very same Hebrew word is used for both, but the English translation of the Hebrew word may vary, depending on the context or the translator’s preference. I found that the same thing was true in the Greek, i.e. the Greek word *apeitheo* is used to indicate both “willful and perverse disobedience AND unbelief”. Peter used this word in 3:1 of unbelieving husbands and in 4:20 of the wicked people in Noah’s day who refused to believe or obey God. The Greek word *hupakouo* means “obedience,” i.e. “to listen attentively and to heed.” This word is used in 1:2 of believers and again in 4:6 to explain how Sarah related to her husband Abraham.

That phrase “to listen attentively and heed” reminds me of an old hymn, “Trust and Obey”. The first verse goes like this:

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,  
What a glory He sheds on our way!  
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,  
And with all who will trust and obey.  
Trust and obey, for there’s no other way  
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

With all of this in mind, your new marking assignment for this week is to go through your printout of 1 Peter and highlight forms of the word **believe** and of the phrase **not believe** the same way you did for “obey” and “disobey.”

Here is a list of all the verses that contain these words: 1:8,21 and 2:6-7

**Map** – Your packet for this week contains a map to attach to the inside front cover of your booklets, so you can see it every time you re-read 1 Peter 1:1. I like the fact that it just fits under the picture of Jesus leading His people through the wilderness, because that is a visual reminder that when the Jewish believers fled Israel to escape persecution, they didn't "go it alone": Jesus was leading them to where they needed to go. As we discussed last week, Jewish believers had to learn how to become one with Gentile believers as Christ was building up His newly established church...and where better to do so than in *these* regions, filled with Gentiles who were being evangelized by the apostle Paul? In the wisdom of God, He led Paul to bring Gentiles into the church by leading them to Christ, and Peter to encourage Jewish believers to welcome their new "brothers and sisters in Christ" by writing them letters. And during this entire time, Jesus was leading them all to show them the way in this newly revealed part of His eternal plan!

### **EXODUS**

**Exodus 20:1-12** – I like the way that the authors of *The Disciple Maker's Handbook* introduce the Ten Commandments. Their comments provide an excellent summary of what Jen Wilkin talked about last week regarding "relationship" versus "rules":

"It's not a stretch to say that the whole Bible is about relationships. The Bible speaks not just of our relationship with God, but about our relationships with other people as well. Consider the **Ten Commandments. On the surface, they look like a list of RULES, but a better way of thinking of them is as the GUARDIANS OF RELATIONSHIPS.** By observing the first four commandments, we honor and protect our relationship with God...and commandments five through ten address our relationships with others."

So with that, let's hear what Jen Wilkin has to say about commandments 3-5.